

# Interests and Inquiries

*August-September 2012*



***God's Calendar and  
Living in the Latter Days***

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***Christ E Free Church Pulpit Series  
August-September 2012***

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*Jesus Christ  
Our Highest Calling,  
Our Greatest Purpose,  
Our Soul's Source and Joy  
And Our All Consuming Passion.*

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## **Introduction**

In our society today, prophecy and predictions concerning the future are everywhere. The Scandal Sheets at the grocery stores, and the specials on Discovery or the History Channel are often focused on some future, end time prediction or Biblical prophecy.

We are a people with many interests and inquiries about the future. We seem to have a curious cultural concern about the things that are yet to take place. Where does it all come from?

We have our calendar and God has His. He knows our calendar, but we cannot know His.

We may know the seasons, the times, the eras or ages in which we live, with its promised signs and warnings of things to come. But when it comes to specifics like dates and the end to come, the Bible says, only the Father knows. (Mat.24:36)



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# God's Plan and Purpose For Prophecy

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August 19, 2012

\* *"Responding To 2012" booklets are available this morning.*



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“...remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying,  
'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.  
-- Isaiah 46:9-11

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## INTRODUCTION

Most people like a good mystery. Who dunnit. Will the crime ever be solved? Will the bad guy get caught? Will they find the treasure? Will the good guy win in the end?

2012 is a year with much mystery attached to it. December 2012 has been prophesied as the year and month that “the end” will come. Hollywood has made much of these prophesies, predictions, and fanciful ideas.

There is a curious cultural concern surrounding our future and The mysterious Mayan Calendar.

There is a curious cultural concern surrounding the mystical predictions of Nostradomas and the 2012 doomsday events that he

writes about.

But what does Scripture say about “the End”?

What can we be sure of and what do we need to be ready to share with others.

**1Peter 3:15** but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you;

- 1) Be Sure about what we believe and what Scripture says.
- 2) Be Ready to recognize the kingdom moments God brings into our lives to talk with and encourage others in the faith.
- 3) Be Obedient to respond to and share our knowledge of the Truth about End Times with others and point them to that truth and to God until Christ returns.

## **2012 AND THE END OF THE WORLD**

### **Wide Spread Interest in End Times**

We must acknowledge the fact that the movie “2012” and others like it, represent a wide spread cultural interest in end times events. From SciFi adventure movie like “2012”, to the writings of Nostradamus, people are interested in prophecies, end times and doomsday issues.

Discovery Channel benefits from the “End Time” interests and inquiries people have. The History Channel benefits from these curious cultural concerns regarding the future. And they are not all religious minded people who have those interests and concerns.

Popular Mechanics has even presented their top 12 possibilities of end time scenarios.

- 1) Asteroid Impact    2) Medical Pandemic    3) Machines or Robots take over    4) A Gamma Ray Burst    5) Snowball Earth, due to global weather changes, the earth turns into a glacier covered lifeless sphere.
- 6) Ocean Acidification    7) Solar Storm    8) Super Volcano

- 9) Geomagnetic Polar Reversal                      10) Nuclear War  
11) Artificial Black Hole    12) The X factor – vacuum decay.  
Interestingly, PM offers no alien invasion scenarios.

Even non-religious people seem interested in Bible prophecies and other sources with their predictions on End Times events. Some are interested for information sake, while others are genuinely sensing an inner concern or perhaps even fear of what may lie in the near future.

## The Mayans Dooms Day Prophecy

It is believed by some that the ancient Mayan civilization predicted the end of the world on December 21, 2012. This is based on the Mayan calendar ending on that date.

The polytheistic Mayan gods included Kukulkán (also known by the Aztec name Quetzalcoatl) and Tepeu. The two were referred to as the Creators, the Forefathers or the Makers. According to the story, the two gods decided to preserve their legacy by creating an Earth-bound species looking like them. The first attempt was man made from mud, but Tepeu and Kukulkán found that the mud crumbled. The two gods summoned the other gods, and together they decided to make man from wood. However, since these men had no soul and soon lost loyalty to the creators, the gods destroyed them by rain. Finally, man was constructed from maize, the Mayans staple and sacred food.

