

Christ in Prophecy

Conference 81: Standing Firm Amid Rising Darkness with Robert Jeffress

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Tim Moore: Welcome to this episode of Christ in Prophecy! Jesus warned His followers that in this world we will have trouble. But He encouraged us by affirming that He has overcome the world.

Nathan Jones: His words are so simple and yet so powerful. We need not fear any created thing—or any rising darkness. His Light has pierced the darkness, and His disciples are called "sons of light and sons of day."

Tim Moore: And yet, we hear from people all the time who feel discouraged by the rising apostasy and wickedness in the world. The darkness presses in on them and their light flickers and fades. That is why the theme of our 2023 Annual Bible Conference was "Let Not Your Heart be Troubled." It was our intention to offer encouragement even as darkness descends around us—an affirmation that Jesus is coming soon.

Nathan Jones: Lamb & Lion Ministries invited a fantastic team of dynamic speakers, including Robert Jeffress, David Barton, David Reagan, Tommy Nelson, Erwin Lutzer, and our own Tim Moore—to shine light in the darkness.

Tim Moore: Over the course of the next few weeks, we'll bring you excerpts from all these presentations—along with portions of two different Question and Answer sessions.

Here now is Robert Jeffress, who kicked us off with a message entitled, "Standing Firm Amid Rising Darkness."

Robert Jeffress Presentation Robert Jeffress

In 1961, on the first day of training camp, legendary coach Vince Lombardi stood before the Green Bay Packers. He held up an oval shaped ball, and his first words were, "Gentlemen, this is a football." You know, sometimes you need to go back to the basics, don't you? And certainly I think we need to today. Do I have to tell you, we are living in a world that is filled with political division, chaos, declining morality. We know that. We hear that. But any true follower of Jesus Christ, instead of just lamenting the condition of the world, has a very practical question: What are we as Christians supposed to be doing? How are we to respond to this darkening and decaying culture we find ourselves in? Are we supposed to organize 24 hour prayer meetings? Do we enlist more people to vote? Do we stand on the street corners passing out Gospel tracts? Exactly what are we supposed to be doing right now as we await the Rapture of the Church?

Well fortunately, our coach, our leader, our Lord Jesus Christ, has told us exactly what we're supposed to be doing. In the original, this is a football speech, also known as the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus went back to the basics. And listen to what He said about how we as Christians are to respond to the decaying and darkening world around us. Jesus said in Matthew 5:13, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has become tasteless, how would it be made salty again? It's no longer good for anything

except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill that cannot be hidden."

Jesus used two metaphors to describe the two things we are to be doing until He comes back again. First of all, He says you are to be the salt of the earth. Now, remember, in Jesus' day, salt was a very valuable commodity. The Greeks thought salt was divine. The Romans said there's nothing more useful than sun and salt. In fact, salt was so valuable to the Romans that they paid their soldiers in salt. Salt was the compensation. By the way, the Latin word for salt, "sal" is the root word for salary that we get today. It's related to salt. Salt was very valuable.

What was it used for that made it so valuable? Well, one thing it was used for was to enhance thirst. You know, in hot a Middle Eastern culture, it was very important to keep your animals properly hydrated. You've heard the old adage, you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. But you can salt the oats. And so they would give their animals salt tablets to make sure they took in plenty of liquid. We do the same thing today, we do that with our animals. We also call them football players. I mean, no, in August, when they're out there playing, they take salt tablets to create thirst, to make sure they receive the proper amount of water.

So when Jesus says we're to be salt, maybe He's saying as we live in this world, we're to create spiritual thirst in people. I think there's a certain way in which that's true. Just by the way we live. We can be salt in the way we act and the things that we say. But the main use of salt in Jesus' day was as a preservative. In the days before refrigeration the way you would delay the decay of meat was by packing it with salt. Now, salt could not prevent the decay of meat that was built in, but it could delay the decay. It could give the meat a longer shelf life until eventually it did have to be thrown out. And I think that's what Jesus was saying here. One reason I've left you here as my followers and haven't taken you to Heaven is so that you can be a preservative in the world. You can delay the decay of the world so that the world has longer to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, every Bible prophecy student knows this passage from 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, in which Paul talks about our responsibility to restrain evil. The Holy Spirit is the one who now is restraining evil until the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way. It is the Holy Spirit who is pushing back against evil. It is the Holy Spirit who is slowing down the decay of our society. But it's not just the Holy Spirit floating around up there. It is the Holy Spirit indwelling Christians, meaning it is indwelt Christians who are the restrainer of evil.

