

03/03/24 Message

Part of The End... then what

March 2, 2024

Message: Not Really

Series: The End

This series is focused on prophecy, the last days, end times, and beyond. Many people are confused by prophecy and are fearful of the unknown. Truth is, God gives us knowledge of the future. He foretells it throughout His living word known as the Bible. Be part of this series and learn more about what lies ahead!

- We know about the end times and beyond through PROPHECY

2Peter 1:21 (CSB)

...no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Not Really the End

We're talking about the end... but not really. It's kind of like God talking about Genesis 1 and saying, in the beginning... because it wasn't really the beginning. It was a beginning, but it wasn't the beginning. How do I know? Because in the grand scheme of God's design, God has always been in existence. Try to wrap your human mind around that concept and it'll make you question things. If it were easy, it wouldn't require faith - but it's not easy and it does require faith! Not just a little... but a lot of faith! We have to accept that God has always been, and God will always be, whether we understand it or not... and if I guessed 100%, I'd be right... 100% of us simply don't understand it... that brings about the next question... do you accept it? Because if you don't accept it, it means your faith bucket is empty - and we have nowhere to go from here. It means life started in Genesis 1 - God didn't exist at any point before - which also

means He's not the Creator of the world and everything in it. It means life will end when you die. There's nowhere to go from here!

—Pastor Chad

- Without faith, you're led to believe NOTHING and you're led to go NOWHERE
- The study of the end-times is ESCHATOLOGY

Fun Facts:

- Second longest recorded teaching is the Olivet Discourse
- Jesus was teaching on the end-times
- Every NT book except **Philemon** and **3 John** contain prophecy about the end-times
- Matthew has 81 prophecies in 278 verses, 26% of the book
- Revelation has 56 prophecies in 256 verses, 63% of the book

Major Views of Prophecy

- Idealist
 - Prophecy is figurative, not literal
 - Revelation is a symbolic presentation of the battle between good and evil
- Preterist
 - All events of Revelation have already happened in the first century
- Historicist
 - Associates symbols with historical persons, nations, or events to interpret prophecy
 - Revelation is not past or future, it's a symbolic view of church history from first century to the end of time
- Futurist
 - Literal interpretation of prophecy
 - "If it ain't happened, then it will happen" —Pastor Chad

The "view" test:

- Does it square with Scripture
- Is it consistent with God's character and history
- Does it allow for the same interpretation method to be used from Genesis to Revelation

Summed up... take it back to the Bible, not cherry-picking passages, but cover to cover - front to back - does it measure up against God's Word?

—Pastor Chad

Most Important Question

- Does salvation depend on what view we hold

To answer this, I have to answer a broader question. Why do our beliefs separate instead of unite? The simple truth is simple... we have to know what we believe, know what we don't believe, and without doubt, know the difference.

—Pastor Chad

- What we believe is our DOCTRINE

2 Timothy 4:3 (NIV)

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

- First order
 - Non-negotiables of our faith
 - Example: How we're saved (only by grace through faith in Jesus)
- Second order
 - Important but they don't separate believers from unbelievers
 - They do separate denominations from one another
 - Example: Infant baptism
- Third order
 - Lower level beliefs that shouldn't prevent fellowship
 - Example: Preferred worship music; Preferred Bible translation
 - ...and ESCHATOLOGY

Eschatology is one of those issues that divide us, but shouldn't. Some say it's a second order issue but really it's probably more of a third order issue. It doesn't affect my salvation, my relationship with Jesus, and shouldn't

*affect my relationship with His church, or my brothers
and sisters in Christ.*

—Pastor Chad

Principles for studying Eschatology

- It's okay for us to respectfully DISAGREE on non-first order doctrines
- It's NOT okay for us to remain UNSURE on end-times prophecy or eschatology

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NLT)

13 And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope.

14 For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.

15 We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died.

16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the Christians who have died will rise from their graves.

17 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.

18 So encourage each other with these words.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 (NLT)

1 Now, dear brothers and sisters, let us clarify some things about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and how we will be gathered to meet him.

2 Don't be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say that the day of the Lord has already begun. Don't believe them, even if they claim to have had a spiritual vision, a revelation, or a letter supposedly from us.

3 Don't be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against God and the man of lawlessness is

revealed—the one who brings destruction.

4 He will exalt himself and defy everything that people call god and every object of worship. He will even sit in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God.

- Interpreting the Bible literally doesn't eliminate all the MYSTERY in prophecy

God hasn't revealed everything to us, and He doesn't have to... He's God. He's sovereign - the supreme power and authority... He's got this! And because He's got this, it means I don't have to! I don't need to. Because if I did, it wouldn't require faith!

—Pastor Chad

- It really does matter what you believe, because what you believe IMPACTS who you are right now!

Your beliefs affect your perspective. Your beliefs affect your attitude. Your beliefs affect your behavior. Your beliefs affect who you are, your direction, your actions... right now!

—Pastor Chad

Titus 2:11-15 (NLT)

11 For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.

12 And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God,

13 while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed.

14 He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.

15 You must teach these things and encourage the believers to do them. You have the authority to correct them when necessary, so don't let anyone disregard what you say.

2 Peter 3:14 (NLT)

And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen,

make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight.

1 John 3:7-10 (NLT)

7 Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous.

8 But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil.

9 Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God.

10 So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.

It really does matter what you believe because your beliefs affect who you are right now.

Who are you... right now?