*They May  
actually ha  
dooms da  
prophecy, o*

*They Mayans  
actually had no  
dooms day  
prophecy, only a  
cyclical calendar  
that ended.*

December 21, 2012 – The Mesoamerican Long Count calendar, notably used by the pre-Columbian Maya civilization among others, completes a "great cycle" of thirteen *b'ak'tuns* (periods of 144,000 days each) since the mythical creation date of the calendar's current era. On this day the Long Count date at creation—written 13.0.0.0.0 in modern notation, equivalent to August 11, 3114 BC in the proleptic Gregorian calendar—is repeated for the first time in a span of a little over 5,125 solar years. The completion of this cycle and the repetition of the previous Creation's Long Count ending date have been central to the 2012 phenomenon. Academic

researchers have not concluded that the ancient Maya themselves attached similar significance to this point in time.

The Mayan calendar began approximately 3114 BC in our modern calendar terms. It is also thought that the Mayans believed the creation of the earth was at this time. Probably no one other than the Mayans hold to that belief. Therefore, since the Mayans' understanding of the creation of all things is in question, there is little reason to take seriously the ending of their calendar as having significance to the destruction of creation. (source, *Wikipedia.org*)  
[Taken from "Responding To 2012" the booklet]

What *does* the future hold? When will the end come? Even Jesus' disciples asked Him questions about the end times.

"As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" (Mat 24:3)

People are both interested and concerned about these issues. How will I be affected? What about my family? Why would God allow all these things to take place? Is there a way to avoid or prepare for these end time events?

Rather than ignore the cultural interest, perhaps we might prepare ourselves by understanding their interest, and knowing how to direct them to the truth regarding the future as God's Word presents it.

*Even non-religious people have interests in end time events prophesied in Scripture.*

What the "*Passion of the Christ*" did to help us better grasp the reality of Christ's crucifixion, "*2012*" has the potential of doing to help us better grasp the reality of the true, end time events, clearly presented in the word of God.

As Christians, we must be aware of our times and in touch with our culture enough to be informed, as well as prepared to interact with those we have contact with. This is crucial, in order to help others understand the truth, look to God for help, trust in Jesus for salvation and be fully prepared when these kinds of apocalyptic events begin truly playing out in real life.



**So Christian**, will you be ready when you meet someone who is truly seeking answers to end times questions? Especially 2012 Doomsday issues?

If you are a **non-Christian**, would you be willing to consider the Bible as a source worth considering to help you learn what the end times will really be like and how you and your family can prepare for them? This booklet will direct you to God's word, the Bible.

## **BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON PROPHECY**

How can we get a Biblical perspective on Prophecy? The Bible of course.

### **God is the Proclaimer and Performer of all things**

*He is Creator and Communicator of all events.*

**Isa 46:3-11** "Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from before your birth, carried from the womb; (4) even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save. (5) "To whom will you liken me and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be alike? (6) Those who lavish gold from the purse, and weigh out silver in the scales, hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god; then they fall down and worship! (7) They lift it to their shoulders, they carry it, they set it in its place, and it stands there; it cannot move from its place. If one cries to it, it does not answer or save him from his trouble. (8) "Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, (9) remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, (10) declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' (11) calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.

For some, prophecy is simply revelation of what someone else knows, that we don't. When God spoke, and the prophets heard

and recorded what God said, some tend to see that merely as God revealing for our benefit, what He foresees in our future.

*Is that accurate?*

Listen how John Piper states it, in regard to the idea of God proclaiming the future but not actually performing the future.

“ But if we stopped there and merely said that the reason prophets can proclaim the latter days is that they are inspired by God who can foresee what will happen, we would be left with a misleading view of God and only half the Biblical teaching. So the second way of answering our question must be added, namely: **God does not merely know history in advance, He makes history; He creates history.**”

*[Can we see the difference? ]*

“If we didn't say this, we might be tempted to think of God as one who creates the world, establishes certain laws and then withdraws and watches and knows and predicts but does not rule or control or move history. But that would be very wrong. The text we just read in Isaiah 46:10 explains how God can predict the future: it's because he says, "My counsel shall stand and I will accomplish all my purpose." God knows what will happen because He accomplishes what will happen. He does not merely watch the world; he shapes the world.”

Therefore, God does not simply know and fore see the future, He causes it. He proclaims AND He personally Performs all His Prophecies.

## **God's Plan Proclaimed**

So We Can Say Prophecy is God's Communication to allow others to be informed of His plan and purposes for the coming days. We have to see prophecy, not merely as God revealing to us what He knows ahead of time – that is not *inaccurate*, but is certainly is *incomplete*.

As Believers in Jesus Christ and in the wholly inspired Holy word

of God, - we must understand Prophecy as God caring enough to actually inform, warn and encourage us as to what it is He is doing or what He has promised He will perform.

