

Christ in Prophecy

Interview 60: *And Then The End Will Come* with Doug Cobb

© 2022 Lamb & Lion Ministries. All Rights Reserved.

For a video of this show, please visit <http://www.lamblion.com>.

Tim Moore: Well, I am back in Louisville, Kentucky and grateful once again to the wonderful folks at Southeast Christian Church for letting me connect again with Doug Cobb. In recent weeks we got together to discuss the book of Daniel as part of our Jesus in the Old Testament series, but I was so fascinated by his book, “And Then the End Will Come,” that I wanted to sit down with him again. And Doug, I’m glad we were able to do so for this episode for Christ in Prophecy.

Doug Cobb: Thank you for having me back, it is great to be back with you.

Tim Moore: Well, again your book was just fascinating to me, but I want to remind our viewers of your own role and background. You are the managing partner of The Finishing Fund, a ministry that seeks to make disciples of every nation, and in every corner of the world by the end of this year 2022. And your book demonstrates that you are also a gifted author who brings clarity, and encouragement regarding the Rapture of the Church. So, I’ll just ask: What motivated you to write this book? And why now?

Doug Cobb: Well, my journey begins on this by getting involved with an organization called Finishing the Task, which is a network of ministries kind of gathered around this idea that we can complete the Great Commission task in this generation. So I got involved as a volunteer with that and began to give some towards it.

But it was along the way that I discovered the amazing promise of Matthew 24:14 where Jesus said, “This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Linking the completion of the Great Commission to the return of Christ. And I love checking things off to-do lists so finishing is fun, but finishing and opening the door to seeing Jesus, oh, my gosh, how powerful is that. And so, really it was through that I began a process of studying for myself: Are there other clues in the Scripture that might indicate that we are living in the days of Jesus’ return? Not trying to predict the specific time, but the general season. And the result of that, are these nine other clues, these ten clues in total, and really I thought that was just for my own enlightenment. I enjoyed it. And one day I was sitting at my desk, July of 2020 and I heard God say, you’ve got to write this down. And I don’t always do what God tells me to do, but in this case I did, and the result is the book.

Tim Moore: Well, I’m glad you did. I’m glad you were obedient to that urging on your heart. I think the Lord had great vision for what you would produce pointing people to His Son’s soon return. You know many scoffers today, and throughout the ages have dismissed the apocalyptic prophesies of the Bible as too fantastic to believe. And other Christians, even now, say, well, it is just too complex to understand I don’t even try. But I like to cite Dr. Henry Morris of the Institute for Creation Research and his wonderful response to both those criticisms, he said, “Even regarding Revelation it is not hard to understand, it is hard to believe, but if you will believe it,” in other words if you will take the Lord at His word then you will understand. How do you approach the study and the subject of Bible prophecy?

Doug Cobb: Well, it begins with understanding that Jesus is coming back. He specifically promised that He would come back. The Old Testament prophesied that He would come back, and most of the other New Testament writers promised that He would come back. So, the beginning place is in agreement that He is coming back. But not only does it say that He will, but it also offers us hints and clues that help us to understand what will happen in the interval, and what the time of His return will be like. And I think many of those things are very obvious and evident in the Scriptures, they are not oblique or difficult to understand, not opaque. And you know what I try to do in the book is just sort of open up some of those things and take a look at them to see if they apply.

Tim Moore: Well, obviously we know that in this world we will have trouble but Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled." So, even though we are persecuted, prosecuted and set upon by every direction, we should not be troubled in our spirit. I am absolutely convinced, though, that Satan does not want faithful Christians to study Bible prophecy in particular, because of what? What is his motivation for wanting to keep us afraid of God's prophetic Word, or at least dismissive of its relevance to our lives?

Doug Cobb: Well, I think he hates us, and he wants anything that is not good for us. He would much rather that we spend our time being discouraged, frightened, off balance, and it is easy to be those things today. There are plenty of things happening in the world that are very discouraging, you know very troubling. He would hate for us to have our eyes fixed on the invisible Kingdom of God that is coming because that is where we find stability and peace, and confidence, right. And so, I think his main reason is that he wants us all to be less than we could be because he wants us to be afraid and discouraged.

Tim Moore: So, almost like Peter if we take our eyes off the Author and Perfector of our faith, let alone He who is coming soon, and look at the wind and the waves around us we begin to sink, as opposed to staying above them with our eyes focused on Jesus. Well, Doug you have a wonderful gift of clarifying the complex.

Doug Cobb: Thank you.

