

These days it seems like every few months something happens that has people convinced this is it, we're in the end times!

As we look around at the things happening in our world, it's hard to avoid the thought that the end must be getting near.

The Bible says there will be wars and rumors of wars...sounds like today.

The Bible tells us there will be famines and earthquakes...sounds like today.

The Bible tells us there will be increased lawlessness and hate among people... It sounds a lot like the time we're living in. Doesn't it?

So, as we consider the things happening around us, we have to think, "Surely we're getting close."

We're continuing this morning in our "You Ask It" series, and today's question has to do with the End Times.

What is the chronological order of the end of times in simpler terms?

Before we get into it, let's put this issue in proper perspective:

1. Faithful Christians have been arguing about this subject for thousands of years, and we have yet to come to a single, united position around what the end times will look like.
 - a. I'm not going to claim today that after 2,000 years of debate, I finally have the answer. I'm going to do my best to be faithful to what the Bible says.
2. *A person's salvation doesn't depend on what they believe about the order/details of the end times.
 - a. Knowing exactly what the end looks like isn't a salvation issue.
3. *In the end, God and his people win!
 - a. No need for us to approach this topic with fear, if we're God's people.
 - b. For the Christian, nearing the end should be a hope-filled reality.

With all of that in mind, I want to share with you how I'd like to tackle this question.

There is a LOT Scripture says about the End times. (Antichrist, and tribulation, the millennium, the mark of the beast, earthquakes, and wars, cosmic signs, the abomination of desolation, the rapture, judgment, resurrection, restoration of creation, etc.) There's a LOT to talk about, and we're just not going to be able to do justice to all of it in one sermon. So we're going to talk about this question next week too! But, even then we can only cover so much ground.

So, here's what you're not going to get from these next 2 sermons. I'm not going to pull out a dry erase board and diagram what I think the timeline of the last days will look like. (Again people have argued about how all these events will occur and fit together since they were written down!)

The question asked for the chronological order of the end times in *simpler* terms. Those kinds of discussions are anything but simple. They can be downright confusing.

So, my hope in these next 2 messages is not just to fill your mind with knowledge (an order of events, timeline, chart). My hope, and I believe God's desire, as we tackle this question is that as we do draw nearer every day to the end, your heart and mine would be ready, should we, in our lifetime, find ourselves walking through the last days. So, we're not going to get bogged down in speculation about all the intricate details and how they all fit together. We're going to get really simple, in the hope that we can get at the very heart of the last things and what they mean for us today. Sound Good?

If I were to simplify the events of the end times as much as I possibly can, I'd boil it down to 2 things. 2 massive, reality altering events. The first, which we'll talk about this week, is the 2nd coming Jesus. And the second is what we'll talk about next week.

If we'll take an honest look at what Scripture says about the End Times, the conclusion we have to come to is that the CENTRAL aspect of the End Times is the 2nd Coming of Jesus. All the other things we so often talk about in regard to the end times are events that either ANTICIPATE the return of Jesus, or happen as a result of the return and sovereign reign of Jesus. Jesus' 2nd coming is at the center.

- There are approximately 330 verses in the New Testament that directly address Jesus' 2nd coming. (1 in 25 verses)
- The only subject talked about more in the New Testament, than the 2nd coming, is faith.
- 21 times Jesus himself made reference to his return, and he warned his followers to be ready for his return more than 50x.
- The bookends of the book of Revelation say that Jesus is coming soon! (it's in chapter 1 and chapter 22!)
 - This is pretty important! Wouldn't you say?

Yet, people so often get distracted speculating about things that are open for debate (i.e. when the Antichrist will come, and who he'll be, and whether Christians will be part of the tribulation, and interpreting this or that symbol in Revelation, and where we are on the prophetic timeline, etc)...And we can easily lose sight of what we *KNOW for certain* about the last days!

Jesus is coming back!

Jesus said he was.

[John 14:3](#) “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.”

The angels said he was coming back.

[Acts 1:11](#) “11 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.””

Additionally, the apostles were awaiting his return.

[Philippians 3:20](#) “20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,”

[Titus 2:13](#) “13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,”

CHURCH! Jesus is coming back! Amen? As we think about the End Times, THAT REALITY should be at the center of our attention. It's what we're waiting for, it's what we're anticipating, it's where our hope lies! Things will not always be as they are now because...Jesus is coming back!

But, when? How? Tell me more! What's this going to be like? As we look at Scripture, there are a few things that God's Word emphasizes about the 2nd coming of Jesus that we need to be aware of.

1st: He's coming soon!