It is God who creates the history and fulfills the future. He communicates it to us in the form of Biblical prophecy and personally carries it out in accordance with His perfect plan and good pleasure.

Prophecy is God's invitation to anyone, to take note, get on board and be prepared for the End Times as they unfold, while fully trusting Him for the future!

Prophecy is not to be something which merely peaks our interest. Prophecy points us to God and demands that we trust in Him for the outcome.

*Prophecy  
captures our  
attention,  
interests us, and  
invites us to take  
note of God's  
calendar and plan.*

## **WHAT WILL WE DO, WITH WHAT HE GOD HAS REVEALED?**

Is it wrong to be interested and to make inquiries based on a curious cultural concern for the future?

### **Is Interest Wrong?**

Is it wrong to have a curiosity regarding end time events?

Is it wrong to refrain from obeying God's Word?

**John 21:19-22** (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me." (20) Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" (21) When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" (22) Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? *You follow me!*"

Jesus states that to know of prophetic events is not necessarily wrong, but it is not enough. Whatever is God' will for our future, it

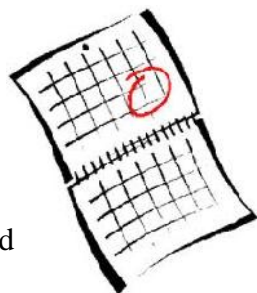
is also His will for us personally and individually – first and foremost – to *follow Him* - obediently.

Are we only curiously interested in the future or are we concerned about doing what God wants us to do?

In “**2012 The Movie**”, there was a lottery and people spending all they had to attempt to purchase a ticket on one of the several giant metal ark like vessels. IT was a survival of the richest, rather than an concern in anyone’s destiny.

What will I do with this information? Is it wrong to be interested in End Times? No. Interest in End Times is good. However, interest in end times events without concern for others is morally negligent.

Look at this calendar. I marked today’s date on a full size calendar. I have an “END TIMES” Calendar (It’s actually just like the one you have at home).



In Acts 2:17, Peter says we are living in the *End Times*. So that means today, we are living in the End Times. It’s not a thousand years in the future, it is Today. I even marked if for today, August 19, 2012 with a big red “X”.

Here’s what’s on the End Times calendar. “*Go to the fair. Go shopping. Call Dad. Cut the grass. Rotate the tires on the car. Go to work. Feed the dog.*” These events make up the end times calendar for many people and unfortunately, even for far too many Christians.

What God Proclaims, He performs. What is on your calendar? What occupies your time in these Last Days? Is it of any eternal kingdom importance?

### **Off the Page and into my life**

1) Christians must be faithful at all costs

**Mar 13:33-37** Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not

when the time is. (34) For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. (35) Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: (36) Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. (37) And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Jesus reveals that is it not enough to simply be curiously interest in gaining knowledge on end time events. He wants us involved. Christians are God's tools for getting out the good news of Christ and God's coming kingdom. We are His hands and heart and legs and voice to the world around us. To have God's End Times calendar clogged with lots of meaningless stuff, and not actively being used by God during these last days, is nothing less than being morally negligent!

What fills your day and clogs God's end times calendar? Perhaps we may need "take heed", "watch and pray" and maybe even re-prioritize our calendars.

2) Non-Christians must be willing to trust in Christ and be reconciled to God while living in these last days.

There will be many difficulties during the end times. As a result, many who had not previously believed God's Truth and trusted in Christ, will become more open to consider both. That is why we are promised...

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*"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." -Act 2:21*

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Why wait? Why not trust in Christ now and not risk missing God's help and forgiveness all together?




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## Living In the “*Latter Days*”

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*August 26, 2012* .



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**Act 2:17-21** "'And in the *last days* it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; (18) even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. (19) And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; (20) the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. (21) And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

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**Texts:** Joel 2:28 / Acts 2:17 / 2 Pet.3:10

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### INTRODUCTION

Portions of Scripture are intended to purify the people of God. It is intended to bring about a deeper obedience and life change. I'm not talking about the 10 Commandments, not the Great Commission, and not even the Gospel itself. I am referring to end times prophecy.

In the 60's, some people carried signs that read, "The End is Near". Some thought those people to be a bit out in left field or on the fringe or high on something. As the 60s faded away, so did

that prophetic awareness, that we were Living in the latter days.

So here we are in 2012, and it looks like, from an overall perspective, that the urgency of the Christian life and ministry of the Church has settled down. Not too many crazy Jesus Freaks walking around today carrying placards proclaiming we are in the End Times.