Tim Moore: You do. And in part one of your book you focus on unveiling the promise. What do you mean by that?

Doug Cobb: Well, I mean the main idea is what we just said, the promise that Jesus is coming back. That He has promised us that He will. He told the disciples if that wasn't true what I've told you, that I am going to come back, I won't lie to you about it, right? And so, we can have high confidence that He is coming back. But another part of that is the idea that we can have some idea about when that will be. There is a tension in the Scriptures between trying to pin that down too preciously, which the Scriptures warn us not to do, but at the same time giving us lots of hints and clues about the things that will be happening around the time of the return that give us a general sense. In fact, you can find that tension in Matthew 24 within a few verses of the time that Jesus says, "Only the Father knows." He also says, "Even so when you see these things you will know that it is near." So, you see that tension right there in that one talk. And so, in that section of the book I also just sort of look at the arguments on the pro and con side, how much can we know? Where does the line exist? And the conclusion I reach is that we can have some pretty high confidence that we are living in the season of His return.

Tim Moore: I certainly agree. You know once you establish the foundational promise that Jesus is coming again, and not just you, the Bible establishes it, but you draw it out in your wonderful writing. You explore ten clues that reveal just what you are talking about, that we are living in the season of the Lord's return. The first of those that you sum up in the title of your book is, "And Then the End Will Come." What do you mean by that particular clue?

Doug Cobb: Well, that relates to that promise in Matthew chapter 24. So, students of prophecy are familiar with chapter 24 of Matthew, it is probably the most important chapter about what is to come. That chapter begins with Jesus' disciples asking Him a question, actually two, but the main one for now we'll focus on is: What will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age? And Jesus gives them a lot of answers to that, He says, wars and rumors of wars, false christs, apostasy, persecution, all of those things are worthy to look at. But in verse 14 He says, "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come." In other words, the way I read that, Jesus linked His return to the completion of this great commission task that He has given us to do. And what is exciting is that we are getting really, really close to seeing that completed. You know, the finish line is within sight. It's like we are running that final lap of a very long race.

Tim Moore: So, you are an expert in this realm, and that is what the Finishing Fund is all about.

Doug Cobb: Yes.

Tim Moore: How close are we? I mean how many people groups, or nations, tribes, tongues, are there that we can delineate and how many are remaining at this point?

Doug Cobb: Think about the Great Commission task as being summarized in the three "B's." So, a believer in every people group. The Bible in every language. And a body of Christ, a church in every place, every village, every neighborhood. And so, I think that we are within a year or two of the first B finish line, where there will be a disciples of Jesus in everyone of the 12,000 plus biblical nations on the face of the earth, that one is the closets. But the really good guys who are working on Bible translation have set 2033 as their goal to have a Bible in every language on earth, all 7,000 languages. And the people who are planting churches are planting millions of them a year, and have various goals, but beginning in 2025, and as late as 2023 to see that church in every place going across. So, whichever one of those three you want to pick, I think we are within 10 years of seeing them completed. And if you want to pick the one I'm working on, the first one, I think we may be just a year or two away from seeing that fulfillment.

Tim Moore: Yeah, I think that is such an encouragement because many Christians think, well we've been sharing the Gospel as a church, collectively for 2,000 years and it's like the finish line that never arrives, and yet we are on the brink of crossing that finish line, so to speak, and not to our credit, it is to the Lord's credit. But 2,000 years of labor and many who have labored far more dangerously than many of us, but we can witness this virtually in most of our lifetimes watching today, very soon.

Doug Cobb: We stand on the shoulders of giants. We read about some of them in the book of Acts, the people who started this work. But some of them are in our history books, the heroes of the 19th Century who went to places like India, China, Burma with the Gospel. Some of those folks worked very hard, in very tough conditions for only a tiny bit of fruit, you know a whole lifetime and only a church or two. We often see today the first believers in places within the first

few days of being there. And that is not because we are better than those people were. It's not because our techniques are more popular. It's because the Holy Spirit has been there working to prepare hearts and minds. I sense that He is urgent to see this work done, because He knows the time is really short.

Tim Moore: I think that even in parts of the world today where there is not as big a presence of evangelists the Lord is working through visions, and people are seeing Christ come to them in visions, and putting their faith in Him. I always think of Jim Elliot who didn't bear any fruit, but his life was a testimony, and then his wife went to the same tribe that murdered her husband and most of the entire tribe was converted. What a powerful testimony! Well, you track other clues. And the clues that you mention in your book also follow on with the messages we've been proclaiming at Lamb & Lion Ministries for many years. What are some of those other clues that indicate that we are toward the end of God's prophetic timeline.