[Revelation 22:7](#) ... Jesus is coming soon to bless those who obey him.

[Revelation 22:12](#) ... Jesus is coming soon to repay people for how they've lived...to punish evil and reward righteousness.

[Revelation 22:20](#)

As Jesus gave John his revelation, he made it crystal clear! “I am coming soon.” That was almost 2,000 years ago! If his return was soon back then, what do you think it is now! He's coming back very soon church!

But, so often we go about our lives like we've got all the time in the world. We don't often acknowledge the fact that this could happen in our lifetime! I don't know if it will, but I do know that after Jesus ascended into heaven, his followers in the earliest days of the church lived like Jesus would return in their lifetime! If they lived that way 2,000 years ago, church we need to do the same!

He's coming back soon! And we need to be ready.

Are you ready for the day when Jesus returns (or calls you home)? It's coming soon! We're closer right now than anyone in history has ever been to the return of Jesus!

Don't procrastinate. Don't put off getting right with Jesus if you're not. Don't put off dealing with sin in your life, don't put off repentance. Don't put off truly following Jesus. He's coming and he's coming soon.

2nd: He's coming suddenly.

[Matthew 24:36-39](#)

The 2nd coming of Jesus is going to happen like the flood did back in Genesis. It'll happen on a day no one expects. When the flood happened, they didn't have meteorologists giving them a heads up, interrupting their regular programming to warn them of the coming flood! Their weather app didn't notify them of a flood warning for their area! No, they were just going about their lives. They were eating and drinking. People were getting married and starting their lives together. People were doing business deals, having kids, just going about life as usual...And then it started to rain, and it didn't stop until the waters covered the earth and swept away everyone but Noah and his family. It came suddenly.

From the mouth of Jesus himself, that's how it'll be when He returns. He'll come suddenly, without warning. People will be going about their lives, business as usual...and in the twinkling of an eye, he'll be back! No one knows the day or hour, but we know that when he comes, he'll come suddenly.

Church, if he's coming soon and he's coming suddenly...then we need to make sure we're ready **now**. In fact, that's what Jesus said in [Matthew 24:44](#) "Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

3rd: He's coming as the sovereign king of the world.

[Revelation 19:11-16](#)

When Jesus came to the Earth the 1st time, he came in humility and meekness. He came as the lowly baby Jesus, lying in a manger. He came as the Sacrificial Lamb of God who came to pay for the sins of the world.

The 2nd coming will be a different story: Clouds, power, glory, majesty, leading heaven's armies on a white horse, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Just before Jesus ascended to the Father, he said to his followers, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." When he comes back, he's going to show how true that is. He's coming back as the sovereign ruler of the universe with ALL power and ALL authority in heaven and on earth! And he's going to use it to rule the world, to bring judgement against sin, and to give the Devil what he's had coming since he fell from heaven.

King Jesus is coming soon and he's coming suddenly, a king like none the world has ever seen! All the kings, pharaohs, monarchs, emperors, presidents, chiefs, and rulers throughout history put together wouldn't come close to the power and the glory and the majesty of King Jesus!

Scripture tells us that before him "every knee [will] bow in heaven, and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." ([Phil 2:10-11](#))

Yes, every knee will bow, but it seems in Scripture that things will go a lot better for those whose knee is bowed to him before he comes back. He's on the throne now, church. You don't have to wait until he returns to surrender. If you haven't yet, surrender to him today.

There's a lot about the end times we could speculate about...But one thing we know for certain.

[Jesus is coming back!](#)

- He's coming soon. He's coming suddenly. And he's coming as the sovereign King of this world!

Are you ready for that day? If Jesus would come back tomorrow, are you ready? Have you trusted in him? Have you made him your Lord and Savior? Have you turned from your sin and decided to live your life following Jesus, surrendered to your king?

I mentioned in passing about Jesus' first coming...Share the Gospel.

If you've trusted in him, then his return will be a blessing beyond belief. You'll be with him forever! And if we're ready for the day he returns, then I'm convinced we're ready for the days that lead up to his return too.

There are so many uncertainties and unknowns about the End times, so many things that are a little blurry in Scripture. And we sometimes find ourselves thinking that what we need is clarity. We need someone to chart out the events of the last days. But, if we'll recognize that the central reality of the end times is the return of Jesus, we realize what we really need. It's not a graphic, not a chart, not a timeline. We need Jesus, period. If we're right with him, then one day the events of the end times will be a distant memory.

- So, be encouraged, and Be Ready!
- Be on Mission! There are people in your life who aren't ready for Jesus' return. And I believe you and I are in their lives to help them get there.