IN the Movie 2012, as the world was coming to an end, people were fleeing for their lives and as they passed a street corner with religions fanatics carrying signs “the End is Near”, one man observed, “*perhaps they were right all along.*”

**Joe 2:28-32** "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. (29) Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. (30) "And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. (31) The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. (32) And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. ....

## Pentecost

**Act 2:17-21** "'And in the *last days* it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; (18) even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. (19) And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; (20) the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. (21) And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

[ compare Acts 2:17ff with Joel 2;28ff]

**Hebrews 1:1-2** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, (2) but in these last days he

has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

So, here we are – We are living in God’s calendar. Today is a day planned from history past and created by God. Today is a day passing us by as we are Living In The Last Days. We don’t see too many people fanatically obeying and serving Jesus Christ. There doesn’t seem to be too many taking the necessary steps to do what it takes to prepare for the future – at least in America – the Western Culture and the Western Church.

What would it look like if people began living like it was indeed, the Last Days? Would the curious cultural concerns for the future take on a new sense of urgency?

What would it look like if Churches began ministering like it was indeed, the *Last Days*? Would anything change? If so, then why not change Now? Scripture confirms that we are Living in the *Latter Days*.

The Bible promises that during the Latter Days, there will be an ever increasing growth in the coming darkness.

## THE COMING DARKNESS

Perhaps we can see that our culture is characterized by latter day elements.

### Darkness in the Last Days

The Last days will be characterized by increasing darkness. In Scripture, darkness is often a reference to the presence of self and sin and the absence of God. Let’s look at that promised darkness.

#### The face of Darkness

**2Ti 3:1-5** This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. (2) For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, (3) Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, (4) Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; (5) Having a form of godliness, but denying the power



thereof: from such turn away.

Not all Last Days will be characterized by perilous times. But in the Last Days, perilous or troublesome times will increase – darkness will become darker and light will become more and more uncommon. The increasing darkness of the Last Days will be characterized by things we see today, only in increasing amounts and severity.

**1) Apathy** toward Christianity, amongst a plethora of religious activity. Anybody see any of that today?

**Mat 24:5** For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.

**Mat 24:11** And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.

Mormon's have their "prophets", Islam has their "prophets", Roman Catholicism has their prophets, Jehovah's Witnesses have their own "prophets" – all of whom speak their own truth – who proclaim new inspired revelation which is considered equal to holy Scripture, but in fact supersede the holy inerrant Word of God in the Bible.

False prophecies abound today. Many believe them and many are led astray.

**2) Anger** towards God – His ways, His purposes, His word

**Rev 17:11-14** And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goes into perdition. (12) And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. (13) These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. (14) These shall make war with the Lamb,

...

The World wants religion, but the world wants its own religion. They want a god, but not The True and Living God. The world wants a Savior and Messiah, but they do not want Jesus Christ –

Anything will do, but not Jesus.

Near the end of the End Times, the hatred toward Jesus and His followers will increase so much, so that the inhabitants of the world –led by the Beast of Rev. - will actually declare and wage a war against Jesus.

Anybody see any of that going on today?

**3) Animosity** toward others will increase – especially toward ***Israel***.

You might say, “Well, Jews don’t believe in Jesus, so why does the world hate the Jews?”

The Jews are the chosen People of the True and Living God. The Jews are the people of Jesus Christ, and from Pharoah, to King Xerxes, to Herod – people have attempted to annihilate the People of God simply because they hate the True and Living Jehovah God and anyone who has any connection to that God- whether it be Jews of Christians.

**Rev 11:2** but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

**Zec 12:3** On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it.

**Rev 19:17-19** Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, (18) to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great." (19) And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army.

Church of Jesus Christ, as we consider our next elections. God have mercy on those world leaders who oppose God's People the Jews, and God have mercy on the people of the nations who elect those leaders.

We must not vote in any way to elect a leader who has evidenced disdain towards God's people the Jews, - who has been overly critical of the Jews or even has hinted that he or she is not supportive of those people.

I believe those who are responsible for placing Jew haters in office, will themselves be guilty of the problems those Jew haters cause for God's people. *May it not be the church. **May it not be so of the Church of Jesus Christ.***

When hatred is growing toward Israel, that is an evidence of a growing spiritual darkness and that is a sign we are living in the latter days.

**4) Adoration** towards self – This is an “Every man for himself” kind of attitude. Looking out for number one even to the extent to neglect of others and gross sinful conceit.

