

The End Times According to Jesus

Small Group Guide:

The End Times According to Jesus, Week 3

Key Takeaways:

1. The rapture and the second coming of Christ are two distinct events.
2. The rapture is believed to occur before the tribulation period.
3. How we interpret the Bible (hermeneutics) affects our understanding of end times (eschatology).
4. The church has not replaced Israel in God's plan (rejection of replacement theology).
5. As the bride of Christ, we should eagerly anticipate His return.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the main differences between the rapture and the second coming of Christ? Why is it important to distinguish between these events?

2. Pastor Allen mentioned the doctrine of imminency regarding the rapture. What does this mean, and how should it impact our daily lives as Christians?
3. How does understanding the difference between "tribulation" (general hardships) and "the Tribulation" (end times period) affect our perspective on suffering and God's wrath?
4. The sermon touched on different interpretations of end times prophecy (amillennialism vs. premillennialism). How might these different views impact a believer's outlook and actions?
5. Discuss the concept of the church being the "bride of Christ." How should this identity shape our relationship with Jesus and our anticipation of His return?
6. Pastor Allen emphasized interpreting prophecy literally. What are the potential benefits and challenges of this approach?

Practical Application:

1. Reflect on your own level of anticipation for Christ's return. What steps can you take to cultivate a greater longing for His coming?
2. Choose one prophecy mentioned in the sermon and study it in more depth this week. How does a literal interpretation affect your understanding?
3. If you struggle with fear about end times events, spend time meditating on Scriptures that emphasize God's protection and care for His people.
4. Consider how the urgency of Christ's potential return might impact your evangelism efforts. Who in your life needs to hear the gospel?

5. As a group, discuss ways you can encourage and remind each other to live with an eternal perspective in light of Christ's imminent return.

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for His plan of redemption and the promise of Christ's return.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: Eagerly Awaiting Christ's Return

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 22:12-17

Devotional: As believers, we are called to eagerly anticipate Christ's return. Just as a bride longs for her wedding day, we should yearn for Jesus' coming. Reflect on your own attitude towards Christ's return. Are you truly excited, or do earthly desires hold you back? Consider how you can cultivate a heart that genuinely longs for Jesus' presence. Today, practice living with an eternal perspective, making choices that reflect your hope in Christ's return.

Day 2: God's Faithfulness to Israel and the Church

Reading: Romans 11:1-12, Zechariah 12:10-14

Devotional: God's faithfulness to Israel reminds us of His unwavering love and commitment to His promises. Even when we falter, God remains true. Ponder how God has been faithful in your own life, especially during times of doubt or disobedience. Thank Him for His steadfast love and pray for a deeper trust in His promises. Consider how

you can reflect God's faithfulness in your relationships with others today.

Day 3: Living in Light of Eternity

Reading: Matthew 24:36-44, 2 Peter 3:8-14

Devotional: The imminence of Christ's return calls us to live with urgency and purpose. How would your life change if you truly believed Jesus could return at any moment? Examine areas of your life that may not align with this eternal perspective. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you prioritize what truly matters in light of eternity. Today, make a conscious effort to live as if this were your last day before meeting Christ.

Day 4: God's Protection Amidst Tribulation

Reading: Revelation 3:10-13, Psalm 91

Devotional: While we may face trials in this world, God promises to protect His people from His wrath. Reflect on times when you've experienced God's protection or comfort during difficulties. How can remembering God's faithfulness in the past strengthen your faith for future challenges? Today, entrust your fears and anxieties to God, resting in His promise of ultimate deliverance.

Day 5: The Hope of Resurrection and New Creation

Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:50-58, Revelation 21:1-7

Devotional: Our hope in Christ extends beyond this life to the promise of resurrection and a new creation. How does this eternal perspective change how you view current

struggles or successes? Meditate on the description of the new heaven and new earth. Allow this vision to inspire hope and motivate holy living. Today, share this hope with someone who needs encouragement, pointing them to the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises in Christ.