

SERIES: The Jesus Journey

In 1972, the son of a presbyterian minister, Marshall Applewhite met Bonnie Nettles. Both had a fascination with Biblical prophecy, but mixed in with new age and ufology.

In 1997 the comet Hale-Bopp made an approach to earth and Applewhite told his followers that hidden in the tail was a spaceship coming to take them to a higher plane of existence.

When authorities found the group, 39 of them had committed a mass suicide, expecting to hitch a ride on the ship.

The bible warns about become fanatically obsessed with signs of the end.

TITLE: The Second Coming of Jesus TEXT: Mark 13:24-37

Context: Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem
His disciples ask 'when' and 'what will be the sign'
He responds with a message to be expecting but not obsessing, enduring and not deceived
But then He gives them what they didn't ask for- an assurance of His second coming

4 main approaches to Biblical Prophecy:

- **The Historicist view- Biblical prophecy is currently unfolding**
- **The Preterist View- Biblical prophecy was future to the original readers, but already fulfilled for us**
- **The Futurist View- Biblical prophecy awaits future fulfillment**
- **The Idealist View- Biblical prophecy has no single fulfillment, only transcendent principles & recurring themes (It's symbolic)**

Which view is correct? The one I hold! Jk. Many faithful Christians have landed on different views (Halla & me)
I want to be careful as we lay out these things, not to lose the forest for the trees- miss the big picture

Jesus' words regarding the end times are intended to incite *preparation* not *calculation*

Mark 13:24-25 "But in those days, after that tribulation: The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not shed its light; ²⁵the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Different views on what Jesus is referring to when He speaks of that tribulation and what these signs mean.

Is it literal? Metaphorical? Spiritual?

Several other passages allude to this same language

Revelation 6:12-17 Then I saw him open the sixth seal. A violent earthquake occurred; the sun turned black like sackcloth made of hair; the entire moon became like blood; ¹³the stars of heaven fell to the earth as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when shaken by a high wind; ¹⁴the sky was split apart like a scroll being rolled up; and every mountain and island was moved from its place. ¹⁵Then the kings of the earth, the nobles, the generals, the rich, the powerful, and every slave and free person hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷because the great day of their wrath has come! And who is able to stand?"

Revelation 7:9,13-17 After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands...

¹³Then one of the elders asked me, "Who are these people in white robes, and where did they come from?"

¹⁴ I said to him, “Sir, you know.” Then he told me: These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ For this reason they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple. The one seated on the throne will shelter them: ¹⁶ They will no longer hunger; they will no longer thirst; the sun will no longer strike them, nor will any scorching heat. ¹⁷ For the Lamb who is at the center of the throne will shepherd them; he will guide them to springs of the waters of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Jesus doesn't go into detail. What is clear is that, whatever view you hold,

1. Jesus will judge
2. God sees the affliction of those who are troubled and He will comfort them
3. This event of His return will be evident

These signs will not be an indication that Jesus *will* come back, but that He *has* returned!

Mark 13:26-27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

²⁷ He will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

Jesus' second coming is unlike the first-

In His 1st coming He came in humility; At His second coming He will return in glory to be worshipped

In His 1st coming He came to seek; At His 2nd coming He returns to gather

In His 1st coming He came to save; At His 2nd coming He returns to judge

In His 1st coming He came to serve; At His 2nd coming he returns to be served

Daniel 7:13-14 I continued watching in the night visions, and suddenly one like a son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him. ¹⁴ He was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that those of every people, nation, and language should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

Never forget that meek and mild Jesus is not all He is. He is a warrior, strong and mighty, and when He returns those who love Him will be exalted, but those who opposed Him & reject him will be shattered.

John 3:16 is followed by John 3:36

Mark 13:28-31 “Learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ In the same way, when you see these things happening, recognize that he is near—at the door. ³⁰ “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things take place.

³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The meaning of ‘this generation/ these things’ is highly debated-

1. The contemporary people in Jesus' who would see the destruction of the temple in AD 70
2. Eschatological (end times) generation alive at the end who witness these things happening together
3. The Jewish people, with the word ‘generation’ meaning ‘ethnicity’
4. The generation of Jesus day who would see the coming of the kingdom (signs are symbolic)

Jesus could have clarified. But I believe His ambiguity is deliberate-

He doesn't intend for His followers to spend the time *deciphering* the second coming, but to be disciples *expecting* the second coming

Why? Because one thing is clear- His second coming is certain

Mark 13:32 “Now concerning that day or hour no one knows—neither the angels in heaven nor the Son—but only the Father.