**2Ti 3:1-2** This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. (2) For men shall be ***lovers of their own*** selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

**Mat 24:12** And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

This is certainly one of the reasons of wars and violence in the world. AS the Last Days near their promised end, the love of humans will diminish and the hearts of men will grow cold – caring nothing about love, peace, justice, human suffering, hunger, persecution, slavery, etc.

This will increase until it characterized the large segments of the inhabitants of the earth.

**5) People would scoff** at the coming of Christ and the judgment of God

**2Pe 3:3-4** Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, (4) And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

People will begin mocking the prophecies regarding the return of Christ and the coming judgment of God.

In recent years, there have been several specific dates published by certain media ministers pertaining to the end and the return of Jesus. And they have all be wrong!

How many false prophecies of the End of the World or of the coming of Jesus do we have to have proclaimed then fail to be fulfilled? How many times does that have to happen before our cynical skeptical culture is completely inoculated to any interest of religious matter whatsoever?

Rule of Thumb: If you have any idea, thoughts or perceived premonition regarding some Bible event, **KEEP IT TO YOURSELF!**

Christians would do well to be silent on their end time predictions. If the public views all our modern day “prophets” as being wrong, they just might think the true Bible prophets are wrong, as well.

**6) False** and empty religiosity

**2Tim. 3:4-5** Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; (5) Having a ***form of godliness***, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Those with a “form of godliness” focus on appearances. They emphasize labels, put forth pretense, and prioritize positions. They are filled up with self-righteous pretense, yet empty religious practices.

Jesus spoke of this kind of empty religiosity when he addressed and the Pharisees.

**Mat 23:27** "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For

you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.

They were worse than an empty tomb. They were filled with dead, rotting, decaying flesh.

### **7) Denial** of historical, God centered, Biblical truth

**2Pet. 3:5-6** For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: (6) Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

Erase God from our schools history books. Remove God the Bible and prayer from our schools. Remove the 10 commandments from our court houses. Attack, reinterpret, and attempting to re-write our Constitution, based on moral, religious convictions.

These are all signs, not of the *coming* End Times, because Scripture tells us we are already Living In The Latter Times. The increase of these acts are certain signs that we are nearing the *end* of the Latter Days – those perilous and tumultuous time – the coming earthquake of moral failure – the shaking of God of all that is, so that all that remains is unshakable.

### **8) traditional Marriage** is forsaken

**1Ti 4:1-3** Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, (2) through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, (3) who **forbid marriage** ....

Christian Morality and Biblical Marriage is under attack today on TV, in advertisements, music, even in some “churches”.

“*Forbid marriages*” - Cultural Christianity will begin to occlude true Biblical Christianity – rejecting traditional marriage, Biblical teaching of Scripture – specifically regarding marriage of one man and one woman for one marriage for life. Reject that and reject marriage all together.

There are groups in America today who call themselves

“churches” who are perverting Biblical marriage, forbidding marriage for some, and changing its definition to accommodate the changing culture.

*Prophecy  
captures our  
attention,  
interests us, and  
invites us to take  
note of God's  
calendar and plan.*

God says that is an indication of the coming of the end of the Latter Days.

### **Shaking In The Last Days**

Ultimately the shaking will ultimately be from hand of God.

The Tribulation, the End Times, and future events will take place, a shaking will occur as a purging force from God.

**Heb 12:25-29** See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. (26) At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." (27) This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken--that is, things that have been made--in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. (28) Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, (29) for our God is a consuming fire.

*In the Latter Days, God Himself will do some shaking, to get the attention of the world and direct His church to its intended calling – the gospel.*

How long and how far can people push God away, until the time finally comes when they think they need Him, but discover they can no longer find Him.

**Hag 2:6-7** For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. (7) And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures

of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. (cp. Amo 9:8-9)

As the Latter Days press on and the darkness increases, what are the Christians to do?

## **THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT**

As the Latter Days darkness increases, so must the light of the lives of God's children of light.

### **Increase of the Light in the Last Days**

**2Pet. 3:10-14** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. (11) Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, (12) waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! (13) But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (14) Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

What sort of people ought we to be? (v11)

**Eph. 5:8** for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

**1John 3:1-3** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. (2) Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. (3) And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

**James 1:26-27** If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. (27) Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

**1Th 5:1-8** Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. (2) For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. (3) While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. (4) But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. (5) For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. (6) So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. (7) For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. (8) But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

During the Last Days, the darkness will become so dark, that the light of the Christian life will shine all the brighter. There will be significant spiritual contrast.

### **Increase of the Gospel in the Last Days**

Not only will believer's lives shine like lights, the good news of the gospel will also shine forth as the light of life.

