

The Approaching New Era

How to Avoid Pitfalls and Be a Victor

A new era is quickly approaching.

Find out what to expect so you will be prepared.

Learn about the dangerous pitfalls along the way.

Discover how to be a victor in the era on the horizon.

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You have probably heard people mention the approaching “End of the World” or “End of Time.” In my opinion, these are unfortunate misnomers. Although there is a mention of heaven and earth passing away and being replaced by a new heaven and earth at some distant point in the future (at least a thousand years from now according to my understanding of the prophecies!), there are a few events that have to happen before the redeemed people of God are taken to a brand new heaven and earth.

The main event that most Christians are looking forward to when they talk about “The End of Time” is the return of Christ Jesus to reign on earth in the fullness of his authority and power to stop evil and bring a government of love to earth.

This isn’t “The End of Time” but it is a *new era*. It isn’t “The End of the World” but it is *the end of the world as we know it* – it is going to get a lot better than this!

In this article, I will tell you what we are looking forward to, some signs to watch out for as that time approaches, some pitfalls to avoid along the way, and how to be a victor.

What We’re Looking Forward To...

Many Christians are aware of prophecies dating all the way back to the first century A.D. indicating that a time will come when Christ will return from heaven to physically reign on the earth. His government will be characterized by justice, peace and love. Satan will have no more dominion over the earth during that time. No more crime, no more abuse, no more deceit, no more murder, no more disease. It will be all about loving King Jesus, loving and honoring one another, and living totally fulfilled lives as peace and joy and love are restored to the earth.

Here are some prophetic descriptions of the coming of Christ to reign on earth. These words are taken from the pages of the Bible:

The Vision of John as Recorded in Revelation

Chapter 19

¹¹I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

¹⁷And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God, ¹⁸so that

you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great.”

¹⁹Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. ²⁰But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. ²¹The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Chapter 20

¹And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ²He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

⁴I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Jesus' Prophecy Concerning Himself as Recorded in Matthew 24

³⁰“At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. ³¹And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Paul's Explanation as Recorded in 1 Thessalonians

Chapter 4

¹³Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep [note: ‘fall asleep’ here refers to what we see as death], or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For 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. ¹⁷After 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. ¹⁸Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Chapter 5

¹Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ²for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

⁴But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. ⁵You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. ⁶So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

The prophets of the Old Testament also foresaw the time when Jesus would come and reign on earth.

Here is a detailed prophecy from Zechariah 14

¹A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you.

²I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city.

³Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. ⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. ⁵You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

⁶On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost. ⁷It will be a unique day, without daytime or nighttime—a day known to the LORD. When evening comes, there will be light.

⁸On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and in winter.

⁹The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name.

¹⁰The whole land, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will become like the Arabah. But Jerusalem will be raised up and remain in its place, from the Benjamin Gate to the site of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses. ¹¹It will be inhabited; never again will it be destroyed. Jerusalem will be secure.

¹²This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. ¹³On that day men will be stricken by the LORD with great panic. Each man will seize the hand of another, and they will attack each other. ¹⁴Judah too will fight at Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected—great quantities of gold and silver and clothing. ¹⁵A similar plague will strike the horses and mules, the camels and donkeys, and all the animals in those camps.

¹⁶Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. ¹⁸If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁹This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

²⁰On that day HOLY TO THE LORD will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, and the cooking pots in the LORD's house will be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar. ²¹Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the LORD Almighty, and all who come to sacrifice will take some of the pots and cook in them. And on that day there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD Almighty.

Some Signs to Watch Out For...

According to Jesus' teaching found in Matthew 24 we should see the following signs as clues that his return is approaching:

- Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom
- There will be famines and earthquakes in various places
- Followers of Jesus will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death and they will be hated by all nations
- Many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other
- Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people
- Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold
- The gospel of the kingdom of God will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations

We are also told that before Christ returns we should expect to see a person who will become very powerful on the earth and will try to take the place of God in the hearts of

the people of the world. He will even require the people of the world to worship him. It will be a cult of personality like the world has never seen before.

Paul explains this briefly in his second letter to the Thessalonians

Chapter 2

¹Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. ³Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for [that day will not come] until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

⁵Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? ⁶And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ⁷For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. ⁹The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹²and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

¹³But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

John the Revelator uses symbolic language to give us more details about this "man of lawlessness" in Revelation 13

¹And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. ²The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. ³One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast. ⁴Men worshiped the dragon because he had

given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, “Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?”

⁵The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. ⁶He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. ⁷He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. ⁸All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

⁹He who has an ear, let him hear.

¹⁰If anyone is to go into captivity,
into captivity he will go.
If anyone is to be killed with the sword,
with the sword he will be killed.

This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.

