

LifeGroup Study
IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT (And I Feel Fine)
When Will It Happen?
2022-02-20
Leader Notes

OVERVIEW:

Welcome to our series, “It’s The End of the World as We Know It (And I Feel Fine)! One day Jesus is going to return . . . physically, literally to planet earth. A lot of believers read world circumstances as signs that Jesus will return soon. But there are no signs that point to the timing of the return of Jesus. Jesus’ return can happen at any time. This reality should cause us to live differently. We should live with expectation, holiness and fervour for our King. The imminent return of Jesus is a truth that should fuel us to live differently. The goal of today’s LifeGroup study is to explore how the Bible speaks to this question – “With Jesus coming soon, how should I live?”

ICEBREAKER: What I’m Looking Forward To

One of the fun things about life is looking forward to future events. What is something you’re looking forward to in this season of your life? Maybe for you it is graduating from school, or a promotion at work, moving to a new home or starting a family. What is it about this anticipated event that excites or inspires you? **Share your story with the group.**

STUDY:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being “dead to it” and 10 being “addicted to it” where would you say you are at in terms of your engagement in biblical prophecy?
2. Have you always related to biblical prophecy like that or has there been times when it shifted around and can you tell us about that?
3. Has the Pandemic and other world news (potential war between Russia and the Ukraine, disasters such as fires, floods, famines etc.) been something that has caused you to think more about biblical prophecy and the end of the world?
4. What do you think is the reason the bible has biblical prophecy in it and what kind of effect do you think it should have on believers?

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY IN THE BIBLE?

Christian perspectives and attitudes towards biblical prophecy run the gamut, from those who obsess over it, to those who are completely and wilfully ignorant of events to come. Obviously, like many things we need to find balance in how we embrace Biblical prophecy.

The bible tells us the purpose of Biblical prophecy.

“I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, I make known the end from the beginning from ancient times, what is still to come.”

Isaiah 46:9-10 NIV

IT STRENGTHENS OUR PERSONAL FAITH:

“I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He.”

John 13:19

5. What does this verse tell us about how prophesy strengthens our faith?

LEADER NOTE: Faith is believing something to be true, even though we don't have irrefutable proof. When it comes to God, faith gets lived out as we trust that what He says about who He is and what He is doing is true. Prophecy strengthens our faith as we see events prophesied in the Bible fulfilled. While He was here on earth Jesus gave many prophecies. For example, Jesus prophesied that he would be rejected, tried and killed, and that He would rise from the dead. Reading these prophecies Jesus made and their fulfillment can greatly strengthen our faith.

IT INCREASES PERSONAL HOPE:

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

Romans 15:4

³ Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

6. One of the great benefits of prophesy is to bring us hope. Have you experienced this? If so, **how has prophesy given you hope?**

LEADER NOTE: One of the great ways prophesy gives us hope is in the Bible we read that in the end of all things, Jesus WINS! We serve a God who is large and in charge. No matter how difficult life is at times, we have hope that in the end God will make all things new and we will be with Him forever.

IT MOTIVATES US TO LIVE HOLY AND GODLY LIVES:

. . . what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

2 Peter 3:11b-12a

7. This Scripture speaks to how we should live in light of Jesus' return. **Do you regularly think about Jesus' return? To what degree do you feel His return is shaping how you live?**

LEADER NOTE: In our information overload, busy and distracted world, it is easy to live our days not centred on the reality that Jesus could come back anytime. This Scripture reminds us the immanent return of Jesus should have a profound effect on the way we think and live.

IT ENCOURAGES US TO PERSEVERE:

¹³ Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

8. To persevere is to continue in the faith, to continue to believe and stand firm in the truth. Think back over this past year. **How have you experienced God's power helping you to persevere?**

LEADER NOTE: Perseverance is all about standing strong through challenging seasons of life. The truth is, we can't persevere on our own. We need God's help, His power, to help us to persevere. Encourage your group members to think about how they have experienced God's help to persevere.

IT ENCOURAGES US TO LIVE THROUGH THE PRESENT / IT BRINGS HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

The godly will be encouraged to live pure and righteous lives and to be willing to suffer and sacrifice in the present in order to participate in the certain blessings of God's future promises. It is like a light at the end of a tunnel, the reason you climb into an aluminum tin can with wings and fly to Hawaii.

Revelation 1:3

³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Prophecy is primarily given not so we can draw things out on some large wall chart (know how to spell Gog and Magog, identify the Anti-Christ, and plot things on a calendar). It is designed primarily so that we can find peace and joy and live holy, faithful and confident lives today.

It is easy to miss the fact that biblical prophecy is about Jesus. The "last things" are about the last One. All of Biblical prophecy is to tell us that ultimately JESUS WINS!!

We must not turn our study of Jesus' return into a catalogue of events in which we're more concerned about chronology than worshipping the Lamb. Jesus first came in weakness, poverty, and humiliation. Although we don't know the exact date, He will soon return as victorious conquering King. We know time is running out and we must be ready.

Jesus is the ultimate focal point of all past and future prophecies. Though we may not know the exact makeup, sequence, and timing of future events, we are to plan as though Jesus were not returning in our lifetime but live as though He were returning tomorrow.

EXPERIENCE GOD:

Watch this video together as a group –

Jordan Feliz – Jesus is Coming Back! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92yISpwV8-w>

How did the words of this video encourage you as you anticipate Jesus' return?

PRAYER

Creekside Partners with Carmen Bajo Alliance Church in Quito, Ecuador supporting the ministry of Pastors Fabian and Grace Erazo. A recent in-depth study of their impact on the community has led to some exciting plans for the next phase of the church's outreach. Please PRAY for Fabian and Grace and for the leadership of the church as they look ahead with fresh vision and direction, for wisdom as they grow and adapt to continue to meet the physical and spiritual needs in their neighbourhood.