**Joe 2:32** And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved...

**Act 2:21** And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon



the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

**Mat 24:14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

This is a crucial element in the Believer's light, it proclaims Jesus Christ and gives testimony to the saving grace of Jesus.

**Act 2:41** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

**Act 2:46-47** And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, (47) praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Christian light consists of a visual witness, as well as a verbal message.

**Rom. 10:13-15** For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (14) But how are they to call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? (15) And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

## **OFF THE PAGE AND INTO MY LIFE**

In the Latter Days, believer's lives will shine like light in the darkness. We are to shine, not only by the life we live, but by the testimony that we share. Sharing faith in Christ as God's only Son and our only Savior is crucial in shining effectively.

Light doesn't just shine. It illuminates the path and gives clear direction in the darkness.

1) Adjust your Living NOW. Don't wait for perilous Latter Day events to get here – then you will change. That probably won't

happen.

2) Live Biblically today. Live as Children of the Light today, so that we will not be overtaken by the darkness later. So our life message will direct others to Jesus Christ TODAY!

Live Life with Verbal Witness.

3) If we are not sharing our faith and Christ now, then we are probably not living as children of light as God intends.

If we aren't living His light now, while it is still day, then when the darkness comes upon us, we certainly won't be sharing Christ then.

4) So much of the Last Days descriptions focus on the description of lack of some aspect of God's love. What if we committed to live our lives, compelled by God's love to help, serve, and share the gospel with them. With the Serve Saegertown Project, Bike Clinic, Sports Camp, and Health Fair, I believe we are on the right track as a church. Loving God and sharing Jesus is key to living as children of light in a culture characterized by growing darkness.



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# “The End of What?”

Text: Mat.24:3,14; Mat.28:20

September 2, 2012

***Mat 24:14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

## INTRODUCTION

I hope you realize, there is no “**End**” in God’s calendar.

Repeat after me: ***The End is Never the End!***

In Scripture, “*the end*” is never **THE END**.

If someone mentioned to you that they heard the world is coming to an end in December 2012, how will you respond? I hope you will not be silent due to being misinformed or unprepared. I hope you will intelligently address their interest and inquiries regarding their curious cultural concerns for the future.

One way you can respond, in order to give you a chance to think about your answer – you can say something like -- “*Yes, I have heard some stories that the world may come to an end in 2012. Does that concern you?*”

See if they will share their concerns with you. Perhaps you might follow that up with another question: “Do you think there is any proof that will actually take place?”

If you need a “**2012**” booklet, there are some on the table in the foyer.

Most seem to have a curious cultural concern for the future, while there are some who are genuinely worried about those events and

how they will be affected.

Today's Message is: "The End of What?"

When the Bible speaks of "the end", what is it referring to?

## WHAT IS THE END?

Be certain, it is not annihilation . It is not the end of time or space. It is not the end of human conscious awareness of personal existence. The End is Never the End!

So, when we hear that "the end" is near, what is it that we are referring to? What is it the end of?

Is it the End the world? Is it the end of Time? Is it the end of God's patience? Or His the depletion of His Grace?

Is it the end of persecution, of evil, or of sin? What is it the end of??

"The End" is a reference to the time frame where eschatological events referred to in the Bible, take place in fulfillment of God's Latter Days prophecies, which will usher in a new era of God's dealings with His creation. It never means annihilation.

Most people know that eschatological studies are the studies of the end times. The word "eschatos" is used to refer to the "latter days", or the end of the age in Acts 2:17, 2 Tim. 3:1, Heb.1:2, and 2 Pet. 3:3 among other references.

## The Close of an Era

**Mat 13:39** and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels

The End is the End of the Age. Some version translate that phrase, "end of the world", but that is a reference to the planet, rather than a time frame on God's calendar.

Remember, ***the End is Never the End.***

The word used is "Aion" which refers to an era or an age – not a focus on the end of the *world*, but the closing of a period of time or an "age".

“The End” refers to the completion or fulfillment of a time frame or an event on God’s calendar. It always precedes another coming era or series of events on God’s calendar. *The End is Never The End.*

These same term is used in Mat 13:40, Mat 13:49, Mat 24:3 and others.

**Question -** What age is being referred to in those passages?

**Mat 24:14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (compare Mat.28:20)

## What Age?

Some refer to it as “the church age”. This is a term used by some to refer to the era we are now living in, in which it is perceived that the church is the focus of God’s attention.