Tim Moore: Pastor Jeffress emphasized God's desire to save Nineveh—even though He had already pronounced judgment based on their sin. Jonah's mission to warn Nineveh led to the greatest revival in world history. Because they repented, God relented. As 2 Peter 3:9 tells us, He is delaying judgment now to give people every opportunity to repent.

Robert Jeffress: Why hasn't Jesus come back again? It's not that He's slow about keeping His promise as some have said. It's so that some more may repent and find eternal life. God is delaying judgment to give people a chance to repent. And what Jesus is saying is, one reason I left you here on Earth is to be that restrainer of evil, to push back against evil, not because you're going to save the world, but to give people longer to hear the Gospel. You know, unfortunately, so many Christians don't understand that. They don't understand their role in the culture right now.

Christians go to one of three extremes. Two of them are extreme, one is correct. Some Christians, when it comes to the culture, decide to isolate themselves from the culture. They get in their little holy huddles in church and just encourage one another, and feed one another, and just pray nothing bad happens to them. They're in their holy huddle. They isolate themselves. Jesus didn't say to do that.

Other Christians go to the opposite extreme instead of isolating themselves from the culture, they identify with the culture. They become like the culture. They adopt the values of the culture. They think the way we're going to win people to Christ is by lowering our standards and being more inclusive. And they are becoming like the salt Jesus said, if salt loses its saltiness, it is worthless. It needs to be thrown out, it is good for nothing. And let me say, by the way, if you are in a church that is trying to belong, and act like the world, I'm not talking about music styles, I'm talking about theology. I'm talking about moral issues. If they are trying to become like the world in order to win the world, you need to not walk, run out of that church as quickly as possible. God's not going to bless that.

God says we're to be distinctive, we're to influence the world, not have the world influence us. And that's the third "I" what God calls us to do is to influence the world. We're to influence the world. You know, for salt to be effective guess what? It's got to get out of the saltshaker. It doesn't do any good in its little holy huddle in the saltshaker. For salt to do its work, it's got to get out of the shaker and permeate the meat.

Ladies and gentlemen, we cannot be silent any longer. It is time for God's people to stand up, to speak out and push back against the evil in our country and in our world. If we don't do it, who is going to do it? God is calling us to be salt again. Objectively, we are living under the most ungodly Administration with the most ungodly agenda in the history of the United States of America. If we don't push back against it, who is going to push back? That's what Jesus meant when He said, "You are the salt, you are the salt." But hear me tonight. The only reason we are to push back against evil is so that we can do the second thing Jesus commanded us to do, and that is to be light. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill that cannot be hidden, nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand and it gives light to all who are in the house."

Ladies and gentlemen, the reason we push back against the culture, the reason we push back against evil is not to save America. Did you know, as Christians, we have not been called to save America? That is not the call of the Church of Jesus Christ. We are not called to save America. This is going to shock some of you. But did you know God doesn't salute when He sees the American flag? Did you know God doesn't get goose bumps when he hears the Star Spangled Banner? God is no respecter of any people or any nations. Any nation that reverences God will be blessed by God, and any nation that rejects God, including the United States, will be rejected by God. We are not going to save America. America is going to eventually collapse. We know in the final seven years known as the Tribulation, there will be no longer an America as we know it. There's a one world government, no freedom of speech, no freedom of religion, no freedom of commerce. Those things are gone. The Constitution is gone. There's a one world dictator. So America is going to collapse. No, our call is not to save America. Our call is to save Americans from the coming judgment of God by introducing them to faith in Jesus Christ. That is the mission of the Church. And we can't forget that right now. That's what we have been called to do.

