



THE FUTURE TODAY!

Prophecy Meetings

COVID-19 - Setting the Stage for the End Times!

Luke 21:5-28

Sermon given on September 13, 2020



Sunday Evening Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

COVID-19 - Setting the Stage for the End Times!

Luke 21:5-28

Opening Comments

- Welcome to the **FUTURE TODAY** prophecy meeting
- We have these meetings because God has told His people what was going to happen in the future in His written Word, the Bible
- He did that so that we would be prepared – that we would be ready
- He also did it so that we would not be afraid of the things going on in the world around us
- Our purpose is to examine current events in light of what God said would happen in the future
- The better you understand what God is going to do in the future, the less afraid you will be about the things that are happening today
- One of the things that has become abundantly clear to me in the last six months is that there are influences at work around us that are using fear as a tool to control people
- As we all know the world was confronted with a pandemic at the beginning of this year
- The COVID-19 pandemic is real – people are getting sick and some of those who get sick are dying – especially the elderly and vulnerable
- Is COVID-19 a sign of the end of the world?
- Is this pandemic proof that Jesus is coming back soon?
- Let's pray and then try to answer those questions
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **COVID-19 - Setting the Stage for the End Times!**
- God's Word should always be where we turn to answer the big questions of our lives – all questions
- Turn in your Bible to **Luke 21**
- Jesus has a conversation with His disciples
- The conversation began with Jesus telling them something bad was going to happen

- **Luke 21:5-6**
- The temple in Jerusalem was the most important place on earth for the Jews
- It symbolized God's promises and gave them a sense of security of God's presence among them
- It was difficult for them to imagine it being destroyed
- The disciples wanted to know when that was going to happen
- **Luke 21:7-11**
- 'do not be deceived. = there will be some who will try to deceive people into believing that Jesus is coming back before He actually is
- 'do not be terrified' – don't be freaked out about the things you see going on in the world
- 'the end will not come immediately' – they are not signs that Jesus is returning immediately
- Jesus then told them what the world would be like until His return
- **Luke 21:10-11**
- The word 'pestilence' is the one that pertains to our topic for today
- Pestilence - a contagious or infectious epidemic disease that is virulent and devastating.
- How bad is COVID-19?
- Since they started detecting it – 27.6 million people have contracted it
- That is 0.3% of the world's population
- Of those who contracted it – 898K have died = 0.00011%
- In the US = 0.00057%
- Compare that with the 1918 (H1N1) influenza pandemic
- 500 million contracted the virus and 50 million died – 2.7%
- COVID-19 is pretty bad, but the world has seen far worse
- Is COVID-19 proof that Jesus is coming back soon
- No – not even close – it is just one of the many things Jesus said would be happening during the in-between time
- Jesus goes on to describe persecution of the disciples and the destruction of Jerusalem
- **Luke 21:24**
- We are waiting for the fulfillment of the 'times of the Gentiles'
- And then...

- **Luke 21:25-27**

- ‘they will see’ – the unbelieving world will witness the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and despair

- **Luke 21:28**

- ‘these things’ = all the things I read before
- Instead of being freaked out by everything that is going on
- These things ought to cause us to look up – ‘redemption draws near’
- Paul referred to that redemption **Romans 8:23**

Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

- COVID-19 is not proof that Jesus is coming back soon
- But it is part of something much larger that does cause us to believe that Jesus is coming soon
- If you have ever attended a play – it is broken up into acts
- The curtain goes up and the actors come out and perform
- Then the curtain comes down and the stage is changed for the next part of the play – called setting the stage
- COVID-19 is just another of the ‘these things’ Jesus said would come
- But it is being used to ‘set the stage’ for the next act in God’s plan of redemption – the judgment of this world and the Second Coming of Christ
- That’s what Pastor Randy does during the meeting – he tells us what is happening in the world and shows us how it is setting the stage for the future events foretold in Scripture to be fulfilled
- So, as we look into these events in our country and around the world, do not be afraid, instead look up, your Savior is on His way **John 14:27**

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

- The stage is being set and soon the curtain will go up
- It will go up as we go up **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

- Until Jesus gets back, let’s keep looking up!