But the Bible does not seem to refer to any “church age”. It does However, refer to the Gentile age or the “Times of the Gentiles”, which many Bible scholar believe is the correct reference to the era we are now living in.

**Luk 21:24** They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

This speaks of an age or time when Jerusalem will be surrounded by her enemies. When this time arrives, we are encouraged, “stand up and look up for your redemption draws near (Lk.21:28)

While this age does incorporate the church, which began in Acts 2, its focus is *beyond* the church. The focus appears to be on the Gentiles or the Non-Jewish world and even those who are enemies of Israel, who are used by God to bring about world events which will bring the Jews back to Israel, increase the boundaries of Israel significantly, leading to the rapture of believers, the return of Jesus to rescue, free and save the Jewish People, as well as the judgment of God upon His enemies.

Therefore, The End, seems to refer to the close of or completion of our present time frame on God's calendar in which we now live.

## WHEN WILL THE END COME?

We don't know, neither can we know the time. We can observantly take note of the signs of the nearing of the end of this era, but no one knows the day or the hour. There will be, as they already has been, many false prophecies publicized by various so called "prophets".

**Mat 24:36** "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

The more predictions that are made, the more the world will refuse to believe Christ is coming at all.

## The "End" Can *Begin* at Any Moment

There will be signs, but no scheduled appointments for us to know.

**Mat 24:42-43** Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. (43) But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.

**1Th. 5:2-6** For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. (3) While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. (4) But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. (5) For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. (6) So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.

**2Pet 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies

will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

**Rev 16:15** ("Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!")

## **Following The Beginning of “*the End*”**

The end is not a point in time, but both a time frame, as well as a series of events, leading up to the consummation of that age or era or that Biblical time period.

The coming of the end will be much like rising flood waters. Typically a flood is not merely an event, but an increase of rain, a gradual rising of waters, that leads to what we would call a flood. But the flood does not involve a moment in time event, but a time frame, with events, with specific effects or reference points. It is an accumulation of events over a period of time, leading up to, and ultimately resulting in flooded conditions.

The End will be much like that. The End will be a growing accumulation of events that together, will be referred to as *the End*, but will more accurately be the End of the End Times or the consummation and completion of the era or time.

## **What will happen when the End comes?**

- 1) It will be what Scripture refers to as the Day of the Lord.
- 2) It will be the time of the Lord's Return.
- 3) A time when there is a genuine taste of heaven on earth.
- 4) The world will be consumed with fire and all the elements will melt with fervent heat
- 5) Time of the Rapture of the church and the ultimate resurrection of all saints.
- 6) A time when perfect righteousness and undefiled holiness will fill the earth.
- 7) God will transform everything and everybody from the earthly

physical state to the eternal spiritual state.

8) Judgment of all sin.

9) We will become like Him.

10) We will rule with Christ

11) A time when everything, will become new.

And we will consider all these by the end of our September's series.

## **How Can We Prepare for The End**

How can we prepare for a flood?  
Look for the signs. How can we  
keep from being swept away by  
the flood of end times events?

Watching the weather reports.  
Drawing up a specific Plan of  
action. Taking specific action  
steps. Filling Sand bags.  
Evacuating loved ones to High  
ground. Gathering Supplies to

help endure the storm, for yourself, and perhaps for others.



Preparing for a flood, means dramatically changing your lifestyle.  
It means being aware of coming events and reprioritizing your life  
to ensure you are adequately prepared.

Likewise it is with *the End* of the Age.. The End Times are not just  
about our own survival, but our ability to help others through it.

If we really believe God's word, and if prophecies really impact  
out lives, - then how can we be changed *NOW*? How will we  
prepare for the end *TODAY*?



## **OFF THE PAGE AND INTO MY LIFE**

**1) The Sand bag of purity.** A man must purify himself.

**1Jn 3:2-3** Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. (3) And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

A man must keep himself unstained by the world.

**Jas 1:26-27** If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. (27) Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

**2) The Sandbag of Ministry.** A man must be doing His master's work when He returns

**Mat 24:37-47** As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. (38) For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, (39) and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. (40) Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. (41) Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. (42) Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. (43) But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. (44) Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. (45) "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? (46) Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. (47) Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his

possessions.

**Figuratively**, the servant of the kingdom. Literally, the household leader of every household – responsible for family – to keep focused and keep prioritized as these last days, end times and close of the age draws nearer. We are never too old or too busy, or too young to be caught serving Jesus Christ.

It will be too late, if we wake up one day in a frantic crisis concern, wondering, now what can I do to preserve my family's faith and to be prepared for the end time events. Once they are here, it is all but too late.

