

3 KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE END

SERIES: END TIMES | WEEK 1 | 4.11.2021

Good to see all of you here. Thanks for coming in this morning. Thanks for making it a priority to just come in here and worship, focus our attention on Jesus.

I was just out there [POINTS TO HIS LEFT] this week, we don't have many offices here so most of our staff works just all over the building, and someone walked into the Café there this week and in a matter of about three minutes told me like a couple successive stories that were just heavy stories in their life, things going on. And this person when they were done talking just goes, "I just wish Jesus would come back soon. I just wish Jesus would come back." And I just looked at this person and I said, "He's gonna." The Bible talks about that as our great hope and we're looking forward to Him returning and we want to know Him, we want to follow Him, we want Him to be the center of our attention here at Calvary. So thank you so much for being part of this conversation.

We're going to start a brand new conversation this morning it's called END TIMES and we're going to dive into Matthew Chapter 24 and Chapter 25 to have this conversation. Many of you know for the last over a year now we've been going through the book of Matthew. We planned over a year ago that we would be in Chapter 24 and Chapter 25 today, and for the next several weeks and here's what we're trying to do – we're trying to listen to and hear what does Jesus say about the end times. And even more specifically and this is what's fascinating, over 2,000 years ago Jesus sits down with His disciples for a final conversation and they have three questions. This is like the final talk that they're gonna have, three questions and the three questions all have to do with when are You coming back, what are the signs of your return, and what's happening with the end of the age thing here? They're basically verbatim the same questions that we ask.

3 Questions

When will these things be?

What will be the sign of your coming?

What will be the sign of the end of the age?

I have people all the time, you know, I oftentimes say to people, like, "What would you like to hear us preach on?" And I get a number of different things, it's fairly random, but in the first list of 1, 2, maybe 3, it's always like, "End times prophecy, pastor, you know, like, you need to bring that." And it's the last thing that Jesus talks about before He leaves this earth.

One of the comments I've heard quite a bit in the last year, it's normally focused sort of in a business-type of a set and that is, "Crisis is an accelerator." And so this last year we entered into a crisis nationally and globally and all of us who have been in the midst of that it has accelerated all sorts of things. It's accelerated technology. It's accelerated our business. It's accelerated dealing with issues. And many of us say it's hard to believe that I'm working from home and I'm busier than ever. Many have said it's weird to see our company having moved forward despite the fact of the massive crisis that we're in.

As your pastor I've been thinking about that phrase because I was thinking about this: Crisis has brought great awakening. One of the things I love about being your pastor over this last year is so many of you in the midst of this crisis it has alerted you, and in a moment you've stepped back and said, "I need to figure out some of these most spiritual things in my life. I have to drill down on that." And I've been talking to our staff and Pastor Rob and he's just been telling me more and more people are coming to groups, but it's more than just a social thing for them, they're coming and going, "Okay, let's talk about this. I gotta figure this out." They're asking the hard questions about

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is God hearing me? Is God listening? What comes next? How should I be planning my life? What should I be focused in on?"

I'm loving talking to a lot of the young people who are saying, "I want to do something in my life that has meaning and purpose. I don't want to just go make money for someone else for no reason. How can I serve Jesus?" And there's this constant thinking among so many people that I'm talking about. I'm seeing that crisis has created a huge awakening in our church. And so I want to take you for the next several weeks to Matthew Chapter 24 and Chapter 25. Here's what I love about this, Jesus is extremely clear about the end times. Oftentimes when you think of prophecy you think, *Well, that's something someone really smart and they're going to unwind it for me.* And then you leave here and you go, "Yeah, I just didn't understand any of that, but I hope he's got it right and I hope that all works out." I want you to know that this is what's so fun about this series that we're going to go into—all of you can understand everything that Jesus said and we don't need to complicate it. We can read it for what it is.

By the way, you're welcome to read ahead. In fact, I would encourage you to just read these two chapters over and over and get to know them over and over. I would encourage you – bring your Bible to church. Now if that's an iPad or a phone that's fine, we're totally cool with that here. We're finding more and more people are going back to paper and pencil and real books because there's something spatially that you can find, so if you have a real Bible and you write in that bring that along. We're going to move into this series more of a teaching series than a "preaching" series, I don't know if you know quite what the difference of that is and I don't know if I do either, but we're just going to take you really carefully through this text and I want to teach it to you over the weeks ahead.