¹¹Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth [note: I will refer to this beast as the first beast’s false prophet]. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. ¹²He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹³And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. ¹⁴Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. ¹⁵He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. ¹⁶He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, ¹⁷so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.

¹⁸This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man’s number. His number is 666.

In fact, according to Revelation 19 quoted above, when Jesus comes back his first mission will be to defeat the “beast” and the beast’s false prophet and all the armies of the world that have submitted to the beast’s authority.

Some Pitfalls to Avoid Along the Way...

We don't know how soon the beast's world leadership will begin. We do not know how soon Christ will come back. We believe that there is a possibility that Christ will take his people out of the world to protect them from some of the judgments he wants to pour out on the earth. These judgments are meant to shake the people's confidence in their world systems and world governments so that some of these people might submit themselves to Christ's kingdom before Christ comes to conquer all those who are aligned with his enemies. We want to be ready at all times by making sure that our hearts are entirely aligned with Christ and his kingdom.

Here are a handful of traps to beware of so that you will not be caught on the wrong side of the battle when Christ comes back and to improve your chances of being rescued out of the earth at that time when Christ takes his people out of the world.

Don't align yourself with the beast and his government.

We have just seen that when Christ comes back his first task will be to conquer the beast and the beast's world-wide government. The beast's authority will only last about 42 months. After that Jesus will conquer him and will reign for 1000 years. Whose side do you want to be on? Do you want to be on the side that enjoys 42 months of power and chaos or the side that enjoys 1000 years PLUS eternity of peace and love?

This will be such an easy trap to fall into. Every nation of the world will submit to the beast and his government. He will use some kind of technology that forces submission to him as a prerequisite for being allowed to operate in the marketplace. We are told that there will be a mark on the hands or foreheads of his people that allows them to participate in the economic system. Only a true prophet of God could have predicted this nearly 2000 years before RFID chips were invented.

I will never let any chip be implanted in my body. And I will never worship anyone other than Jesus Christ and his Father in heaven. I do not want to be counted as one of the partners and participants in the government of Jesus' enemy – who will be utterly defeated.

The warning is very clear in Revelation 14:

⁹A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, ¹⁰he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name." ¹²This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.

¹³Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

"Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Yes, I would rather die than offend God by worshiping a Satan-possessed man. And if we are killed for defying the authority of the beast, our commitment to God will not go unnoticed.

According to the description of the 1000 year reign of Christ found in Revelation 20 already quoted above, anyone who is killed for refusing to worship the beast and for refusing to get the beast's mark in their body will receive a special honor and privilege. They will be brought back to life and reign with Christ for the thousand years. The other believers from ages past will not yet be resurrected. Reigning with Christ for those 1000 years will be a special privilege given exclusively to the martyrs who are executed for resisting the government of the beast.

Don't become careless while waiting for Jesus

Too many people become careless when they aren't in a time of crises. Then, when a time of crises comes they are not ready for it and make bad decisions.

As I mentioned earlier, some bad times are coming to the earth. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken. Only the kingdom of Christ Jesus will be exempt from the shakings.

Look what Hebrews 12 says

²⁵See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth [Moses], how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven [Jesus]? ²⁶At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." ²⁷The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

²⁸Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, ²⁹for our "God is a consuming fire."

A time is coming when out of God's mercy Jesus may hide his people away from the destructive shakings coming to the earth.

This protection for those who serve the Lord is hinted at in the prophetic writings of found in the Old Testament.

Read what the prophet Zephaniah says in chapter 2 of his book

³Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land,
you who do what he commands.
Seek righteousness, seek humility;
perhaps you will be sheltered
on the day of the LORD's anger.

Also, see what the prophet Isaiah wrote in chapter 26 of his book

²⁰Go, my people, enter your rooms
and shut the doors behind you;
hide yourselves for a little while
until his wrath has passed by.
²¹See, the LORD is coming out of his dwelling
to punish the people of the earth for their sins.
The earth will disclose the blood shed upon her;
she will conceal her slain no longer.

The New Testament also includes clues that God will shelter his people from his holy wrath that will be poured out on the earth.

Here is the message the angel gave to the church in Philadelphia as recorded in Revelation 3

¹⁰Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

This time of protection for God's people and judgment for the world will come without warning and when that time comes you don't want to be caught unprepared and left on the earth where the people who belong to the world will be. Examine your thought life and how you spend your time. Is your life focused on the kingdom of God and loving Jesus? Or have the things of the world captured your affections?

Here is Jesus' warning as recorded in Luke 21

³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴"Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. ³⁵For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man [Jesus]."

Jesus talked about how he would come like a thief who sneaks and steals something away. He is going to come and steal away his people out of the earth. No one can predict when a thief is going to come – otherwise the thief would never be permitted into the house. But Jesus will come at an unexpected time to steal away his treasures and he will take them to his home where they will be safe. Jesus wants us to always be ready for him. He doesn't want us to be caught unprepared living like the world. If that happens what does it say about us? Does it say that we should be with Jesus or with the world? Should we enjoy the blessings and protections of Jesus or should we know the destruction that will come against the world?

