

Thy Kingdom Coming

I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

A. Slide#2 Gilbert & Johnnie Ann - new overseers of Married Couples Ministry.

II. Intro:

A. Slide#3 Title: *Thy Kingdom Coming*

B. Slide#4 Imagine the story of **Cinderella** ending after the **Act** where she enjoyed *the night at the Ball*

1. It would have been a **wonderful dance...but no marriage**; A great **night on the town...but no hope for a groom**; A thrill for the **present... but no future**.

C. Slide#5 Imagine the story of **God** ending after the **Act** where we have “the birth, life, death, resurrection & *ascension* of Jesus, **but then** no talk about a *future*, no *Return of Jesus?*”

1. But we are told about the next **chapter...the next Act**.
2. It's the **one page** left to be turned. **The one story** left to be told.

D. If we leave off His **2nd coming**...*we've had a wonderful dance...but no marriage; A great night on the town...but no hope for our groom; A thrill for the present...but no future.*

E. Slide#6 God has placed w/in us an interest in the future, an awareness that life as we know it is not going to continue indefinitely. Jerry Vines, Mark, pg.249.

1. Slide#7 I don't claim to know how to unravel everything in the end times. As Chesterton said, “It is only the fool who tries to get the **heavens** inside his **head**, & not unnaturally his head bursts. The wise man is content to get his **head** inside the **heavens**.”

III. Slide#8 **OLIVET OVERVIEW (1-4)**

A. Slide#9 How do we study End Times? How do we balance our theology.

B. Some rules:

1. We will take it **literally** (not *allegorically*).
 - a) Slide#10 *When the **literal** makes sense, seek no other sense. When it **doesn't** (i.e. a symbol) we will use **proper rules** of grammar & interpretation.*
 - b) We will interpret it with “*normal, grammatical, historical, ordinary literal sense*” w/in the normal context that it is written.
2. We will **not make it a test** of orthodoxy or spirituality.
3. We will take it in the light of the **rest of scripture**.
4. We will look for the **practical application**. *It wasn't written to satisfy curiosity.*
 - a) 4 x's: **Take heed, watch out, take heed, watch.**
5. We will better understand **present & future** events.

6. Slide#11 We will **not** hold a **narcissistic & self-centered** eschatology. *i.e. anything that happens to America, "it must be the end"*.
 7. Slide#12 We will **not** set dates.
 8. Slide#13 We will not be **obsessed** by it **nor** ignore it.
 9. Slide#14 We will note the **Jewish** atmosphere of the discourse. [Israel/church]
 - a) We have 4 Jewish men, asked a Jewish Rabbi, about a Jewish Temple. He warned them of: false Messiah's, referred to Jewish courts & trials, & talked about fleeing Judea. And remember this *tribulation to come* was called *the time of Jacob's trouble* Jer.30:7.
- C. Slide#15 The **chapter** overview: *The Beginning of the Tribulation* (5-13); *The Middle of the Tribulation* (14-23); *The End of the Tribulation* (24-27) [See vs.8,14(Dan.12:11),24]
1. Note: Rapture not discussed until vs.32-37.
 2. We will just take the **1st section** this morning.
- D. Slide#16,17 WHAT WERE THEY SEEING?
- E. The Stones – Some were 40' long, 12' high, & 18' wide. Reckoned to be 660 tons.
- F. The Buildings – The building covered approximately 1/6th of the city.
1. John 2:20 says Herod's temple was already been under construction **46 years**.
 - a) Completed in 64ad.
 2. It was considered one of the **great wonders** of the Roman World.
 3. Josephus quote, "The exterior of the building wanted nothing that could astound either mind or eye. For, being covered on all sides with massive plates of gold, the sun was no sooner up than it radiated so fiery a flash that persons straining to look at it were compelled to avert their eyes, as from the solar rays. To approaching strangers it appeared from a distance like a snow-clad mountain; for all that was not overlaid with gold was of purest white." Josephus, War, V.5.6.
- G. Slide#18,19 WHAT WERE THEY **NOT** SEEING?
- H. (2) The destruction prophesied.
1. Jesus already gave his assessment of the temple. Jewish leaders had defiled it. Jesus departed from it & left it desolate (the ultimate failure of the Jews...to know God in a personal way).
 2. The Romans destroyed it in **70 ad** led by General Titus.
 - a) According to the Historian Josephus, over a million people were killed, mostly through starvation; nearly 100,000 were taken captive.
- I. (3) Here we get the title of the Olivet discourse. [Note inner circle + 1]

