

AFTER THE STORM: What's next?
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I. Introduction

- a. For storm survivors, storms do not always have to be seen negatively.
 - i. The storm has a way of helping us focus on what really matters.
 - 1. Our relationship with God
 - 2. Our relationship with family
 - ii. The storm has a way of removing distraction and causing us to be still.
 - iii. The storm has a way of pointing us back to God.
 - iv. The storm can act as a bigger problem that overshadows our current situations.
 - v. It can encourage us to live for a purpose that is bigger than ourselves.

1 Chronicles 12:32

Sons of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do

- a. We live in a day and time where natural disasters occur more frequently, terrorism threats grow, political and racial division exists and morality standards decrease before our eyes.
- b. These facts may make some of us nervous, but we don't have to be when we know what to do.
- c. People are asking the following questions:
 - i. Is Jesus coming back again soon?
 - ii. Are these the last days?

II. Are these the last days?

- a. Most scholars will agree with some variation that our time on Earth follows these events:
 - i. Creation of Earth and man
 - ii. Fall of man
 - iii. The law of Moses
 - iv. The coming of Christ
 - v. The church age
 - 1. We are currently in this stage and working to build the church.
 - vi. The rapture of the church
 - vii. Tribulation period
 - 1. 7 years combined: 3.5 years of tribulation, followed by 3.5 years of great tribulation.
 - viii. Second coming of Christ – Battle of Armageddon
 - ix. 1,000 year millennial reign
 - 1. Jesus will reign in earth to bring the greatest time of peace.

- x. Satan is released from the pit one last time and will deceive some people.
 - 1. This time frame is expected to last a very short period.
- xi. Great white throne judgment
- xii. Eternity
 - 1. New heavens and earth will exist where there will be no sorrow or tears.
- b. This type of information may be scary for some.
- c. However, it is good news for those that have confessed Christ as their Savior.

Luke 21:25-28 NIV

²⁵ “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶ People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁷ At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

- a. What to do:
 - i. We can stand up against addiction, perversion, and depression.
 - ii. Live with expectation that Jesus is coming back.

Matthew 24:36-44 NIV

³⁶ “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

- a. We may not know exactly when Jesus is coming back, but we can:
 - i. Stand up
 - ii. Lift our heads up
 - iii. Keep watch or be alert
 - iv. Be ready
- b. A wisdom key is to plan like Jesus is not coming back for 100 years and live like He is coming back tomorrow.

- III. 4 steps to do after the storm**
- a. Prepare for the next one now
 - i. As long as we live in a fallen world, there will be trouble and storms.
 - ii. We don't have to get caught off guard, we can prepare now.
 - b. Fix what's broken
 - i. God is able to fix broken hearts and dreams when we let him.
 - c. Make heaven your focus
 - i. Earth is not our home and will be replaced by a new earth and heaven at the end of the ages.
 - ii. We must be more heavenly-minded than earthly-minded in order to avoid being sad, confused, or angry.
 - iii. We are in this world, but not of it.
 - d. Value community and church family
 - i. During a storm, family and friends can be important for checking-in and helping out where needed.
 - ii. After the storm, community can help us grow and stay accountable to God's ways.
 - iii. The book of Acts talks about how the early church came to the temple, ate house to house, and grew in community.
 - iv. We believe that real life change happens in the context of relationships with friends and family that can connect us with God's Word.