Here is another warning from Jesus to put things in perspective for us from Matthew 24:

³⁶“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

⁴²“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

⁴⁵“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. ⁴⁷I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ ⁴⁹and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. ⁵⁰The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. ⁵¹He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

So I just want you to know that even though we have strong clues about the coming of Jesus to reign on the earth, we do not have such strong clues about when he will come to thief away his people. There is mystery surrounding this event that has Bible scholars tied up in knots. But we don't have to have it all figured out. We just have to be living as though we belonged to Christ's kingdom and live to please our King. We don't want to be caught living like we belong to the world because the world is slated for judgment and ultimately destruction.

Also, as far as the coming government of the beast is concerned, many who call themselves Christians will be so preoccupied in worldly things and have such half-hearted devotion to Christ that they will easily succumb to the beast's demands that we submit to his authority by accepting the mark in our bodies and by giving him our worship. When faced with the problem of not being allowed to buy or sell unless they accept the mark of the beast, all the people who haven't placed their confidence entirely in Jesus and trust in money to solve their problems will find themselves scrambling to get the beast's mark implanted into their bodies. Parents will think they are doing their children a favor by bowing to the beast's government. People who aren't madly in love with Jesus will not have the backbone necessary to resist compromising.

Do not become an enemy of Jerusalem and her people

Notice that in Zechariah's prophecy quoted above it is prophesied that all the nations will gather to fight against Jerusalem. Then Jesus will come and conquer all those people. You see, the beast and Jesus will have their face-off at Jerusalem. The beast will rally all the people of the world against Jerusalem.

Jesus is not willing to return until his own people – the Jewish people – recognize him and accept him. He is waiting for the leaders of Israel and Jerusalem to welcome him as their king. He is not willing to see them left out of his eternal kingdom.

In Matthew 23 Jesus said the following words:

³⁷“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. ³⁸Look, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

He said that they will not see him again until they accept him. When Jesus comes again, we will all see him – including the leaders of Jerusalem. Jesus said in Matthew 24 that when he comes he will be seen from the east to the west like lightning in the sky. We will all see him on that day. But he is waiting for his own flesh and blood – the people of Israel – to see him.

In the meantime, Satan has been doing his best to turn the hearts of the Jewish people away from anything Christian or anything to do with Jesus. Satan has made Christians a stink in the nostrils of the Jewish people. Satan desires to delay Christ's coming (and Satan's consequent defeat) by keeping the hearts of Jewish people from accepting Christ.

Even many Christians feel that they don't need the Jewish people. They feel that they are a complete replacement for the Jewish people and that Jesus does not need them anymore. But these Christians forget the words of Paul as recorded in Romans chapter 11 where he says that all of Israel will be saved and that it will be a great blessing for all Christians when the Jewish people accept their messiah.

Know Jesus well so that you won't be deceived

Finally, we are warned that many convincing false prophets will come that will appear to be messiahs and people will even think that Jesus has come back and go to them.

But when Jesus comes we won't have to go out and find him because the sky will announce his coming.

Here is Jesus' warning about this in Matthew 24

²³At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. ²⁴For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. ²⁵See, I have told you ahead of time.

²⁶"So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. ²⁷For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

We should know Jesus intimately so that we know the genuine Jesus when we see him.

The last time Jesus was on earth many did not recognize him. Will we recognize him and honor him when he comes back?

Will we fall for a counterfeit Jesus?

We don't want to fall for a false Christ. But at the same time we don't want to reject the true Christ when he comes.

Let's know him intimately so that we will really know him when he comes.

Also, consider that we want to know Jesus well so that we recognize what he is doing now in our present time and support his work in the earth. Here again we don't want to fall for a false move of God but we don't want to condemn a genuine work of God either. We need to really get to know Jesus.

In every generation, people get led astray by movements that are not from God. At the same time, each generation sees many religious people condemn the genuine move of God in that day. Let's be so close to Jesus' heart and listen to the voice of Holy Spirit so that we can correctly discern what God is doing in our day so that we can join him and be a part of his great work in our generation.

How to Be a Victor...

The last time Jesus came to earth he came preaching one primary message:

Mark 1

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”

Jesus Christ came to teach us how to live as members of God’s kingdom. God’s kingdom will be completely victorious and will be fully manifest on the earth when Christ comes back as the conquering king and sets up his government in the world.

On one hand there are world governments that will be shaken and conquered and on the other hand there is the eternal kingdom of King Jesus. Which government will you give your life to?

Even though Jesus’ kingdom government has not dominated the earth yet, we can start living as citizens of his kingdom right now.