I'll tell you the thing that complicates it is not what Jesus said. What He said here is very easy and clear—it means what it says, He says what He means, He answers all of our questions here. So what Jesus said is the easy part; what is hard is most of us come from backgrounds that include systems on what's going to happen in the end times. If you're like me you have charts that you have looked at and you've been taught and you tried to remember. There are big words that define some of these systems. I'm going to ask you for this series, let's try to see if there's any way we could put that behind you. That book series that you read when you were 15 that kept you awake at night for fear of the end of time. So just to tell you, would you put that behind you for a moment?



I'm going to take this and say yeah, there's some hard stuff in this, there's some scary stuff in this, but here's why this person said out in the lobby, "I just wish Jesus would come back." Here's why—

waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

– TITUS 2:13 (ESV)

for the Christian it is the great hope, it is the thing that we know that day is coming that Jesus has promised, where He's going to come here and He's going to set up His Kingdom here on earth and He's going to reign and rule and He's going to make everything right. There's some hard times before that while He cleans up this

mess, while He gives this world one last chance to repent, but when it is all said and done we enter into a 1,000-year reign of Jesus here on this earth called the Kingdom and it's going to be an amazing time.

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Jesus says all over His Bible He is coming again, He is coming again. And all over the Scripture there is this reminder to us as Christians that's our hope, look forward to it, get excited about it. So I want you to just go after this; I want you to just stop; I want you to go to your Bible and I want you to listen to Jesus. Matthew 25 is Jesus talking about this. He will give many little references that go back to something else that was said somewhere else in our Scripture and we'll mention that, that's why I wish you had a pen and pencil with you so you could just write down some of those Scriptures so you can look at it later. Because what's fascinating about this is how everything that the Scripture says keeps on coming true, and there's a whole lot more that it says that's going to come true, and we know that because of all the stuff that has already come true. So let's get rolling here.

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

– JOHN 14:1-3 (ESV)

When you study the Bible, if you want to understand it really well, you need to understand context. It's one of the very first rules of interpreting Scripture and understanding it. Oftentimes you jump into Scripture we find a hard passage and go [THROWS HIS HANDS UP], "I don't know, that's for smarter people than me to figure out. I don't know." I'm just gonna suggest to you it's not as hard as you think it is, and so we just continue to teach you how to study the Scripture. This is not just for me to study the Scripture, we want you to know your Scripture, we want you to be evaluating it. One of the first ways to understand it is to step back, understand the context around it.

Chapter 23 comes right before Chapter 24, and in Chapter 23 Jesus has His final address, His final comments to the religious leaders. That's what happens in Chapter 23. So let me tell you where we are in history. Remember last week we talked about the cross of Jesus, Jesus dying on the cross. We talked about Passover. We talked about Him raising from the dead. This whole experience that we're going to be talking today takes place in the week prior to that, probably on Wednesday of that week, so that's when Jesus is having this conversation that we're going to share in a moment that's His last conversation with His disciples. Just prior to that conversation He has a last conversation with the religious leaders.

I don't know if you remember but Jesus does not get along real well with the religious leaders because they don't want to follow Him, they don't want to recognize Him as God. And in Chapter 23 seven different times He uses the word *woe* and He says woe to you, woe to you, religious leaders.¹ His last message to them is woe to you. First message was back at The Beatitudes,² blessed are you, happy, blessings are coming to you. Now at the end of His life He's speaking to them and He says woe to you.

Now, when I think of the word *woe* I remember when my kids were little, I'd be doing something in the kitchen or in the house and I would notice something out of the corner of my eye and I go, "Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!" and I'd run and I'd lunge them and grab something out of their hand. You know, you don't want them playing with a big knife or something like that, and whoa, whoa, whoa, and I'd grab that from them. And so for me that's how I picture the word *woe*.

¹ "Woe" – Matthew 23, verses 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29 (ESV): "**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!**" And verse 16: "**Woe to you, blind guides...**"

² See Matthew Chapter 5:3-11 for The Beatitudes.