- J. (4) Actually 3 questions we see in Mt. 24:3 **Now 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?”**
1. The questions weren't really being asked **the right way**, because they still had many **political overtones** in their questions.
 - a) e.g. in Acts 1:6 (post Res.) they were still asking, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”
 - b) It is like the boy asking his father, “Daddy, why does **the sun** shine in the **daytime** when we don't need it, & not at **night** when we do?”
 - c) That kind of question is **difficult** to answer, not because the answer is hard, but because the question is so wrong.

IV. Slide#20 **SPIRITUAL DECEPTION (5,6)**

- A. Slide#21 Jesus' aim **wasn't** to *satisfy their curiosity about the future* (or ours) **but to encourage their faith & help them face the challenges that lie ahead.** ***
1. A photographer has the ability to make two objects, 1 in the foreground, one in the background both come into focus.
 - a) That's what Jesus does here: w/**an event in ad 70** & an event **to come...The Tribulation.**
- B. **Take heed** – Watch, keep your eyes open, evaluate, test, try the spirits, bring everything to the test.
1. The predominate note of the age will be one of **deceit & confusion.**
- C. Slide#22 Signs of the **beginning** of the Tribulation (8)
1. Don't get these mixed up w/**signs of His Coming.** These are only the **beg of sorrows.**
- D. **The signs are: Spiritual Deception; International Disruption; Physical Destruction; & Religious Discrimination.**
1. Though these have always been with us, obviously they will **accelerate.**
 2. So under our banner of **Spiritual Deception** we're warned against **False Christ's.**
- E. **FALSE CHRIST'S**
- F. Pages of history are filled w/tragic stories of *False Messiah's, False Prophets, & their enthusiastic disciples.*
1. How easy it is for people to follow popular leaders w/their simple but erroneous solutions for the problems of life.
 2. 1 Jn.2:18 **Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.**
 3. These **anti-Christ's** are not someone who is **against** Christ, **but** who appears **instead of** Christ.

- a) These include **the false Jesus of the cults**; **the false Jesus of the gurus of eastern religion**; **the false Jesus of liberal theologians**.
- b) Their basic message is **anti-Christian** in that they reject **the true Christ**.
- c) Don't be deceived because they use the same terms or names. Their **Christ** is an impostor.

V. Slide#23 INTERNATIONAL DISRUPTION (7,8a)

- A. The Roman Empire had enjoyed a measure of peace for many years...but it wouldn't last.
 - 1. Slide#24 They are about to move from (peace) **Pax Romana** to getting the **ax Romana**.
- B. **Nation against nation...kingdom against kingdom** - speaks of not a specific war or wars, but instead **a general course of the age**. **Continual turmoil among nations**. *Totally sounds like our day*.
- C. As the *American writer, historian, philosopher Will Durant* wrote, "In the last 3,421 years of recorded history only 268 have seen no war."

VI. Slide#25 PHYSICAL DESTRUCTION (8b)

- A. EARTHQUAKES
- B. You want to get away from earthquakes? The best continent to live on would be...*Antarctica*.
 - 1. Although they do have small **icequakes** (ice sheets shift, not land mass).
- C. To stay in America? Then try Florida & North Dakota.
- D. Slide#26 There have always been earthquakes but **in various places** means "*from place to place, everywhere, here & there*" (LKGNT).
 - 1. According to the **US Geological Survey** there are approximately **1,000,000** earthquakes around the world every year. Of these approximately **1/10** are large enough to be **felt by humans**. So on any day there will be on average **275** earthquakes around the world that can be felt.
 - 2. Each year in So Calif we get about **10,000** earthquakes.
- E. Slide#27 FAMINE
- F. **Famine is an extreme scarcity of food**. **1 in 8** in our world live in **chronic undernourishment**.
 - 1. Famine is often left behind in **a wars wake**.
 - 2. Famine is also caused by **man's abuse of the environment**.
 - 3. Famine is also can be **sent by God** as a judgment.
- G. *Famine Redefined* (from *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*) quote pg.8.
- H. Does the world produce enough food to feed everyone?
 - 1. The world produces enough food to feed everyone. World agriculture produces 17 percent more calories per person today than it did 30 years ago, despite a 70

percent population increase. [show *mud cookies* from Hinch market]

