

## End Times Session Notes- Fall 2014

Does the Bible speak to what is happening in the world today? With wars between Israel and its neighbors, global terrorism, increasing frequency of famine, new types of diseases, increasing moral decay, collapsing financial markets...*where will it all lead?* Add to that, churches walking away from Biblical Truth and redefining sin as acceptable in both the Christian community and our country.

The Bible gives us so many answers to the questions of life, particularly in this day and time. If you are interested in understanding what the Bible says will be in our future, come to a series of Biblical studies on ***Sunday nights beginning November 2, 2014*** entitled:



**Schedule: Sunday night beginning at 6:00pm- 7:30pm in the Sanctuary**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Title of Session</u>
✓ Nov 2, 2014	Signs of the Times
✓ Nov 9, 2014	Who is the Anti-Christ?
✓ Nov 16, 2014	Can one man rule the world?
✓ Nov 23, 2014	All Hell Breaks Loose
✓ Dec 7, 2014	Armageddon
✓ Dec 14, 2014	Ultimate Destination Wedding Reception
Dec 21, 2014	Jesus' Second Coming
Dec 28, 2015	Touchdown!!
Jan 4, 2015	The Ultimate Hope
Jan 11, 2015	Q&A on End Times

This is a DVD series by Bryant Wright, Sr. Pastor at [Johnson Ferry Baptist Church](#) in Marietta, Georgia. We will have a brief introduction, play the DVD session, and end with Q & A. Each session will be facilitated by Jim Lay. **BRING YOUR BIBLE and join us!!**

## End Times Session Notes- Fall 2014

### Session 6 – December 14, 2014 – Ultimate Destination Wedding Reception

#### Introduction

In this session we will finally get to the description and choices for the timing of the event we call the Rapture of the Church. There are 4 commonly held views of the timing of this event and each is worth discussing but there is one that seems most likely to me and is supported by the majority of Evangelical Biblical teachers.

I go back to a discussion I had earlier about how one views the Bible and the views we take on that will also have a dramatic effect on the choice we tend to believe when it comes to Rapture timing.

I hold the view that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, and it is the last Word of God and is both sufficient and necessary for understanding and following God's plan for each of our lives.

There are ways of interpreting the Bible that I must bring to light here because so much of one's beliefs are based on not only which view we take of the Bible but also the way we interpret its truths. The preacher-word for this is *Hermeneutics*, which simply means the Theological Study of Interpretation. Knowing the definition is not the same as understanding the accepted principles for this Biblical Interpretation.

There are whole courses in seminary about the various principles for interpretation and I won't go into them here except to put a couple of them that are instructive as we look at this question of timing of the Rapture.

**Principle #1 – Understand the Bible is a Mid Eastern book written with the minds and thoughts of the times when written...*guided by the Holy Spirit of God*.** We cannot and must not think like 21<sup>st</sup> century people in the USA when we read for understanding the time. We must always use the context of the time when written, who wrote it, and who was it addressed to so we can get our minds around the meaning intended by God and the human author. No taking scripture out of context and using it to make a point not intended in the text or making a politically correct point (Like Social Justice).

**Principle #2 - The best interpreter of the Bible is the Bible itself.** We must use the whole narrative of the Bible as a lens to look at a particular verse to decide its meaning. We must never use the lens of what is currently in-vogue in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to be the lens we view the Bible from... *Always the other way around.*

**Principle #3 – Read the scripture for the plain meaning.** The Bible is made for us to understand and it is not just the purview of the Theologian, Priest, or Pastor to determine the meaning. It is easy to twist the meaning of scripture in a tortured way to support a particular point of view but this is not correct interpretation.

## End Times Session Notes- Fall 2014

**Principle #4 – Read OUT of the scripture, not IN to it.** We must try and let the scripture and the Spirit speak to us not take out thoughts and place them in the text. This is a hard element to discern in others but we must listen for the truth and question anything that is attributed to the scripture that does not seem to fit the simple, plain meaning or context.

There are many other points to be made here but I always view the Bible as Truth, and every passage must be true and not in conflict. As an example...we discussed in a Q&A the topic of Calvinism or Predestination which is so prevalent in the seminaries today. When viewing the texts that discuss pre-selection or predestination or the opposite texts like salvation being available to the “whosoever” in John 3:16... we must look for explanations where both can be true and not discount the other passages. If we cannot do this in our human mind we simply accept that both are true and do not get into arguments about them.

With these in mind let’s watch the DVD session for tonight and I will return to explain my view of the Rapture and why I believe the way I do.

< Play DVD >

### Post DVD Discussion

I think you will agree that this is an exciting set of things to think about. Not only will the Lord take us “home” to be with Him, but we will be His Bride and will celebrate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb that Bryant discussed.

I do differ with him on the timing of the Rapture however, and I want to make my position clear as to what I believe and why.

There are various ways to think about the Rapture. Some Christians don’t even believe there is a Rapture, but I find that a problem in believing the Bible as Truth. The Bible clearly teaches a snatching away and the attributes are so different from the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming that it can only be explained by a separate event. Also the Saints come back with the Lord at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming so they have to get to Heaven and get glorified bodies somehow...and that “somehow” is the Rapture. Bryant and I are in total agreement here.