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I want you to know that is not the definition of this word *woe* here in Chapter 23. When Jesus is speaking to the religious leaders in Chapter 23 He's using *woe* in the terms of judgment, in terms of damnation. He's saying woe to you, judgment and damnation are coming to you type of woe. I don't know about you but that's

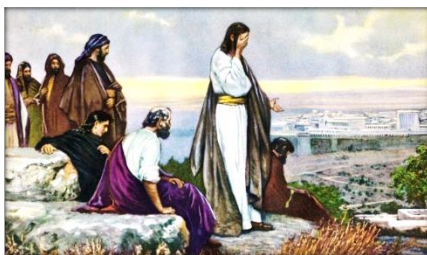


not how we picture Jesus, kind and friendly and nice and loving and hugging. Here's what I want you to know this morning, the attributes of God include His holiness and His righteousness and His justice. And in a moment I'm going to explain even in this almost the same breath it includes His love. When He says *woe* to these people there are a couple words that are repeated.

By the way, that's one way of helping us understand Scripture – words that are repeated over and over. One of the words is the word *blind*, five times the word *blind* is mentioned in Chapter 23³. And what He's saying is you have seen Me; Jesus says you have seen Me, you've seen my works and you've seen my miracles, you've heard my teachings, you've had complete light, you've had complete access, and you have purposely blinded yourself and others to the message that I'm preaching. You intentionally became blind. And Jesus says as a result of that, woe to you damnation and judgment to you as a result of that.

The other word He uses seven different times is the word *hypocrite*. So those early people in theater would have understood this very well in the Greek theater where they would have different masks that they would put on to play a different part. And as they would take that mask off they would be someone else in a moment and that word came to be synonymous with someone is who is playing a part. And Jesus says playing a part, being a hypocrite is something that never fits into my Kingdom. It never has anything to do with what I am about. He wants us to be the real deal inside and out. And these religious leaders they were pretending to be one thing on the outside and they were acting and being and living a totally different thing on the inside. That's why He uses the phrase you're a bunch of whitewashed sepulchers.⁴

So capture this, seven times speaking to these religious leaders for the last time He just pounds these woes over and over. And then as that comes to an end, I believe it's verse 37, He looks at these



Jesus laments over Jerusalem
– Matthew 23:37

people and it's as if tears start flowing down His eyes—and this is what I want you to see—we have a holy, righteous God that has to judge sin. That's why Jesus had to be hung on the cross. If He doesn't have to judge sin, Jesus never has to go to the cross. Sin is a horrific thing in the eyes of God; He can't have it in His presence, it has to be dealt with. And so either Jesus takes on the punishment for your sins or you take on that punishment. These people kept on saying no, we don't want to believe You, Jesus.

We don't believe you're God. We don't believe You've come to forgive. We don't believe You are who You are. We like our religious system, we like our religious ways, be gone.

³ "Blind" – Matthew 23, verses 16, 17, 19, 24, 26

⁴ Matthew 23:27-28 (ESV): "**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.**"

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And Jesus says woe to you and in the same breath He says oh, I wanted you to come to Me. It's as tears start to flow down His eyes, I love you, I want you, and I'm going to read the exact words that He says:

37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings,

— and then He says this:

and you were not willing!"

– MATTHEW 23:37 (ESV)

It's as if right here in this moment to these religious leaders they're walking up to a precipice, there is judgment, there is damnation, there is a literal place called Hell. God does not want you to go there. God does not want to send you there, but He says you were not willing. You get a choice, He doesn't force you, and He says you have received the truth, you've been blinded to it, you have faked your way through it by being a hypocrite. I loved you, I have presented Myself, I have bent over backwards to show my love to you, but you were not willing. And then He begins to explain what's going to happen next and in quick succession He gives two prophecies that you need to hear. These become very key to understanding Chapters 24 and 25. Look at verse 38, it says this:

"See, your house is left to you desolate."

– MATTHEW 23:38 (ESV)

Now again, this is where if you jump in without context you might go, "Huh? Their house?" I mean, I think of my house, my home that I'll go to after I leave here today. When He's talking about this house, they're standing in the temple. In Luke Chapter 19 and verse 46, when Jesus cleanses the temple, He says "My house," the temple, He refers to it as My house shall be a house of prayer.⁵

45 And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, 46 saying to them, "It is written: 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."