- I. **Slide#28 BEGINNING OF SORROWS** (sorrows = Lit. *birth pangs*)
- J. **Birth pangs** of course come suddenly, build gradually, & then lead to terrible sorrow.
 - 1. 1 Thes.5:3,4 **Peace and safety! then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.**
- K. So, **political & geological disruption** will give false prophets & false Christ's great opportunity to deceive people.

VII. Slide#29 **RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION (9-13)**

- A. Not only were the believers to **take heed & avoid deceivers...**but were also to take heed to **themselves**.
 - 1. **Why?** Because they would face increasing **opposition & persecution** from **2 main sources: Official & Personal**.
- B. **OFFICIAL** (9-11)
- C. Persecution would begin in the **local Jewish courts & synagogues**.
- D. But then they would move to the **higher courts**.
 - 1. **Note:** this happened in **the book of Acts**. **Persecution started in the local courts:** Sanhedrin & High Priest (Acts ch's.4,5,7); Herod (12); Magistrates in Philippi (16); Felix (23); Festus (24); King Agrippa (25); **all the way up to Caesar**.
- E. They were to use these at opportunities to witness...**for a testimony to them** (9b).
 - 1. **Slide#30 Persecution would only result in Proclamation**.
 - a) **Pastor Saeed** in Evan Prison in **Iran**, I heard has led over 30 in prison to Christ.
 - b) Our friend **Dan Jones** in **Alamos Mexico** thrown into prison for 9 months? Led men to Christ & now is the only pastor allowed to go in & evangelize.
 - c) Whether **Paul** before Agrippa; **Peter & John** before the Sanhedrin, or **Martin Niemoller** before Hitler...**Persecution results in Proclamation**.
 - 2. **Slide#31** Tertullian to his persecutors, **"We multiply whenever we are mown down by you. The blood of Christians is seed."**
- F. **Of course this last century** saw more Christian persecution & martyr's than in all prior centuries...**put together**.
- G. (10) **Gospel preached to all nations** –
 - 1. **Does this destroy the teaching of the imminent return of Christ?** (i.e. He can't return until...)
 - 2. **If** this is spoken in the midst of **the beginning** of the tribulation, **then by the end** of the tribulation I believe there will be salvations from **every Tribe, Tongue & Nation**.
 - a) Isn't necessary before **the Rapture**. See Rev.7:9,14; 14:6,7

b) Though I don't think that *taking the gospel to all nations* is a **condition** for our Lords return; **but** it is certainly Christ's **commission** to His people. *Will you participate?*

H. **PERSONAL** (12,13)

I. Why would family members rise up against each other?

1. We see this even today in **Honor Killings**.
2. **News:** A man was beheaded and his girlfriend beaten to death in an "honour killing" in northern India after they eloped, police said last Thursday.
3. Tuesday this week: A New York man has been charged with conspiring to commit the '*honor killings*' of a family in Pakistan, the D.O.J. announced today.
4. **Yesterday:** Indian police searched through the burnt remains of a daughter publicly burnt to death by her mother & father for having an affair.

J. In the 1st century, to the Jew the Christian faith was looked upon as **heresy**; **and so** it will be again **in the tribulation**.

1. They will be torn between their loyalty to their **ancient faith & their nation**, & to **their family members**. [Note: *for My name's sake* (13)]

K. **Slide#32** (13) **He who endures to the end shall be saved** –

1. Not as a condition for salvation, for it applies to **witnesses** during the tribulation.
2. During the tribulation true believers will **prove their faith** by their **faithfulness**.

L. Someone once said, **If the shoe fits...wear it**.

1. We can be like Cinderella, **if the gospel fits...wear it; own it, live it, give it, share it**.