Doug Cobb: An important one would be the reestablishment of the nation of Israel. I believe Jesus promised in Matthew 24 that the generation that witnessed that event in history would also be alive to witness His return. We can't know exactly what that means, how many years that describes, I think it is dangerous to try to predict that. But we are now 70 some years post that establishment, or if you take Jerusalem as the key we are still a number of years past that. And so, we are living in a time when that definition of a generation is coming to be, so that would be one. Another one that I really like is from Hosea chapter 5 and chapter 6. In chapter 5 God is speaking to the Israelites, the Jews and he says, that I am going to tear you to pieces and go away, I'll return to my lair. I will withdraw from you. And I think that is a reference to probably what happened in 70 AD when God sort of broke off His relationship with Israel, temporarily, and turned His attention to the growing Church around the world. But then in Hosea 6 He promises after two days, I will return to you and on the third day I will live with you. And I think from a prophecy point of view those two days represent, probably a period of 2,000 years, and that third day, another 1,000 year period, the Millennium. What is interesting is that we are getting very, very close to the 2,000 year anniversary of the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. So, if that represents the departure, we are very close. It may be 70 AD, so it may be a little further out. But that is kind of a cool one that you don't hear about talked about very much, but I think points again to kind of our day.

Tim Moore: It really makes your heart thrill with the proximity of His imminent return.

Doug Cobb: Another clue that I really like, actually there are several of them in Daniel chapter 12, that chapter is about the times of the end, it is the most important biblical source for the idea of the resurrection. We find the Great Tribulation is in that chapter in the first couple of verses. In verse 4 Daniel is given the vision that at the time of the end human travel, and human knowledge will increase. It says, "Knowledge will increase and people will move to and fro." And it's easy to kind of just skip past that and go on, you know, what does that mean? But what it means is that it is a perfect description of the days that we live in. We move about the planet like no one in history has. Like no one could have even imagined even 150 years ago. I like to say that when the first missionaries went to India they got on a boat, it took them five months to get there from England. The last time I went there I got on a plane in Newark at about 9:30 at night and was in Delhi at 9:30 the next night. So, not even a whole day to get there. We take these things for granted. But the Bible says that will be a characteristic of the time of Jesus' return. Also, you know the explosion of knowledge, and not just the availability of knowledge, but the accessibility of it. I sometime jokingly will tell my kids about when I was in college in the dark

ages and you needed an article or a book and you had to get it physically delivered to you from another library. And the idea of the internet that makes basically everything you could ever want to know instantly available to you, again a very I think direct fulfillment of that prediction about what the time of Jesus' return would be like.

Tim Moore: I also give other examples for instance, the average Sunday edition of the New York Times contains more information on a weekly basis than most people were exposed to in their entire lifetime, just 100-200 years ago. Now, there were some that had collections of books, but they were rare, and so most people just weren't exposed to that volume. And as far as understanding we can look to Revelation chapter 11 when for the last 2,000 years Christians have read that these two witnesses would appear in Jerusalem, they would be killed, and the whole world would look on. And they had to imagine, well, how can that be? Is it a supernatural vision? Does the Lord allow everyone to see some kind of miracle? Well, we take for granted the fulfillment of that very prophecy just in the last several generations with the advent of television and satellite communications. We watch things happening instantaneously around the world today and take it for granted.

Doug Cobb: And don't forget smartphones.

Tim Moore: And smartphones, exactly.

Doug Cobb: Which they say, you know there are more phones in the world than there are people in the world already. And I've been to some pretty remote places and seen people interacting with their phones. So, it is a ubiquitous technology.

Tim Moore: It is. When I was in high school and even college they were still selling encyclopedias, you know World Book or Encyclopedia Britannica. I don't think they sell those anymore, or no one buys them because it is all available to you.

Doug Cobb: Probably on as a keepsake, right or novelty.

Tim Moore: Yeah, paperweight. Exactly right. Well, so what other signs, that we've talked about, some of the various signs, what signs would you say point to the Lord's soon return that we perhaps haven't already touched on?

Doug Cobb: Sadly, the Bible in several places talks about what the condition of the Church is going to be like in the time of Jesus' return. We understand that the culture is going to be in decline, that's maybe not hard to imagine. But what is sad is that the Bible seems to predict that will infect the Church. And again, sadly I think we see evidence of that today, that churches are losing their grip on doctrine, that they are embracing positions that really are not biblical. And just with COVID we've seen in our church, like many, there are a bunch of people who have kind of just disappeared, some of them are maybe watching on the internet, or maybe some of them have just given up on that. So, all of these, sadly are things that the Bible predicts will be part of the time of Jesus' return.