– LUKE 19:45-46 (ESV)

You've heard that statement made, we talk about that a lot around here. He goes, ***"My house shall be a house of prayer."*** Here He stands in that place that has been referred to as "My house," God's house. It was the center of religious life. It was the center of national pride. It was part of their identity there at the temple. And on top of that it was known as the place where the presence of God resided. And it was the place when He tries to come clean it up and tries to get them to understand what's really taking place. He says My house. But now He says to these leaders right after He's thrown judgment on them and said I wanted better, but you weren't willing, He says *your* house is going to be left desolate.

There's a couple meanings that go along with this and those meanings begin to roll faster here after. In a few moments Jesus would walk out of that temple not to walk back into it. When He leaves, God Himself will be leaving that temple; when God Himself leaves the presence of a place be very, very scared. When the blessing of God is removed, when the blessing of God is lifted—be very,

⁵ "house" – Matthew 23:38, cross references: Matthew 21:13, Mark 11:17, and Jeremiah 7:11

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very scared. This is why even as David led us in a song, *Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, I want to be pure, I want to be holy, I want to live for God, because I want to live with that blessing on my life.* And Jesus now says to these religious leaders this blessing of God in the temple that you have come to experience, that you've come to love, to know that God is here, momentarily that's going to be lifted. I'm going to be walking out of here and this place is going to be left desolate and it is at risk from here on out.

And they're thinking because they remember back in Daniel Chapter 8 and back in Daniel Chapter 9, you might want to write both of those chapters down, 8:11 and 9:26 of Daniel it foretells what's going to happen in this temple when the blessing of God is removed from it. All of a sudden it is open for destruction, it is open for enemies. Something major is about to happen.

I told you this is Wednesday before Jesus goes to the cross, you'll remember how on that weekend the veil in the temple is rent, ripped, and now as a result of that because of what Jesus did we have access to God, that now He lives within us. Something is major about to change and we have to respond to that. I share with you brothers and sisters in this room just a little aside to this thing, if you want the blessing of God in your life, do things God's way. If you want the blessing of God in your life, invite Him into your life and keep this as a pure place. He will keep on asking you, He will keep reminding you, He will keep on forgiving you, but there comes a given point – when you say, "No. No. No." – that all of a sudden He steps back, He pulls back His blessing as He does here in this situation, and allows what's to happen to happen. He says, "*your house*" what should have been His house, your house will be desolate. And then He makes this comment and this is a future thing, this is something yet to come to this day, this has not happened yet, verse 39, this is a key verse of Chapter 23, Jesus says:

39 "For I tell you, you will not see me again, until

— something future, everything that we're going to be doing here now and all of our motivations are going to be looking forward to this future time when Jesus sets up His Kingdom here on earth and makes things right. He's going to say here you won't see me again, I'm going to walk out of here in a minute, you won't see me again until:

you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

– MATTHEW 23:39 (ESV)

Here's what He's saying: Until you – the Jewish people – recognize who I am and invite Me in, you're not going to see Me again. You've been given the message, you've been given the opportunity, I'm sad your house is going to be desolate. You, the religious leaders, have led all the people to reject Me but there's coming a day when you will lead them to accept Me and when that happens, Romans tells us all of Israel will be saved.⁶ The people of Israel will return to the One that they crucified and they will worship Him and respond to Him. And that day is coming. That's a

It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown

– DANIEL 8:11 (ESV)

And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

– DANIEL 9:26 (ESV)

⁶ "*And in this way all Israel will be saved*" – see Romans 11:26-36

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prophecy and it's going to be key in understanding this. He says blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, that's what they're going to cry out.

Now you may remember a couple weeks ago we said, when they were laying down the palm branches, they were saying "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."⁷ They're going, "Save now! Save now!" They recognize this phrase this comes from Psalms, and from the Psalms that it comes from it's saying very clearly save us, save us, O God:

²⁵ Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.

– PSALMS 118:25-26 (ESV)

And there's this amazing moment when we say, "You are who You say You are. I want You in my life, would You save me?" Many of you, I hope all of you, have come to that place in your life where you go, "I know You died on the cross to take my sins on yourself. I know You were the substitute, save me, O God!" And He says here there's coming a day, those of you who rejected Him will turn and say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord," and then Jesus will return.