He believes in a Mid-Trib Rapture for the reasons he mentioned and disbelieves in the Pre-Trib rapture for the reasons he lists:

- Rev 3:10 is only speaking to the Church written to, and
- He sees the believers having to go through the partial wrath in the first 3-1/2 years of the tribulation and being taken out at the mid-point.
- He does make the point that the most compelling reason for Pre-Trib rapture may be the Doctrine of Imminence

Here is my thought process.

## End Times Session Notes- Fall 2014

**Point 1** – If Romans is written to more than the Romans, and Thessalonians is written to more than the Thessalonians, there is NO SCRIPTURAL or INTERPRETATION BASIS for believing the thoughts of Christ expressed to the 7 churches are not meant for all time and all churches. I would add to that thought that many interpreters see the 7 churches in Revelation as “types” or stages of the evolving church throughout the church age. How can this be if they were only meant for them and not us? So I think this argument is a silly way of supporting a different view other than the “plainly written view”. **In Rev Ch22 we see <sup>ad6</sup> “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches (not just the church in Rev 3).**

**Point 2** – The Doctrine of Imminence means that the Rapture can come at any time. Since we have a point in time when the Tribulation will occur, and the midpoint will be exactly 3 ½ years later, if the Rapture were to occur then we would all know the date, so that cannot be true according to scripture itself.

**Point 3** – There is no mention of the church in the book of Revelation after Chapter 3 except to refer to the Bride of Christ and the Armies of the Lord (Saints)

**Point 4** – Whether we believe that we should not be exempt from the wrath of God in the tribulation period is of little interpretation interest. What is important is that the Bible tells us that we will be taken to be spared from the wrath of God. This is in many passages, not just the Rev 3:10 passage mentioned earlier but also 1 Cor 15: 50-52

<sup>50</sup> *I declare to you, **brothers and sisters**, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will **not all sleep, but we will all be changed— <sup>52</sup> in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.***

As I mentioned earlier, these are not salvation issues and we are all brothers and sisters in Christ who believe the essentials of the Faith, but I take great hope and comfort in my belief that Jesus is coming back, He is coming back soon for His Bride (the believing church) and we will live forever with Him in Heaven.

I don't argue with those who believe differently, I just try and declare the word of the Lord and why I believe the way I do.

### **Brief Testimony**

I have been a Bible Teacher for almost 40 years. Vicki and I started out teaching middle school boys and girls, moved to young-marrieds, and then adults. I now teach an Adult couples class here at FBC in an expository fashion. In other words, I use the Bible and Bible books as my text and try to explain in an expository way, verse by verse what it means, why it was written and what is its significance today and in the future.

We started getting interested in Prophecy back when we were young marrieds in a class taught by a Godly couple about 40 years ago. A guest speaker came and presented from the Hal

## End Times Session Notes- Fall 2014

Lindsay book "The Late Great Planet Earth". We were both disturbed but very interested in this whole subject of the Rapture and what God's Word says about the future. Went right home and called Vicki's Dad who was a SS teacher in Louisville. He had certainly heard about the Rapture but either we had been asleep when it was mentioned in Church, or more likely it was not taught in any way that captured our attention.

This interest continued but was interrupted by life, raising children, jobs and moving until about 7 years ago when Vicki began to listen to sermons by well known Pastors like David Jeremiah and others preaching sermons and writing books about the subject. Through her interest and listening to and reading a lot, she piqued my interest and we began a renewed effort to understand. Since then we have listened to hundreds of Sermons and presentations and sought out prophecy teachers we believed were accurate plus read dozens of powerful books and commentaries. I began to research and teach the prophetic books of the Bible with interest and also we did small group sessions and church wide presentations on the subject.

My observations are these:

1. The more you read and study and let the Spirit speak to you, the more you will see prophecy unfolding right in front of your face. This is both exciting and un-nerving.
2. If you get the "bug" and begin to talk about it to others, even those within the church you will be seen as crazy, a weirdo, too intense, and other adjectives but you will be compelled to talk about it. We feel we are "watchmen on the wall" called by God for this time and place to teach His Word and Sacred Plan.
3. You will have to accept the ways others treat you since the Bible clearly points out it will happen to anyone who openly professes and declares His Word...whether prophetic to the church, or evangelistic to unbelievers.
4. If you are willing, God will prepare and give you opportunity to fulfill your own personal call...and we each have one.

My goals are these:

1. Teach God's Word fully as I believe it is my call
2. Use as many venues as possible to get the word out. SS, Church-wide teaching, Small Group, Website...or whatever other venues I have access to pursue.
3. Teach others to get interested in reading, understanding, and obeying God's Word for themselves...and pass it on.
4. Continue to study God's Word and be available for His use.

Open for Questions

...are there any Questions I can answer from either my discussions or the DVD presentation?

## End Times Session Notes- Fall 2014

**Handouts:** You have note paper available to you and also a 3x5 note card. What I want you to do is either send me at [jim@jmlay.com](mailto:jim@jmlay.com) any questions you want me to answer for you or write them on the card.

You do not have to sign them but I will not identify anyone's question when I answer it. My plan is to gather the questions and do a question and answer sheet but also for the last session talk through some of the questions so that everyone who might not be sure about some things will hear the answer and be able to follow up.

These sessions will not be a complete expose' on End Times, and I will do a follow up session sometime in the spring for a deeper dive into some parts of this study.