Tim Moore: So, the warning for those of us who want to be faithful is we have to determine, and persevere by maintaining our commitment to the Lord, and not drifting away. And as the song says, and I know this personally, prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the Lord I love. So, I have to determine day by day, almost hour by hour, as for me and my house, and sometimes I can only speak for me, I will serve the Lord. And that's a decision we have to make each and every day, not one and done years, and years ago, to stay committed to Him.

Doug Cobb: My wife likes to say, “The Holy Spirit is really smart.” And that’s really true. And you know there is the guide He gives us in Hebrews chapter 10 where He says, “We should not forsake meeting together.” And then he adds that little tag on it, right? Where he says, “and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” And I always thought that was kind of well, this instruction applies to everybody in the Church Age, this never goes out of importance. But I’ve really begun to think that was delivered specifically to our generation.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Doug Cobb: Where we have the ability to do church in a lot of ways that don’t require us to come together, and the Spirit is saying, no, you really need to be together physically with one another, to stand firm and to practice all those one anothers that the Scripture talks about. You know it is easy to bear with somebody who is not in the same room with you. Get close to people that’s when forgiveness and those other things become important.

Tim Moore: And that passage in Hebrews 10:23-25 talks about holding fast. I like the picture even of William Wallace in hold, and stand firm. “Hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering.” And then the last thing, “...and all the more as you see the day.” And I’ve heard people say, “Well, I don’t really need that I’m okay.” And my answer is, “Yeah, but what about the brother or sister in Christ who needs you? Are you withholding that encouragement that they need?” You may say, I’m okay. And I could argue with you where, no there are no lone wolf Christians outlined in Scripture, we are part of the body of Christ. But you are neglecting a brother or sister who is in need just of your encouragement, let alone your fellowship if you withdraw yourself from the body of Christ.

Doug Cobb: Yes. The metaphors the Bible uses for the Church are metaphors of physical things, the body, a building, these are integrated things, these are not virtual things. And I think that even though we celebrate these technologies and they can be used for lots of amazing things, that the importance of that physical connectiveness with brothers and sisters so that you can encourage one another, help one another when the time is there, learn these skills that we need to learn to be more like Jesus, that really requires being together.

Tim Moore: It certainly does. You know looking around the world even this year, the world seems to be falling apart at the seams. Again, especially this year, or the last couple of years, and many people wonder how much worse it can get? We are not prophets of doom, or gloom, but we have longed said it will get worse before the Lord returns. So, where is the hope in that message?

Doug Cobb: Yeah, the Bible says that the days of Jesus return will be like the days of Noah, the days of Lot, which are notable in the Scriptures for being two periods of particular evil in the world. So, I think we would expect to see increasing difficulty. Sadly, it also talks about how those things will infect the church, and that there will be apostasy and a lot of people will fall away during those days, and that is a very sad prophecy. The good news is that those things are the signs of something really great that is coming, and they won’t last for very long. The promises that those things will be right before He returns, but when He returns to establish His Kingdom, oh my goodness, what a great day that is going to be.

Tim Moore: So, we should persevere. In the language of Revelation we should be overcomers even of some of that temptation to be gloomy in our outlook.

Doug Cobb: It's interesting how the Bible instructs us as believers to stand firm. And I think in America, generally we've not had to do a lot of standing firm. Maybe in our personal lives against personal temptation, but against the culture it's been pretty easy, but I think we are going to learn how to do that probably before He comes back.

Tim Moore: I do too. And on that note I love to read the biographies and the accounts of saints and martyrs from the past because they were so sure of their security in Christ that they willingly and even joyfully marched to gallows, and stakes and horrible death. And in recent years I've heard about the holy pride, quite frankly, felt by Coptic Christians in Egypt when they testified to the 20 young men who were marched out on a beach by terrorists from ISIS and beheaded. And actually, when they were marched out only 19 of them had professed faith in Christ, there was a 20th young man, but as he watched the other 19 refuse to recant their witness for Christ he was so impressed that before he was killed he said, "I also trust in this Jesus that they have testified to." And so, he became a believer right as he was killed.

Doug Cobb: Kind of like the thief on the cross, right there at that moment.

Tim Moore: Kind of like the thief on the cross. So, how can we steal ourselves for that kind of tough faith regardless of our circumstances?