Listen to me tonight. If your goal in life is peace, prosperity, pleasure, the avoidance of any kind of pain, if that's your real goal in life, these are terrible days in which to be alive. These are truly frightening days. You have every right to be fearful. But if your goal is what Jesus Christ said, we were left here to do. If

your goal is what Paul talked about, and that is to win as many people to Christ as quickly as we can, there's never been a better time to be alive and to be a Christian than right now because the darker and darker this world becomes, the brighter the light of Jesus Christ shines in a dark world. And that's why Jesus said, "You are the light of the world."

Now I know what some of you are thinking right now. You're thinking, Robert, this is the most schizophrenic message I have ever heard. I'm confused. What is it we're supposed to be doing? Are we supposed to be pushing back against evil, taking stands against evil, voting for godly people, speaking up at school board meetings, are we supposed to be pushing back against evil, or are we supposed to be introducing people to faith in Jesus Christ? That's the only way you're going to transform the world is transforming the hearts of people that live in the world. Which is it? Pushing back or sharing the Gospel? Well, what did Jesus say? Did He say you are to be the salt of the earth, but if you're uncomfortable doing that, you can concentrate on being the light of the world. Did He say you're salt or light? No, He said we're to do both. If we're going to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ, we've got to learn to multitask as Christians, to do more than one thing. We can do two things. It's not either or, it's both and. We need to be balanced in how we approach the world.

But please hear me tonight, don't confuse the word balance with passive. This is no time for God's people to be passive. I think of the words of William Watkins in his book, "The New Absolutes." He says, "It is time for Christians to reject the new tolerance and instead become a people marked by intolerance, not an intolerance that unleashes hate upon people, but an intolerance that is unwilling to allow error to masquerade as truth any longer, an intolerance that is willing to stand up and call good, good and evil, evil." May God give us the courage to do just that.

Q&A with Robert Jeffress

Nathan Jones: Following Pastor Jeffress tremendous sermon, he and Tim sat down for a Question and Answer session. Their full dialogue is available on our Christ in Prophecy YouTube Channel. But here now are some excerpts from that insightful conversation.

Tim Moore: I guess the first thing I'll ask Pastor Jeffress is you touched on the impact that we need to be having in every sphere. So whatever our calling is as a career, profession, we can be impactful there. Obviously with our vote as free citizens, still. But it does seem, looking just over these last few years, that the left, the hard left, seems to be gaining and ascending across America. Do you see the pendulum swinging back?

Robert Jeffress: No. I wish I could tell you that there's going to be some great revival that's going to change the course of America in the world. I don't believe that. There's never been a nation that has descended as far as we have that's ever turned back. It's just the way things are. I mean, look at the nation of Israel. You know, there's a temporary revival, but Israel was as apostate as it's ever been and so forth. And so I don't think there's going to be any great turning. The good news, now I know that sounds fatalistic, but the good news is we're right on God's timetable. We're right on God's schedule. And God's work is not going to be accomplished by a majority of people. It's not by the numbers of people. God always has a remnant and He does His work through a remnant. So I'm not discouraged at all, just for the reason I got through saying I think there's never been a better time to share the hope of Jesus than right now.

Tim Moore: So sort of the lesson of Elijah, you're not the only one left, but I don't need a majority to accomplish My purpose. You don't think the Lord surprised, in other words, by all the things that sometimes trouble our hearts if we are confessional, that in the deep, dark thoughts of our heart, it is discouraging to look around. But greater is He who is in us than He was in the world.

Robert Jeffress: Yeah, and if I could, Tim just give this word of advice. You know, I was talking to a guy, he said, "Pastor I'm just so angry. I'm just so angry." And I said, "Well, tell me a little bit about, you know, what you do every day." Well, it turns out he listen to talk radio four hours a day. No wonder he's angry. I can say this as a somewhat of an insider. You know, there's some great News networks, and I'm happy to contribute to one of the great ones and glad to do that. But whether it's a leader of a website, a broadcaster, whatever, their goal is to get the biggest audience they can, the most eyeballs they can on their web page. And they have two strategies for doing that, either making people angry or anxious. And they know in the headlines they write, the stories they cover that's to go make people angry or anxious. So don't take too steady of a diet of the News. Balance it with God's Word, and family time and so forth, because you can become overly pessimistic and anxious.

