

Then the End Will Come

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Signs, Times and Seasons

Text: Matthew 24:14

The **ultimate** sign of the end of the age is the spread of the Gospel of the Kingdom to all the nations of the world. When Jesus gave the Great Commission to the Apostles it was truly an enormous undertaking. They traveled by foot and by sea to the then known world. But it was not possible even with their passion, courage and commitment to reach the whole world in their day. **Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18**

In our own lifetime, due to the development of technology, it is **possible** to reach the entire planet with the message of the Gospel. **Daniel 12:4** In our day worldwide travel is commonplace and missions travel has increased as a result. With the increase of knowledge, technology and travel these innovations are all being used to reach people who at one point were unreachable. Once the entire world has been reached with the Gospel, **then** the end will come.

Jesus said that this Gospel shall be **preached** in all the world. This word depicts those who purposefully go to the inhabited world, to the cities, towns and villages, wherever people **live** and dwell. **Romans 10:15-17**

This Gospel will be a witness. A witness is someone who stands in a court of law and tells the **truth**. What they saw and what they heard and know to be true. The Bible says that we overcome the enemy by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our **testimony**.

The Bible tells us that the Gospel will be preached to the **nations**. The word 'nations' is the Greek word '**ethnos**'. So, the word nations could be translated '**ethnic**' groups. The spread of the Gospel is not so much dealing with borders as it does with people from all walks of life and languages understanding the message of salvation in a way that they will be able to receive the message. America has many different and distinct ethnic groups. In China, Brazil, India, Russia and Europe within each country are an array of languages and ethnicities' that require a unique approach.

Jesus was saying that the **availability** of the Gospel would be possible for every nation and ethnic group at the end of the age. There are approximately 7,078 unreached people groups that amount to 3.14 billion people who have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even if millions reject the message of salvation, we must see to it that they have an **opportunity** to receive or reject it. We are called to take the Gospel to our "Jerusalem" but also to the very ends of the earth so that the end of the age can come.

While there is an abundance of cell phones, TV shows and podcasts that make the Gospel available, nothing replaces the actual face to face sharing of the Gospel. This is why it is so important that those who will and are called **go**, and that those who are not called to go **send**. We must not lose our passion for souls or stop giving our best efforts to ensure that we champion foreign missions.

In many ways it seems as if the last days are going to never end. **2 Peter 3:3-4** Many people scoff at the idea of the soon coming return of Christ. They will tell you that there is no urgency and that for the last 2,000 yrs. People have been talking about it since Jesus time and not much has changed. They say the world isn't worse than it was, we just have better news coverage, so we are just more aware. They say that Christ's soon return is based on fictitious prophetic words that have no basis in reality.

Remember when we started this series, we said the last days started on the Day of Pentecost. **Acts 2:16-20** For some 2,000 years we have been living in what is theologically called the period of the last days. That may seem like a long time to us, but it is not to God. **2 Peter 3:8** These 2,000 years are like 2 days on God's prophetic calendar.

Why has God taken so long to return? **2 Peter 3:9-10**

The word 'slack' in the Greek means tardy, delayed, slow or late. God made His promises and He is not slow regarding them, He is being patient with people. Many versions use the word longsuffering which describes great intentional patience. God could take revenge on a sin-filled world, but He refuses to do so. He is not delaying His promises He is delaying punishment. He is willing to wait for that one last person who will repent and turn to Him. God is not willing that any should perish. He is waiting for the Gospel to reach that one last person so that they have the opportunity to be saved. God knows what Hell really is and He does not want anyone to go there. This is why we must be serious and committed about taking the Gospel to the world to as many people possible by any means possible.

As we come to the end of this series how should we as believers live? **2 Peter 3:10-18**

- We are to live holy and godly in this present age.
- We are to be looking forward to the coming of the Lord and hastening the day by sharing the Gospel.
- We are to be found living in peace with people and in our hearts. God has not given us a Spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
- We are to be without spot and blameless or without blame. Remember Jesus is coming back for a pure and spotless bride. He was our spotless Lamb.
- We are to consider the longsuffering patience of God and how it leads to salvation. This will cause us to love people and to care for people and be gentle to help lead them to salvation ourselves.
- We are to be aware that unstable people will twist the scriptures, and some will fall from their steadfast belief in God and His word. We are to make sure that we are not led into that same deception in the last days.
- We are to keep growing in the grace and knowledge of God. Until Jesus returns, we are to keep maturing in God.