Let me take you now—I told you we're going to study Chapters 24 and 25, we just needed to grab a little bit of that context—I want to take you to Chapter 24 and I'd like to just begin to read those first four verses. So if you have your Bibles I'm going to read that:

¹ Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. ² But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

³ As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying,

— now He's having His last final private meeting with the disciples and they asked these three questions I mentioned to you earlier:

"Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" ⁴ And Jesus answered them,

– MATTHEW 24:1-4a (ESV)

Here's the picture: So Jesus walks out of the temple and He says your temple's going to be desolate. They're now picturing what Daniel 8 & 9 talked about, about the temple being desolate, about it being knocked down. They're thinking this is end-of-age talk. The disciples are walking out, their mind is spinning, and as they walk with Jesus, and oftentimes that's when they did their best talking, they point up at the temple and they sort of have that nervous moment. You know those moments where you're just not quite sure what to say and so you just sort of blurt out something. And they're just like, "Look up at the temple, Jesus. Look at the stones, aren't they nice, aren't they big, um, impressive, right?"

⁷ Matthew 21:9 (ESV): *And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"*

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Now understand a couple things. The temple was you needed your Ray-Bans and your Oakleys we're told to look at this. This mammoth structure up there was covered with gold and white marble. Evidently when you looked at you had to put on your glasses to look at it, it was that bright and that glistening. It had been under construction for 50 years. Anyone have a home right now under construction? Anyone doing some remodeling? Does it feel like it's been going on for 50 years? Here's the bad news – it would still be under construction for another 40 years and it'll probably feel like your place is under construction for yet another 40 years. A building that takes that many years to build is a huge deal.



What's even huger about it is that the stones in that, some of them were over 100 tons. They had to come from a quarry far away and be brought in and placed into right place in a time prior to the machinery, equipment, and cranes that we enjoy today. It's mind-boggling. Those who study this cannot understand how those stones got there from that quarry. It was considered one of the architectural wonders of that time. So the disciples walking by it going, "Do You see that? If we just heard You right You're saying something about that becoming desolate and that coming down, that's not a place that that's going to happen to. That is one amazing place."

And Jesus now gets to the Mount of Olives. So if you leave the Temple Mount and you go down through the valley you come up to the other side, up on top of a mountain, that is the Mount of Olives. And Jesus sits down on the Mount of Olives to have this final conversation with the disciples when He says this, He says, "Yeah, you see that place you just asked Me about, not one stone is going to be left upon another that won't be thrown down." Mind-blowing to these guys. This is the center of religious life. This is the center of the nation. This is their identity. This is where the presence of God is. And in their minds if He's saying that, this sets into motion Daniel Chapter 8 and Daniel Chapter 9, the end times. They know their Bible everything is starting to awaken but they don't understand it.

And by the way, I want us to understand that in this room today. While I ask you to take some of your systems and put them aside, all of our systems and all of our boxes and all of the books and novels that you've read about this subject, and all the movies that you watch, it's people trying to make sense to it and put a story around it. There are some things that we will not fully understand and will not fully know all of the story around it until that story happens. And I'm okay with that, but they're standing here and they're scratching their heads going, "Jesus, what is going on?" Some of us right now would say, "Jesus, what is going on? It appears like You ought to come back right now. Are things not bad enough? What do we have to have more?"

You're looking at your relationship, you're looking at your home, you're looking at people that have treated you horrifically, and you're going, "How did sin get worse than that?" You're seeing things that shouldn't be and you're just screaming out, "Jesus, come back! Come back now!" We think it should happen right now, but we don't know the whole story. We don't know how all of this comes together. And yet, Jesus gives clear answers to these things.

And so, by the way, this is fascinating, so He tells you this thing's coming down, they're going, "I can't imagine that something this beautiful and this amazing and this much of a landmark is going to come down. This thing that's the center of our world is going to come down?" He says it's going to come down. 70 A.D. Titus comes in from Rome and attacks Jerusalem. They were in the middle of a civil war at that time internally and so they don't see that they're being surrounded. They're so

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busy fighting each other— isn't that interesting?—that they don't notice what's taking place and these armies surround them? By the time they realize what's going on these armies have surrounded them. The Jewish people put such a pushback to their attack and to their offensive that it goes on and on and on and they can't beat the Jewish people.

But the problem is they're all locked in the city—they don't have food, they don't have supplies, and the people begin to die. It's a gruesome scene, I mean, the explanations by Josephus who Titus, the emperor, wanted to record all of this, he was a Jewish historian who we trust greatly wrote a lot about what was going on at that time. Josephus talked about them even eating their own, they had gotten in that difficult of a situation. And then what ends up happening, Titus said do not, whatever you do, do not destroy the city. Don't burn the city. We just want to take it alive.