Tim Moore: Amen to that. I've asked people, even as they would interact while I was in politics and would seem to be anxious as Christians, I'd ask them, "Come of the morning, do you read the paper, or watch the News before you read the Bible?" And you could always tell what they saturated themselves in by the level of anxiety.

Robert Jeffress: And there's a balance there. We need to be like the sons of Issachar who understood their times and knew what Israel should do. And, you know, Billy Graham, who, by the way, was a member of our church for 54 years, he used to say, "You know, in one hand I have my Bible and in the other hand I have my newspaper. The newspaper tells me what is happening; the Bible tells me what it means." So we need to be balanced.

Tim Moore: Well, given the rapidity of the moral revolution, I mean, I ask when I go and speak, how many of you could have imagined 20 years ago, 30 years ago, where we would be as a society? You almost dread to think where we are going. But you have grandchildren. I have grandchildren. Many here have grandchildren. What is the next shoe to fall? In other words, what is the trajectory taking us toward if we even dare to contemplate?

Robert Jeffress: Well, I think, again, you saw this. I'm trying to think in a debate recently. Well, it was a debate on CNN about well, if you believe in parental authority, why shouldn't parents be allowed to transgender their children and have surgery and so forth? Why should there be any restrictions against parents if you believe in parental rights? I think what you're going to see is an erosion of parental rights. That's going to be the next shoe to drop.

Tim Moore: I agree. Absolutely. I think the next thing and it's already there cultivating this ideology is to give children autonomy from their parents. And already you're seeing school districts in places that are relatively conservative, at least in our perception, that have school districts that are saying we're not going to tell the parents what the child is identifying as or wants to do at school. And so this push for childhood autonomy is going to give at least some sway to those who want to advocate for pedophilia. And I believe that will be eventually decriminalized, because if children truly are autonomous, then who's to say they don't want to be in a relationship with an adult in any kind of abominable way imaginable. Robert Jeffress: I think you're right, unfortunately.

Tim Moore: We then turned our attention to a choice looming on our nation's horizon—the 2024 election.

Tim Moore: We are I say on the cusp, really, it's already begun, and that being another presidential election, so much energy, and much volume and noise will be consumed over the next 18 months, nearly, for the presidential election. We're not going to make a prediction. But what do you see as the patterns? I'm told that there has been a slight surge in people identifying as conservative on economic principles just because of a little bit of a pushback. But what do you think is going to drive this particular election cycle?

Robert Jeffress: Let me tell you what I'm concerned about. And I'm hearing it from leaders. I'm seeing it in polls, is the apathy among Christians, disgusted with the political process, and pretty much indicating they're going to sit this one out regardless of who's running. And I understand the disappointment. I understand a lot of reasons they may feel that way. Some feel like, well, the battle's been won. We got the three conservative justices added to the court, and 200 plus conservative federal judges. Well, what most people forget is judges, and justices, die and they retire. And there's always a need for a conservative judiciary. So as the Scripture says, we can't grow weary in well doing, we need to stay engaged. And actually, the Dobbs Decision did not eliminate abortion, as most people are finding out now, it just relegated it to the state. And instead of having one battle, there are going to be 50 battles. And so the fight for life, for the right to life is really just in the beginning stages. And I would just encourage Christians not to be obsessed with politics, don't get obsessed with it, but let's be sure and exercise our responsibilities and rights that our forefathers died to provide us with.

Tim Moore: Amen. I mentioned the name earlier, Alan Colmes. I've heard you testify to having a friendship with Alan. So how does a conservative Christian communicate in such a way as you have the natural gift, I say natural, God given gift of being able to befriend people who would disagree with you politically and maybe even on theological terms, but to be winsome and convey with grace, and love, the message of truth that you are very bold to proclaim.

