

# ARE WE IN END TIMES?

## “Fear or Father?”

Scripture Reading: ROMANS 8:12-18

- ) **SLIDE 7-8**. Scripture reading.
- ) **SLIDE 9**. Today’s message is titled, “*Fear or Father?*”
- ) Last week we concluded our series on “*Christianity in Troubled Times*” where I showed one possible and probable reason why America is in the terrible shape that it is in. And that reason is because the church is failing to be the church.
- ) The church, God’s representatives on earth, have suppressed the truth in unrighteousness leading God to allow us to go our own way. And this country has and is doing what it thinks is right in its own eyes. It is now a substitute society, morally bankrupt, and totally confused about what is right and wrong.
- ) Most of us would agree that we have never seen our country in such turmoil, confusion, hypocrisy, lack of common sense, and absolute hatred towards our president. So, that begs the question. Are we in end times? Is this the beginning of the end? Are we personally witnessing the birth pangs that Jesus says will happen just before His return?
- ) Today we begin a new and short sermon series concerning end times. Are we in end times?
- ) End times seems to be a rather popular topic of discussion in churches, on the internet, on YouTube, on Facebook, social media, etc. You see it more now than what you did at Y2K.
- ) Over the past few weeks, I have had several people approach me with questions about this. So, let’s talk about the possibility of living in end times and see what the Word of God has to say. After all, that is our only source of truth. Right?

- ) **SLIDE 10.** In this short series we will look at 1) the different views of end times prophecy (eschatology), 2) the signs we need to be looking for, and 3) how we need to respond in the event that these are indeed end times we are witnessing
- ) This would be a logical progression for teaching and preaching on this topic. Let's first talk about the different eschatological views that churches teach; follow that up with the signs we need to be looking for that the Bible gives us leading up to the return of Jesus; and then once we have laid all that foundation, what is the Christian response.
- ) But today, I want to begin with the conclusion. Our response. Why? Because I want all of us to know and understand what kind of Biblical heart attitude we must have as Christians regardless of the eschatological view we may have or the signs that may be in front of us today.
- ) In other words, what should our attitude be about the second coming of Jesus Christ regardless of when or how that happens? We may agree or disagree on the particulars about prophecy interpretations and signs, but we must all agree that it will occur at some point in time, and our hearts must be right.
- ) What I am about to say for the remainder of this message is directed only to believers—Christians. Not to unbelievers. Paul is addressing believers in v12.
- ) If we are going to talk about a heart condition of believers, let's begin by talking about the human condition. We all recognize that there is a battle going on in each of us between the spirit and the flesh (our old sinful self). Paul addresses this battle in ROM 7:14-25.
- ) **SLIDE 11.** But beginning here in chapter 8, he goes on to tell us that, if we are indeed saved, the Spirit dwells in us (v9). And now the Spirit is our new Master.

- ) **SLIDE 12.** (fitb) Paul then makes it very clear in verses 12 and 13 that we (believers - brethren) live either according to the **FLESH** or according to the **SPIRIT**. And if we continue to live according to the flesh (sin), we must put that to death.
- ) The human condition (our desire to sin – our flesh) will always be a part of us. But we cannot allow the flesh to win. That's why Paul says we cannot continue to live by the flesh.
- ) **SLIDE 13.** (fitb) You're either in slavery to **FEAR** or you follow the **FATHER**. Verse 15. In this new creation, you cannot live the way you used to live. The old you had a spirit of slavery (to sin) which led to fear. The new you must have a Spirit that understands you have been adopted as a son or a daughter into God's family in which you cry out "*Abba Father!*"
- ) Fear or Father? That old human condition of ours wants to fear. Why? Because sometimes it is difficult to trust God. But He's our Father. Our Abba. Our daddy.
- ) This can be a huge problem for some people because they never had an earthly father they could trust. And for some reason, they think our heavenly Father will let them down too just like their earthly father did.
- ) And Paul is telling us, "*No. You can't go there. Put away your fear. Start living by the Spirit of the Father instead of the spirit of slavery which leads to fear.*" Christian, remember whose you are. And if we do not build this as our foundational identity and mindset, we will never be prepared to act and make wise and godly decisions whenever end times fall upon us.
- ) And if we are going through end times, we have questions. Unfortunately, all these questions lead us to what human emotion? Worry. And worry is synonymous with fear. What does Jesus tell us about worrying? Answer. Don't. Why?

- ) **SLIDE 14.** Because to worry means we are trusting our **OWN** devices before we trust **GOD'S** provisions. We are submitting to the spirit of slavery (human condition) which leads to fear.
- ) In LUKE 12:16-21, Jesus speaks a parable about a rich man who has a bumper crop and needs to build more buildings to store everything. He does. He will eat, drink, and be merry.
- ) **SLIDE 15.** This man is only concerned about himself and not God. Jesus ends that parable by saying this: "*But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.*"
- ) Immediately after this parable, Jesus speaks about worry. You see that man in that parable worried about the wrong things. He worried about himself and his wealth and his future. Jesus tells us not to worry about such things or anything. Do we trust the Great Provider?
- ) **SLIDE 16.** Jesus goes on in those verses to speak about the lilies of the field and feeding the sparrows. He ends that section on worrying with this: "*But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.*"
- ) We have the kingdom. We are children of the kingdom. We are no longer of this world. The kingdom is now our focus. Let the world go away.
- ) And one of the ways the flesh wins over the Spirit, is when we allow it to mold our thoughts about the return of Jesus Christ and what the world will be like when He returns.
- ) **SLIDE 17.** Paul address that in verse 18. Paul is saying this. We may be suffering now. And we may or will be suffering in end times. But let's compare the two. Suffering. Glory. Suffering. Glory. Fear or Father?

- ) Do we want to build up bigger barns because that is our concern, or do we want to seek God and His righteousness and trust Him?
- ) But Mike, if we are going through end times, doesn't the Bible tell me that I won't be able to buy or sell? What if I don't take the C-19 vaccine? And is that vaccine the mark of the beast? Folks, I am not here today to tell you to sell all your belongings, buy 100 acres in Montana, and live off the land.
- ) Because if things get that bad, and people become that evil as the Bible says they will, people will find you and they will take all that is yours regardless if you are in Montana or in Nelson County. And, by the way, cult practices have done that and some of them end up drinking the Kool-Aid.
- ) But Mike those times will not be pleasant. I know. Fear or Father? Make a choice. If we are in end times, I'll trust God and His direction and provision. And quit believing everything you see and hear on the news and on social media. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.
- ) **SLIDE 18**. Today we started with a conclusion. How do we, as Christians, respond if we are going through end times? Will you allow fear to dominate you, or the Father?
- ) There's so much more to say about this. But I think you get the point. We are not Christians only in the good times. It is during the toughest times of persecution that will separate the wheat from the tares. Is your heart ready to trust the Father?
- ) Next week we will start looking at the signs and begin to study the different eschatological views.

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