



Today's Sermons

Morning: Hearing
Evening: Jonah

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FOR THE RECORD

Sunday Bible Study	17
Sunday AM Worship	30
Sunday PM Worship	26
Wed. Bible Study	19
Offering	\$1382



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Times of Services:

Sunday
Bible Study:... 10:00am
AM Worship...11:00am
PM Worship:...6:00pm
2nd Sunday:.....1:30pm

Wednesday
Bible Study:.....7:00pm

Radio Program
Sunday:.....7:30am
"Back to the Bible"
AM 580 WSKS
93.5 FM

**We Extend A
Warm & Cordial
Welcome
To All Our
Visitors!**

Are We Living in the Last Days?

by Heath Rogers

We cannot deny the fascination that many have concerning the prospect of living in the "last days." Some people are confident that things like the rapture, the seven years of tribulation and the battle of Armageddon are on the horizon. Current events are routinely interpreted as signs of the end times. The claim is made: "Surely we are living in the Last Days!" Are we? What does the Bible say?

The phrase "last days" or "latter days" is used in a number of passages in both the Old and New Testaments. While its use in the Old Testament began as a general reference to the future, the prophets used the phrase to refer to the highly anticipated time of the Messiah. "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it" (Isaiah 2:2, see also Micah 4:1).

Occurrences of this phrase in the New Testament help us pinpoint exactly what is meant by the "last days."

Continued Inside

The Bible is a collection of evidences showing divine wisdom

Old Testament was written from 1500 to 400 years before Christ

Human wisdom alone could not and would not write these

Hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16)

Bore our sins (Isaiah 53:6)

Prophetic word

Soldiers cast lots for His garments (Psalm 22:18)

Not a bone broken (Psalm 34:20)

Crucified with sinners (Isaiah 53:12)

Rose from the grave (Psalm 16:10)

New Testament is eyewitness testimony

Acts 1:1-2

So we have the prophetic word strongly confirmed. You will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dismal place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 2 Peter 1:19

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In Acts chapter two, the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles at Jerusalem. This event produced a sound like a mighty wind. The noise drew a multitude together who heard the apostles speaking in various languages. When asked what this was, Peter stated that it was a fulfillment of prophecy. “But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh...’” (Acts 2:16-17). Thus Peter affirmed that the events of Pentecost (the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles) ushered in the “last days.”

The book of Hebrews begins with, “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son...” (Hebrews 1:1-2). This passage helps us to understand that the “last days” has reference to a period or dispensation of time.

The use of the phrase “the last days” is not an indication that the Christians of the first century believed that the end was near. Instead, they understood that they were living in the last dispensation of God’s grace. While God had dealt with man through the fathers (the Patriarchal dispensation) and through Moses (the Mosaic dispensation - the Law of Moses), He now dealt with them through His Son (the Gospel or church dispensation). This is called the “last days,” not because the time is short, but because it is the last period or dispensation of this world before eternity.

Are we living in the “last days?” We certainly are, if we are using this phrase in a Scriptural way. We have been living in the “last days” for almost 2,000 years now.

Such an answer will frustrate one who is longing for signs of the Lord’s imminent return. However, the Bible offers no such signs. The apostles asked Jesus about this very thing. “And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matt. 24:3). Jesus responded, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only... But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect”(vs. 36, 43-44).

False teachers like Tim LaHaye and John Hagee have made fortunes pandering to the paranoia caused by the speculation that the end is near. The plain teaching of the Lord is that we are to watch and be ready for we know not the day nor hour that He will return. No man can give a more accurate answer than this! Instead of looking for signs of the Lord’s return, we are to make our lives right with God today by repenting of our sins, obeying the gospel, and serving God faithfully and fruitfully every day.

Salvation is a Process

Matthew H. Allen

Have you ever thought about the number of terms associated with salvation? When we speak of salvation, we are referring to a process by which mankind is delivered from eternal punishment in hell. “Redemption,” “sanctification,” and “justification” all describe different aspects of salvation. In scripture, salvation is described as a process. When a person is convicted by the gospel, realizes their condition outside of Christ, and moves to respond to God’s terms of grace, scripture says they are saved. We might refer to this part of salvation as “deliverance.” When we respond with faith, repentance, confession, and baptism, God delivers us from the grasp and ownership of Satan.

Not only have Christians been delivered or ransomed from their former trespasses and sins, but they continue to be saved while anticipating the final reward of heaven. We are preserved for salvation on the final day as long as we are committed to working out our salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (Philippians 2:12-13). While we live in this life, we are being sanctified. Sanctification is the process of becoming holy, 1 Peter 1:15-16. It is time spent in living for God, being completely dedicated to Him, where we are transformed and renewed into God’s kind of person (Romans 12:1-2). During this time, we do not remain sinless, but upon realization of sinful activity, we have the responsibility to confess and seek forgiveness from God (1 John 1:8-10).

Finally, the scriptures also speak of a future salvation. This is the future deliverance of believers at the end of time. Peter writes about a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:5). This salvation can be viewed as a future deliverance from the wrath of God, which will be executed on the ungodly at the end of the age (1 Thessalonians 1:10). It is also interesting to study how the Holy Spirit uses the word redemption to describe what will happen at the return of Christ. In Romans 8:23, Paul writes: “And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.” What does Paul mean by “the redemption of our body?” At the return of Jesus Christ, our bodies will be freed from their physical limitations. We will put on a spiritual body and become as He is (1 John 3:12). The Christian can trust in God to be raised to his salvation...or life eternal! This hope is through Christ. Paul taught that it is Jesus who was given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory (Eph. 1:14).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Oct 4 – Men’s Business Meeting & Ladies’ Bible Class
- Oct 11 – Song Service after Evening Worship
- Please give support money for Chinese orphans to Jim Winters