Robert Jeffress: You know, for those who don't know, Alan used to be the resident liberal at Fox News. He was Jewish. He had a show with Sean Hannity, Hannity and Colmes. And Alan Colmes became a great friend of mine when I first started working with Fox and really helped me a lot. And he would always have me on his show and he had always give me a chance to share the Gospel.

I remember one time he said, "Pastor, do you think you'll be alive to see Jesus come back to Earth one day?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. But Alan, it really doesn't matter." And he kind of said, "What do you mean it doesn't matter?" I said, "Well, and at the time I said, I'm 52 years old, and in the next 30 years or so, one of two things is going to happen either I'm going or He's coming. But the end is close to me and it's close for you as well. And the most important thing is to be ready with the Lord."

And I was his last guest on his show before he died and shortly before he died, he said, "You know, you've been sharing your faith with me all these years. I just found out my college roommate has become a Messianic Jew and accepted Jesus. There is no hope for me between the two of you." And I said, "I hope not." But you know, I've had a good experience with people like Alan, with Bill Maher. I was on his show after the program, his Real Time show. We were at the after party. We stood there for 30

minutes and talked about everything. And he said, "You know, Pastor, I don't believe one thing you believe, but you're a great representative for your faith and you're a happy warrior," he said. And I guess what I would just say is, just remember, when we're talking to people about these issues, our goal is not to win the argument. I used to get in these debates and start frothing at the mouth, you know, and so forth. I would get so angry and, you know the goal is not to win the argument, it's to win the person. We don't have to be angry. We've got the truth on our side. We know the truth. And you're not going to argue somebody into the kingdom of heaven, it comes by loving them and praying for them.

Tim Moore: I think I'm going to use that either He's coming down or I'm going up, if you don't mind.

Robert Jeffress: Go right ahead.

Tim Moore: I'm going to cite you. Well, I dare I say I disagreed, and flipped the quote from Charles Spurgeon, but when I read it, I was going to apply it to you. And I said, no, that doesn't fit because you can be bold hearted and not thought as being mean spirited. And so you certainly are not mean spirited. But I, I appreciate your bold heart, your testimony and your fearless testimony in Jesus Christ.

Robert Jeffress: Well, thank you. And thanks for letting me come tonight. It's been a real treat.

Tim Moore: It's been a thrill for all of us and a great blessing.

Robert Jeffress: Thank you. Thank you.

Closing

Tim Moore: Wow! Robert Jeffress always brings an enlightening and uplifting message! That's why so many people—including me—love his preaching. And why I've called him the "Happy Warrior." He boldly declares the truth of God's Word, but in a winsome way—and with great love and joy.

You know just two days after our Conference, Pastor Jeffress' own television program, Pathway to Victory, continued his "Unstoppable Power" series by focusing on two promises Jesus made to His followers—one already fulfilled and one yet to be kept.

Nathan Jones: We can be assured that He who is the Yes and Amen will keep every promise, including the one He made right after telling His disciples to not let their hearts be troubled: that He has gone to prepare a place for us and that He will come again to receive us to Himself.

Tim Moore: We'll bring you much more from our annual Bible Conference in the coming weeks. But, due to time constraints, we cannot air any of these presentations in their entirety.

And as Nathan said, you can always visit our Christ in Prophecy YouTube Channel to access all of these messages, as well as every Christ in Prophecy episode ever produced, and a growing library of videos and teaching materials.

Nathan Jones: Well we know that many of you will want to get the complete DVD set containing all of these presentations and both Question and Answer sessions.

For only \$25—and that includes domestic shipping—we'll send you the multi-disc DVD album with the full presentations by Robert Jeffress, David Barton, David Reagan, Tommy Nelson, Erwin Lutzer, and Tim Moore. Just visit our online store or call the number you see on the screen.

Tim Moore: That's all the time we have today. Join us again next week when we will feature portions of David Barton's presentation. Until then, on behalf of Lamb & Lion Ministries, this is Tim Moore.

Nathan Jones: ...and Nathan Jones

Tim Moore: ...saying, let not your heart be troubled! Godspeed!