Doug Cobb: You know I think it really helps to have an understanding of how the Bible says these events will unfold, and what is coming. As difficult as times may get, and many Christians of the world are already facing these difficult things, just like the story you just told, even if they get hard for us here in America the promises that God has made to us about what comes next after that are so much more glorious than the hard things that we are going to have to face. So, we want to do what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4 we want to fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.

Tim Moore: Amen. Amen.

Doug Cobb: The things that are coming, because those he says are the things that are really permanent, eternal, not the hard things that we face today.

Tim Moore: The last chapter of your book focuses on what we can expect in Heaven, give us a glimpse anyway. But the chapter prior to that talks about what kind of people we should be. So, if Jesus really is coming soon, how now shall we live?

Doug Cobb: There's lots of great biblical passages about that, but one that I have really adopted is in 2 Peter 3:11-12, Peter asks what kind of people ought to be in light of the coming judgment that he had been talking about? And he says, "we should live holy and godly lives looking forward to the coming of Jesus, and speeding that day." Speeding it's coming, really interesting. So, holy I think of that as being set apart and distinctive as the culture rots away around us, we don't want to be a part of that, we want to be distinctive, not scornful toward it, not dismissive of our loved ones who are in it, but distinctive from it. And then we want to be godly, we want to be more like God. Jesus said, if you've seen me you've seen the Father, so love, joy, peace, patience the fruit of the Spirit. We want to be eager for that day. Sadly, this is a place where a lot of folks in the west fall short because we live in such a rich safe place, it is so great, how could the kingdom of God be better? It's going to be a lot better. Right? And then that last one which is a real mystery, how do we hasten or speed the coming of that day? What

I've decided in my life is that is getting the Great Commission work done as quickly as we can, so that Jesus can keep that Matthew 24:14 promise.

Tim Moore: Amen. It is a motivator for us to do all those things. Motivated toward urgent evangelism, holy living, and keeping our eyes on Christ, as is our kind of theme as we talk about at Lamb & Lion Ministries. Well, Doug we obviously want our viewers to be able to get a copy of your wonderful book. But I have to ask do you have any other book projects underway, and how can our viewers support your ministry as part of the Finishing Fund?

Doug Cobb: Well, thank you for asking about that. I've been toying the idea of a book that would be more about how we should be living in these days. A little bit like this book, but instead of 90% about the signs, and 10% maybe the opposite, so that would be fun. As you know though a book project is a daunting thing, and having done one I have to get my courage back up. As for the Finishing Fund folks can visit: www.finishingfund.org and learn a little bit more about us, and if they would like to talk to me about that there is button they can push on there to set up a call and we will be acquainted.

Tim Moore: Well, folks, I really do hope that you will check out not only Doug's website there, and be in touch with him, but get a copy of "And Then the End Will Come." Because we are on the brink of the end days. We are living in the end days right now we believe, but there are things that we can be about while we look forward to the soon coming of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. And so, Doug thank you again.

Doug Cobb: It was my pleasure.

Tim Moore: For joining us today on this edition of Christ in Prophecy. I'd like to have you back sometime, and frankly I actually hope the Rapture occurs before we can even schedule that.

Doug Cobb: Well, I'd love to do it, but I would rather be with Jesus.

Tim Moore: Amen. Amen. Well, may the Lord continue to bless you and your ministry and all the outreach you are impacting all around the world.

Doug Cobb: Thank you, Tim, it is great to be with you.

Tim Moore: Yes, sir.

Closing

Tim Moore: I hope that this program highlighting Doug Cobb's insightful book has been an encouragement to you.

You know Scripture tells us that when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, and all of Christendom pauses in December to commemorate our Savior's birth.

But those of us who know Him—and look forward to His imminent return—we discern that all the signs of the times point to the nearness of His coming, and our homegoing!

At the end of the Year of Our Lord 2022, we believe that we are on the cusp of seeing the fullness of time when the God the Father will say to His Son, "Go, and get your Bride!"

As we await His coming, Peter said that we should conduct ourselves in holiness and godliness, “looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God.” So, how do we do that? By sharing the Gospel, bearing witness and making disciples.

I am grateful for the hope Doug’s book offers. So, for a gift of \$20 or more, we would be glad to send you a copy of “And Then the End Will Come.” Just visit our online store or call the number on the screen.

Well, thanks for joining us today for this final episode of Christ in Prophecy in 2022. We pray God’s continued blessing on you and your family and will look forward to seeing you again next week—in 2023!

Until then, this is Tim Moore, saying, Godspeed!!

End of Program