And the fighting got so fierce and so hard and the soldiers advancing on Jerusalem were so upset at how this whole thing had gone that they eventually light this thing on fire. And when this is lit on fire the gold in the temple melts and goes down in-between the stones, and now as they come trying to plunder and loot, as advancing armies would always do, they took these huge, long steel rods and they would they would lift these stones off to pull out the gold that was there. And as a result of that these stones tumbled down into the valley so that in 70 A.D. exactly what Jesus said would happen, there wasn't a stone left upon another.

And I repeat this because when we talk about end times, when we talk about Jesus coming and the prophecies of such, I want you to know this isn't some pie in the sky thing where it's like, "Well, I hope all these things come true." Everything the Bible has been saying is going to come true. You go all the way back to Genesis at the beginning when mankind sins and they become separated from God. Genesis Chapter 3:15 gives the first prophecy in Scripture; it tells us of a Savior that is going to come, a Messiah that's going to come. Jesus comes just as He said. When Jesus says that there's not going to be one stone left upon another no one could imagine such a thing, and yet it is the very thing that happens.

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

– GENESIS 3:15 (ESV)

Verse 3, without that knowledge they go okay, since all of this is going on, since Daniel Chapter 8, verse 26, tells us that this is what's going to happen in the end times, and Chapter 9, verse 11, tells us this, you need to answer a few questions for us, Jesus. So I want to read these questions. I want to show you from the context exactly how Jesus is going to answer them. So verse 3 they say this to Him: ***"Tell us, when will these things be...?"***

As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

– MATTHEW 24:3 (ESV)

And if you're looking at a Bible right now, look at verse 2 when Jesus talks about this temple being destroyed, Jesus answered and said, ***"You see all these, do you not?"*** What's He talking about? The temple, that's what they're looking at, that's what they're fixated on. The context gives us the answer. When will *these* things be? When will all this Jerusalem stuff happen? When will all this temple stuff happen? That's the first question they asked.

But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

– MATTHEW 24:2 (ESV)

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The second question – *"what will be the sign of your coming...?"*

Well, if you look up to the end of Chapter 23 where we talked about a moment ago in verse 39, He says, *"... you will not see me again, until"* —they had just heard this—*"you say,"* —sometime in the future, yet to come today, it hasn't happened yet—*"Blessed is he"*—until you invite Jesus into your world. There's coming a day when the Jewish people will invite Jesus in.

"For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

– MATTHEW 23:39 (ESV)

And then there's the final question, it says and what about *"the end of the age?"* And in their time they only saw two ages, this age that we're in now and the age yet to come. And so they're asking how is it, when is it, the age that is yet to come is going to take place? And as we wrap this up, verse 4 says, *"And Jesus answered them."* And I want you to hear this, I want you to be super clear on this is Jesus answers our questions. When it says Jesus answers these three questions, we are going to spend the next bunch of weeks getting the answers to those questions. Those are the questions you want to know—what are the signs, when is this all happening, talk to us about this, Jesus.

Here's what we're going to come to know over the next couple weeks that I just, I'm so excited about and I just want to proclaim it over and over—Jesus is coming again. There's a lot of things that we talk about here when Jesus was working with His disciples, remember they kept on thinking the Kingdom was right now? Kingdom was going to happen right now and He was going to set up His Kingdom right now. They weren't understanding the time frame in it, they weren't getting that, and so they were making a lot of assumptions based on that. But in saying that we may miss the fact that Jesus said over and over I'm coming again which meant that He was going to leave and then He would have to come back. That's what He said here at the end of Chapter 23, you're not going to see Me again, I'm not going to come until you call on Me. He's going away and He's not going to come back until they call upon Him.

I love John Chapter 14, verse 3, it's very familiar – remember? I go to prepare a place and if I go and prepare that place for you, I will come back and I'm going to take you to be with Me so you can be with me forever.

² "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

– JOHN 14:2-3 (ESV)

If you're that person talking to me in the lobby going, "I've had enough! Stop! Make it stop. Jesus, come back." He says I went to prepare a place, I'm coming back.