That was the message of Christ when he came to us in the first century A.D.

He came to teach us how citizens of God’s kingdom live. He also came to demonstrate that the authority of the king of God’s kingdom was stronger than any other force in the earth.

Jesus used his authority to command demonic forces to leave people alone.

Jesus used his authority to command bodies to be healed and made whole.

Jesus used his authority to command nature.

Jesus used his authority to command the dead to come back to life.

Jesus used his authority to grant forgiveness to sinners.

Jesus used his authority to create food that did not exist before.

Jesus willingly laid down his life as a sacrifice and then took his life up again so that a doorway to heaven’s glory would be opened for us and he would become the prototype of what we are when we enter his kingdom.

All of this authority was given to Jesus by God.

Now, when we give ourselves to Jesus’ kingdom – when we love and honor Jesus as our king and live to please him, the authority of our king is over our lives. We can go into the

world with the authority of our king covering our lives and everything we touch. We can do the same things that Jesus did to help Jesus extend his kingdom influence over the earth.

In fact, not only is Jesus' authority upon us and our lives; but also, we have in us the same Spirit of God that was in Jesus.

In John chapters 14-16, Jesus taught his disciples about their new relationship to himself, God the Father, and Holy Spirit.

He taught them that they are not of the world and that is why the world will hate them.

He taught them that he is the source of their strength and authority and that when they rely on him and stay intimately connected to him they will see his fruit in their lives.

He taught them that God the Father and Jesus himself will do whatever Jesus' followers would ask in the authority of Jesus' name.

He taught them that they would do greater things than even Jesus had done.

He taught them that obedience to him would be the primary indicator of our love for him.

He taught them that Holy Spirit would teach us all things and remind us of everything Jesus has already taught us.

He taught them that the prince of this world [Satan] now stands condemned.

The thing about authority is that if you don't know you have authority then you will not see the fruits of your authority. If you don't know your kingdom authority, you will not see healings in your life and the lives of people around you, you will not have a covering of peace and blessing over every part of your life, you will not see your influence for Jesus grow and change lives, and you will miss out on seeing all kinds of wonderful miracles from God that could have come if you knew your spiritual authority.

My experience as an elementary school teacher has taught me a lot about authority. It is amazing how the children can sense if their teacher is experienced or not.

To be an effective teacher you must have authority. Only then will you have respect from your students. The authority of a teacher comes from experience, confidence, and the ability to call on someone with higher authority, like the principle or a parent. If you lack one of these, the children may not listen.

In the same way when we speak against principalities, we must have the confidence that comes with experience and we have to be able to connect with the authority of our all-powerful God.

We need to know the source of our authority and be intimately connected to that source. The source of our authority in the kingdom of God is the King himself. You just don't push around a close friend of King Jesus! ...Especially when that friend of Jesus is acting in accordance with Jesus' directions and is totally under Jesus' authority.

The best way to gain authority in the kingdom of God is to draw near to the heart of Jesus and develop his heart in our own lives. When you are wishing for the same things that Jesus wishes for and are upset by the same things that upset Jesus and loving the same things that Jesus loves then you are on solid ground. That is when you are really operating from the values of the kingdom of God. Then you can expect the king to back you up.

Since we are robed in Jesus' authority, we can walk in that authority when we truly represent the King's heart and when we have a deep confidence in Jesus' willingness and ability to back us up.

This confidence comes from knowing Jesus and building up a résumé of experiences with Jesus in which we witness him backing us up. This will build up our courage and faith in him to enforce the pronouncements we declare as representatives of him.

Even if we sometimes don't see breakthrough, we should try to remember the successes and the miracles we *have* seen over time. By focusing on the miracles we have seen, we can build up our confidence in God and have the faith necessary to see more and more miracles over time as we have more and more positive experiences and focus on those experiences.

We gain confidence in the authority granted to us by our King when we see examples of him coming into a situation to make sure that everything responds to our prayers. At the same time, when powers and principalities see that we are not afraid to call on Jesus and that he responds to us, they will develop a sense of respect for us and put up less resistance. They see that we have authority and they know they have to submit.

Conclusion

We have seen that Jesus is coming back to conquer the world government of the beast and to establish his holy kingdom on the earth. Even now, there is a very real conflict between the dark powers in the earth and the heavenly kingdom of Jesus Christ. We want to be on the right side of the war waging between the dominion of darkness and the kingdom of Jesus.

We want to know our king's heart and share his vision and mission so that we can also share in his victories and his joy.

We know King Jesus will see ultimate and complete victory in the future. In the meantime, we are not willing to invest our lives in this doomed world. We want to give

our lives to the kingdom of God and start experiencing God's power and blessing in our lives right now.

Thank you for reading. I hope much blessing is yours as a result of this information.

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