

“Are We Living in the Last Days?”

Mondo Gonzales, Pastor New Lenox Patriot- February 20, 2009.

I will be starting a series on “Prophecy and the Last Days” March 8. You are invited to come hear how the Bible has specifically laid out the end time scenario, but let me say this now. The return of Jesus from heaven to this earth to judge the world and be reunited in person with His church is one of those great promises that Jesus Himself gave to us. Jesus tells us in John 14:1-3 that it is certain He will come back again. Yet we realize that it has been almost 2000 years since Jesus ascended into heaven. This has caused some to doubt Jesus’ words and others to even mock our hope in His return. This shouldn’t surprise us. Peter warned us that in the last days people would mock the idea of Jesus returning (2 Peter 3:1-9). The reason Jesus is delaying is to give this world more time to repent. I am thankful that Jesus didn’t return in 1985, as an example, because I was not yet a believer in Him. So I am thankful that He has been patient and not returned. For in that patient waiting I came to trust in Him as my Savior. Jesus told us to be watching for His return (Matt 25:13) and to keep busy doing His work until He comes (Luke 19:13). Can we really watch for His return? What are we to watch for? Even though we cannot know the day or the hour (Mark 13:32), Paul teaches us that the signs and season of His return will not be a surprise to us (1 Thess 5:4). Jesus scolded the Pharisees for not seeing the signs of Jesus’ first coming (Matt 16:3) and further encourages us to be watching for signs of the last days before His Second coming (Luke 21:28).

The disciples asked Jesus what would be the signs of the last days in Matthew 24:1-3. Before I lay out just some of these signs, I want to mention that even as little as 100 years ago, people who believed in Jesus did not have any of these signs. So let’s not just brush them off as wishful thinking. Jesus spoke about the end of the age when He returns and encourages us to be looking. We are living in the end of the age and the evidence points to this. Let me name just a few: 1) There will be an increase in knowledge and world travel (Daniel 12:2). Think of the amount of knowledge that has burst on the scene in the last 100 years. From the first airplane in 1903 to atomic bombs, genetics, and computers, we are living in a time of unparalleled knowledge. Compare, as an example, living in 1800 AD versus 1200 AD or 600 AD. It was mainly an agricultural lifestyle. There has always been a steady and slow increase in knowledge, but the Bible predicts an explosion and that is what we have seen. Also, world travel has never been like it is now. Sure people have always traveled around, but not like today. As of 1995 over 70 million people travel on airlines per month! I only have space to elaborate on one more and that is the return of Israel to the land. The Bible predicted that Israel would return as a nation (Ezekiel 37; Daniel 9:24-27; Isaiah 11:11-12) and this happened in 1948. A hundred years ago even some bible teachers didn’t believe that Israel would ever return as a nation, but God’s Word is true. Some of you maybe even witnessed it. Here are some others you can look at on your own. 2) Revival of Europe as a super power (Daniel 2, 7, 9); 3) Russia/Iran Alliance (Ezekiel 38-39; Magog is an ancient name for Russia); 4) World Wars (Matt 24:7); 5) Technology that allows for the economic mark of the beast has arrived. This wasn’t true even 50 years ago (Rev 13:18). So... are we living the last days? If we examine the current state of uncertainty in the world: the economy, nuclear weapons, wars, etc., it’s hard not to affirm that things are happening exactly as the Bible foretold and warned. How soon? I don’t have that answer, but what we do know is that the signs are happening as I write this. Jesus warned that there would be many people not looking for His return and will be left out when He comes. If He came today would He find you ready or would you be cast out of His sight into eternal judgment? Jesus tells us that we need to repent of our sins and put our full trust in Him alone. Only then we will get our reward at His return (Matthew 25:1-46). Have a blessed week! (www.ccc-nl.org)