

“Judgment Day on May 21, 2011?”

Mondo Gonzales, Pastor

CrossRoads Community Church in New Lenox

www.ccc-nl.org

If you haven't heard about or seen the billboard on I-55 north, there is a man by the name of Harold Camping predicting that judgment day will be arriving on May 21, 2011. As a Christian who fully believes the Bible's prediction that Jesus will return someday, I can't help but note my sadness at seeing how much publicity this particular prognosticator is receiving. What is unfortunate is that the media seems to be having a field day with the dozens of people associated with his ministry (Family Radio Network) who are traveling around the country in RVs or other vehicles advertising their particular brand of apocalyptic time frames.

Harold Camping is an engineer by training and so he has had quite a history of playing allegorical games with the various numbers as found in the Bible in order to predict the date of Jesus' return. After I first became a Christian in 1993, I soon came across a book entitled, “1994?”, by Harold Camping. In this book, he predicted that the God's judgment had begun in 1988 and that Jesus would be returning in 1994. I did check Amazon and you can presently get the book for the low price of 29 cents. Even more intriguing is to go there and see how many 5 star reviews it is still receiving!

Jesus warned us in Matthew 24:11 and 24:24 that false prophets would come and deceive many. We should not be surprised that this happening and in fact we should expect it to happen more and more. I do believe that the Scripture affirms that we can have a general understanding of the “season” of the Lord's return (1 Thessalonians 5:1-5), but according to Jesus “no knows the day or the hour” (Mark 13:32). I have watched the glee of many reporters interviewing the followers of Camping travel around the country promoting the May 21 date. Their commentary afterward is eager to see this date come and go and to see more of these “Christians” look foolish. Unfortunately, for those of us who truly believe the Lord is returning sooner rather than later, we end up getting lumped into these other groups through guilt by association.

When asked what they will do when they wake up on May 22, none of them would even dare to entertain the possibility of their leader being wrong. When pressed to answer, they said that if they wake up on May 22, it means that the Bible is wrong or they were not truly saved. How sad for these people. The Bible has never been wrong, but it is true that man's interpretation of the Bible have been proven false. I have written in this column numerous times of the undeniable signs of Jesus' soon return. Yet we would all be wise to avoid date setting and instead focus on whether we are prepared to meet Him when He does return in judgment. He warned us, “unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). God is gracious and loving enough to give us one more moment to do this and be prepared to meet Him. Have a blessed week!

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