How could Jesus not know if He is God?

In becoming a man, He did not surrender His deity, but He did, for a time, limited free use of His power, and in this way, in His incarnation, He did not know.

Mark 13:33-37 “Watch! Be alert! For you don’t know when the time is coming.

(There have been many who have tried to decode when He will return, all the while ignoring this verse; Listen, Jesus isn’t going to quiz us on who got the date right! He’s looking for people who were ready-)

³⁴ “It is like a man on a journey, who left his house, gave authority to his servants, gave each one his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to be alert. ³⁵ Therefore be alert, since you don’t know when the master of the house is coming—whether in the evening or at midnight or at the crowing of the rooster or early in the morning. ³⁶ Otherwise, when he comes suddenly he might find you sleeping. ³⁷ And what I say to you, I say to everyone: Be alert!”

In other words, we can’t know when, but we know how- suddenly!

Here’s what Jesus is getting at in His discourse to the disciples and in these 2 parables-

Jesus will return: sovereignly, certainly & suddenly, to redeem, to rule, and to render judgment

We know how the play ends, but none except the Father knows when the curtain will fall

The question then becomes: ***How should we wait?***

Well we have a good example of how NOT to.

In Acts 1, Jesus gives His disciples the mission to be His witnesses and then He is taken up in a cloud.

Acts 1:10-11 While he was going, they were gazing into heaven, and suddenly two men in white clothes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, “Men of Galilee, **why do you stand looking up into heaven?** This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you have seen him going into heaven.”

IOW- why are you standing around if you know He’s coming back!

The question remains, how do we wait?

In a world that is ever-more troubling, with trials that are ever-more difficult, with struggles that are ever-more stronger, with failures that are ever-more piercing...

I want to suggest 8 ways to wait for the return of Jesus-

While we wait for Jesus to return, we should hold:

1. A growing longing for us and for the world to be made right

A dissatisfaction with what is & a looking to what will be; hungering for righteousness

It’s right to look around and mourn and be angered by much of what we see, around us & in us!

2. A growing appreciation for the mercy & grace of the gospel

We ought to be amazed daily, moment by moment with the scandalous gospel that declares guilty sinners to be saints, chosen and a royal priesthood

3. A growing affection for the Lord

Not to follow Him with dragging feet or because we don’t want to go to hell, but to delight in Him

2 Timothy 4:8 There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but to all those who have loved his appearing.

4. A growing hope in suffering, in sickness and even in our sinfulness

Trusting the promises of God more every day

With every problem that comes our way trusting He *will* bring relief @ His 2nd advent

With every sinful failure that brings shame that He *will* free us from the power & presence of sin

5. A growing resilience & endurance against temptation, persecution and suffering

United in Christ we will see the power of His Spirit working IN us, strengthening us day by day

6. A growing awareness of the need of the world and the mission set before us

We need to see the biggest problem to be the problem of sin and the biggest remedy to be the blood of the Lamb- not to hand it off to David Halla, but to have eyes to see people with eyes of mercy

7. A growing alertness so that we won't be deceived

In a world of toxic tolerance, we need to know what the Bible says so that we aren't sympathetic in areas where we were supposed to be standing firm,

In a world of internet prophets, we need to be aware of what Christ has already said so that we aren't believing every tickling word our itching ears love to hear

Ephesians 5:6-7 Let no one deceive you with empty arguments, for God's wrath is coming on the disobedient because of these things. ⁷ Therefore, do not become their partners.

8. A growing eagerness for Christ's return

We should have a positive anticipation, not dreading thinking of what we'll miss out on if Jesus returns now.

An excitement that any day could be the day because we are nearer now than we have ever been

Leila Morris (1912) "What if it were today?"

Jesus is coming to earth again-- What if it were today?

Coming in power and love to reign-- What if it were today?

Coming to claim His chosen Bride, All the redeemed and purified,

Over this whole earth scattered wide-- What if it were today?

Satan's dominion will then be over-- O that it were today!

Sorrow and sighing shall be no more-- O that it were today!

Then shall the dead in Christ arise, Caught up to meet Him in the skies;

When shall these glories meet our eyes? What if it were today?