Once the flood hits, its too late to prepare. The best you can hope for is to swim with the swelling torrential currents and stay afloat, wondering if you'll be swept under, and if you and your family will survive for another day, without renouncing your faith.

Some people think, well if it comes down to it, I can just verbally say I'm not a Christian, but secretly I'll still be a Christian. Do not be so sure.

**3) The Sandbag of Readiness** – A Man must be ready - Not just saved.

**Mat 25:1-11** "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. (2) Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. (3) For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, (4) but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. (5) As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. (6) But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' (7) Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' (9) But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' (10) And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. (11) Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to

us.'

**4) The Sandbag of Expectancy.** A man must live expecting the Lord's return and our eternal life with Him.

**1Th 4:15-18** For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. (16) For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore encourage one another with these words.

This will be the culmination of "the end" or the completion and close of this age. But remember, *the end* is Never **The End!**

## Teaching

Readiness is Teaching and preparing our families now. Preparing our children and our youth. Encouraging their faith. Reminding our elderly, encouraging and building up the faith of the weak

## Reaching

Readiness means the church reaching out to its mission field, now. Alerting others so they will know where they can come to find help and direction once the flood hits. Helping them know how they can be prepared before the flood comes upon them.

Gain the reputation that we are flood ready. We are end times ready.

Sharing Christ, proclaiming the gospel. Making disciples. Even care givers encouraging and assuring those you care for in gentleness and kindness, while comforting their spirit.

**C.      Readiness is not merely being forgiven, but actively being about the Lord's work, now.**

Readiness is not just being forgiven. Not just sitting in church worshiping. Not just having the TV off and Bible on the coffee table.

**Obeying**

Readiness is doing what Gods commands NOW. It means obeying God's calling TODAY. It means encouraging others to follow Christ *without delay, today*

It means being awake and alert – alert of the times in which we are living.

Living every day like this could be the day when the Lord returns in glory.

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***It Won't Be Long lyrics, Andre Crouch***

*It won't be long, Till we'll be leavin' here*

*It won't be long, We'll be goin' home*

*It won't be long, Till we'll be leavin' here*

*It won't be long, We'll be goin' home*

*Count the years as months,*

*Count the months as weeks*

*Count the weeks as days,*

*Any day now...*

*We'll be goin' home.*

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*But first dear friends, we must be ready!*



# ***Don't close this booklet yet***

***without considering this all important question.***

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## **Is Jesus Christ the Savior or *your* soul and the Lord of *your* life?**

Every person is born guilty of sin and in need of forgiveness.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;  
--*Romans 3:23*

Our sin is against God, therefore our forgiveness can only come from God.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only  
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should  
not perish, but have everlasting life. --*John 3:16*

God has appointed His Son as the payment for sins and sent Him to die in our place.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is  
eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
-- *Romans 6:23*

God's love is demonstrated through the sacrificial payment of Jesus Christ in our place for our sins.

...but God shows his love for us in that while we were  
still sinners, Christ died for us. ---*Romans 5:8*

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord  
will be saved." -- *Rom 10:13*

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name,  
he gave the right to become children of God, - *John 1:12*

Before you close this book, why not be absolutely certain that you are truly a citizen of God's eternal kingdom and loving family?

Trust in Jesus Christ today and receive  
forgiveness for your sins and citizenship into  
God's family and His kingdom.

**A** - Admit you have sinned and are in need of a Savior.

**B** - Believe Jesus died in your place, and you can no way help yourself.

**C** - Confess your sins to God. *He already knows.*

- also Confess Jesus as you LORD.

**Prayer:** Take time to talk to God right now and open your heart and life to His instruction and leadership.

**Connect** with a local Bible believing, Christ centered church.

**Commit** yourself to meeting regularly with other Christians who are growing in their faith.

**Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**Act 2:41-42** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

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For more information or for spiritual help, please contact us at:  
Christ E. Free Church, PO Box 619, 19682 Hill Rd,  
Saegertown, Pa, 16433, Ph: 814-763-2934, [www.christefca.org](http://www.christefca.org)

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***It is our prayer that you find Jesus Christ to be,  
your greatest purpose, your highest calling, your  
soul's source and joy, and your all-consuming  
passion.***

*Other Free Booklets downloadable at [www.ChristEFCA.org](http://www.ChristEFCA.org)*

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*May each lesson bring a growing submission, a deeper obedience and  
an increase of the righteous reign of the Lordship  
of Jesus Christ in the fullness of His Spirit  
in His Church and throughout our mission field.*