

Most of us have suffered though someone we trusted telling us that “The end of God’s Plan is upon us”, only to find that the promised date comes and goes without even a whisper of it happening.

For 2100 years people have looked for Jesus’ return and expecting it in their lifetimes. The ways in which it has been calculated are innumerable. Why do we keep putting ourselves through the disappointment of thinking it will be in our lifetime?

Jesus’ disciples thought that He would return shortly because the Roman rule was so oppressive and their world *couldn’t get any worse*. **But it did.**

Through the following generations the expectation was that He would return within their lifetimes, because the world *couldn’t get any worse*. **But it did.** There were still more wars, rumors of wars, and cataclysmic natural events and devastating famines; **and yet He didn’t return.**

A very short list of the many people that have set dates for Jesus’ return, is a veritable who’s who in religious circles.

- 500 Irenaeus – Greek Bishop
- 1000 Pope Sylvester II
- 1504 Sandro Botticelli – Italian painter
- 1836 John Wesley – Methodist
- 1891 Joseph Smith – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- 1914 Jehovah’s Witnesses
- 1935 Herbert Armstrong – Worldwide Church of God {also 43, 72, 75}
- 1970 Hal Lindsey – author of *Late Great Planet Earth*
- 1990’s Tim LaHaye – *Left Behind Series* {supposedly written as fiction}
- 1999-2009 Jerry Falwell – Baptist preacher and televangelist
- 2019 Ronald Weinland – Church of God {splinter group from WCG}

In truth, many of these men only hinted at a date, while others gave specific day and time of the return. Their “predictions” were the basis of much of their theology, which caused many to believe that the end was eminent.

Most of these “predictions” were based on misunderstandings of scripture. Some used various verses to mathematically calculate their date, while others substituted a word in the scripture that sounded like another and then based the date on an Old Testament event to predict the future end. Some even took a scripture that spoke about one coming event and by selecting verses that made it appear that it was speaking

about the end times. One wonders why these men didn’t believe what Jesus plainly said to his disciples about when He will return.

Matthew 24:

<sup>3</sup> *As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”*

<sup>4</sup> *Jesus answered: “Watch out that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I (Jesus) am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many. <sup>6</sup> You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the **end is still to come.** <sup>7</sup> Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup> **All these are the beginning of birth pains.***

<sup>23</sup> *At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. <sup>24</sup> **For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.** <sup>25</sup> See, I have told you ahead of time.*

<sup>36</sup> **“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.**

Why these (worldly) intelligent and learned men missed this clear instruction is beyond comprehension. Their pride overcame prudence and they thought that they knew more than Jesus. But what they did was to cause panic among their followers and when the prediction fell flat, many questioned their faith. Was there really a Jesus? Was He really the Son of God? The answer, sadly, for many was NO. Their response was to “Forget about a god and live it up in the here and now”

How can we still believe in Jesus’ return and the end of the age? Jesus says, *“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.... **So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.** Matthew 24:42, 44*

Keeping watch doesn’t mean calculating the time. It means being ready at any moment that the Father determines is the right time or maybe even the right condition of the world.

## Are we ready – TODAY?

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