A helpful image to us who live in waiting, is one of a relay race in which one runner passes the baton to the next.

Those before us have also suffered as the waited for Christ to return. They've toiled and endured.

John the Baptist passed the baton to Jesus' disciples; they passed it on to those after them; eventually it was handed to you and I.

We cannot know if we run the last leg of the race or not.

But it should make no difference how we run our race.

Should Christ return today, or in a thousand years, may He find us expecting Him

CALL UP WORSHIP TEAM

INVITATION:

Should Jesus come first. Or should you die and go to Him first, are you ready?

Hebrews 9:27-28 And just as it is appointed for people to die once—and after this, judgment—²⁸ so also Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Today is the day of salvation for you friend

COMMUNION:

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, and said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

.BULPEN-

We don't know when He will return, but we do know what we should be doing until He does

V33 watch, be alert

Beasley-Murray- *"The elements of creation go into confusion and fear **because** he appears, not as a sign that he is about to do so..."*

What does a life expecting the sureness and alert of the suddenness of the return of Jesus look like?

In the life of the community/ church

In the life of the individual (moms; dads; singles; seniors, etc.)

3 core values: mission motivated/ cultivate community/ deepen devotion

Geddert- *"The disciple is not called to eliminate his ignorance of the timing of the end, he is called to cope with it, and respond to it appropriately"*

So how should we wait? Not looking up (Acts 1) but living out, going out, not giving up

The point is that in the face of impending suffering and uncertainty, Jesus' words inspire faith, endurance and hope and assure the fainthearted

David E Garland- *"When the Son of man comes, he will not quiz people to see whose predictions on the date were accurate. He will want to know what we were doing. Were we proclaiming the gospel to all the nations? Were we enduring suffering faithfully? Were we fulfilling the assigned tasks? Those who have been asleep on the job or buried in the task of trying to map out the end times rather than carrying out the mission will be more than just embarrassed; they will be judged. That is why Jesus warns his disciples to be on their guard."*

Isaiah 45:22 Turn to me and be saved, all **the ends of the earth**. For I am God, and there is no other.

Isaiah 13:9-11 Look, the day of the LORD is coming— cruel, with fury and burning anger— to make the earth a desolation and to destroy its sinners.

¹⁰ Indeed, the stars of the sky and its constellations will not give their light.

The sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shine.

¹¹ I will punish the world for its evil, and wicked people for their iniquities.

I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant and humiliate the insolence of tyrants.

Acts 1:6-11 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ After he had said this, he was taken up as they were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going, they were gazing into heaven, and suddenly two men in white clothes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you have seen him going into heaven."

Ephesians 5:6-15 Let no one deceive you with empty arguments, for God's wrath is coming on the disobedient because of these things. ⁷ Therefore, do not become their partners. ⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light— ⁹ for the fruit of the light consists of all goodness, righteousness, and

truth—¹⁰ testing what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what is done by them in secret. ¹³ Everything exposed by the light is made visible, ¹⁴ for what makes everything visible is light. Therefore it is said: Get up, sleeper, and rise up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. ¹⁵ Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise—¹⁶ making the most of the time, because the days are evil.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him: We ask you, brothers and sisters, ² not to be easily upset or troubled, either by a prophecy or by a message or by a letter supposedly from us, alleging that the day of the Lord has come.

James 5:7-8 Therefore, brothers and sisters, be patient until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth and is patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, because the Lord's coming is near.

2 Peter 3:3-13 Above all, be aware of this: Scoffers will come in the last days scoffing and following their own evil desires, ⁴ saying, "Where is his 'coming' that he promised? Ever since our ancestors fell asleep, all things continue as they have been since the beginning of creation." ⁵ They deliberately overlook this: By the word of God the heavens came into being long ago and the earth was brought about from water and through water. ⁶ Through these the world of that time perished when it was flooded. ⁷ By the same word, the present heavens and earth are stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

⁸ Dear friends, don't overlook this one fact: With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. ⁹ The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief; on that day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved, and the earth and the works on it will be disclosed. ¹¹ Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, it is clear what sort of people you should be in holy conduct and godliness ¹² as you wait for the day of God and hasten its coming. Because of that day, the heavens will be dissolved with fire and the elements will melt with heat. ¹³ But based on his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

Titus 2:11-13 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² instructing us to deny godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way in the present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.