The ascension, remember last week we said Jesus, when He rose He never died again, He ascended into Heaven? Acts Chapter 1, fantastic passage, they're standing there look at that, there's Jesus ascending up. Can you imagine?

An angel comes and says, "What are you looking at?" What do you think I'm looking at? He says, "Don't be bothered by that. Just the way He went out of here He's coming back again." That's clear in your Scripture—Jesus is coming again.

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

– ACTS 1:9 (ESV)

3 KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE END

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And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

— ACTS 1:10-11 (ESV)

If you're taking notes you might want to write this down; if you're not taking notes, you'll be able to remember it, it's the next to the last verse in the Bible. I'm actually going to turn there because I just absolutely love this verse. Hopefully, I can get there, it's just before the book of maps, Chapter 22, verse 20, says this:

²⁰ *He who testifies to these things says,*

— listen to this, and it's in red letters, it's Jesus speaking the last words of the Scripture —

"Surely I am coming soon."

— and John, the Apostle John writing this, he adds a little narrative to it. So Jesus said, "Surely I am coming soon," and John goes:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

— REVELATION 22:20 (ESV)

And that ought to be the cry and the heartbeat of every child of God. Yes, things are going to get tough between now and that second coming when He comes back, but in the midst of all this we want Him to make all this right. We want justice, right? We want righteousness. We want things to be taken care of. And He says I'm going to do that, here's how I'm going to do it, and John along with all the believers of all age say, "Oh, yes, Jesus, come quickly." That person in the lobby may have thought, *I probably shouldn't have said that, I'm sounding like I'm not very appreciative of what God's given me now, I'm not very engaged in life now, I want a quick exit, I want a easy out.* No, this person said what the saints of all ages have said that even Jesus said, "I come quickly," and John screams out, "O Jesus, come quickly."

And I want to add one more thing before I end because my time oh, I, maybe I'll have two, um, I'll go quick though, I promise. Second Timothy 4:8⁸, listen to these words:

⁸ *Henceforth*

— this is the Apostle Paul —

there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,

— now listen to this—

which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

— 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 (ESV)

Those of us who are going, "Lord Jesus, I cannot wait for You to come back. I want to see You," He says there's going to be a crown for you. I don't know about you, I sat in all those high school

⁸ Transcriber edit/correction: Reference of 2 Timothy 4:18 was cited in the video, it should be verse 8.

3 KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE END

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assemblies when they paraded everyone up to get their awards and to get all their patches for the coats and all, I never got one of them. I'm sitting there going, "Shoot, I probably should have signed up." [LAUGHTER] Too late now, you know, we're four years into this thing, it's all over.

Man, that just sinks into my head. I don't want to be in that spot. I want you to know Jesus, I don't want you to be sitting there going, "I should have listened that morning, I should have done something about that. I should have stepped up. I should have said, *Yes, Jesus, You are my God, You are my King. I believe You died on that cross. I want You in my life. I want You in my home. I want to live my life for You.* I should have signed up." For those who love His appearing, who look forward to seeing Jesus, there is laid up for them a crown of righteousness.

Verse 4 says of Matthew 24 then Jesus answered them and in this chapter He begins to answer these three questions. We're going to answer those three questions over the next bunch of weeks, you've gotta come back next week. And just a little teaser for next week, He starts out next week in verse 4 and He has a lot to say where He says do not be led astray. I want to just say this this morning, there's a lot of people giving a lot of information—YouTube and the web and articles—and it's just coming at us all the time. And what Jesus is going to say is a lot of that stuff is leading us astray. And you're going to be surprised next week that some of the stuff that you think is the radical stuff,



that is the stuff leading you astray, is not all that He's talking about. We have a lot of people that we all in this room would agree are good teachers, and I believe He's going to say they're going to lead you astray. Be very careful. I want to, and I said it a moment ago, Jesus is coming back – listen to Jesus. Stop listening to all these teachers. Stop listening to all of this stuff. Jesus is coming back – listen to Jesus. Read Chapters 24 and 25 this week, read it over and over and over again, and start hearing what Jesus says.

So with the gospel writer at the end of the book of Revelation Jesus says, *"I am coming soon,"* and John responds saying, *"Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"* Could we say that as our out-loud prayer in this room right now [APPLAUSE] as David and his team leads us in this final song? I'm going to say it and then I'm just going to have you say it and I want you to say it as a prayer. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

WATCH OR LISTEN



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