

Why Is the Evangelical Church Waiting to Be Evacuated?

Acts 2⁸ “[Y]ou shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”⁹ Now when [Jesus] had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,¹¹ who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

► Imagine we woke up one morning and found ourselves in WWII style uniforms on the shores of France, with our enemies amassed against us. What’s the first thing we need to know?

Is this Dunkirk or _____? Are we _____ or evacuating? What are our _____?

Mat 28¹⁸ Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Rev 1⁵ [F]rom Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

► Nevertheless, the modern evangelical church (MEC) has concluded that we are at _____, and when Christ returns – *that* will be _____ – and meanwhile our orders are to “watch” and “be ready” for his imminent “coming” and the church’s evacuation (Mt 24.37-44). But when we look at our sermon text, we don’t see any of those elements. It is clearly talking about the visible, bodily return of Christ in his 2nd Advent, and yet there is _____ sense of imminence, only of certainty. And there is _____ command to watch or be ready. Indeed, the command is to _____ watching and get _____.

► In the Bible, there are _____ references to the coming (or the day or the presence) of the Lord. Some are referring to Christ’s bodily coming in his 2nd Advent, but many are referring to Christ’s coming in historical _____ on some wicked city or nation. If you look carefully at all these passages, you will see that there are certain tip offs as to which category each passage falls into.

► Passages referring to Christ’s coming in his 2nd Advent are typically like our sermon text – they have:

- No apocalyptic language, only straightforward language.
- No sense of imminence, only certainty.
- No commands to watch or be ready, only to get busy and live faithfully.
- No judgment of cities or nations, only of individuals.

1Cor 15²⁰ Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.²¹ For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.²⁴ Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.²⁶ The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

Rm 2⁵ [I]n accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,⁶ who “will render to each one according to his deeds”:⁷ eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; ⁸ but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness – indignation and wrath ... ¹⁶ in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel

Acts 17³⁰ “God ... now commands all men everywhere to repent,³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

► Lets look at a couple of examples of Christ coming in _____ judgment.

Isa 13¹ The burden against Babylon ... ³ “I have commanded My sanctified ones; I have also called My mighty ones for My anger – those who rejoice in My exaltation.” ... ⁹ Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. ¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. ¹¹ I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity ... ¹⁵ Everyone who is found will be thrust through, and everyone who is captured will fall by the sword. ¹⁶ Their children also will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; Their houses will be plundered and their wives ravished. ¹⁷ Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them ... ¹⁹ And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans’ pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Mat 24¹ Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ² And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." ³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" ...

¹⁵ "[W]hen you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place ... ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains ...

²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be ...

²⁹ Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

³¹ And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other ...

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming ... ⁴⁴ ... [B]e ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

- Do we interpret Christ's apocalyptic language in light of his straightforward language or do we do the opposite following the MEC? Jesus says his coming would be like Noah's flood, with some people being taken away and others left. Was the flood

final or historical judgment? _____.

Who was taken and who was left? _____
_____. Noah's flood was a reverse
_____, which means you want to be _____
_____.

- Jesus staked his credentials as a true prophet and the true Son of God and Son of Man on his prophecy that the events of the Olivet Discourse would come to _____ during the lifetime of his hearers.

Dt 18²² [W]hen a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; ... you shall not be afraid of [that prophet].

► There is no more effective way to neutralize an _____ than to convince it that its orders are to _____ on the beach and _____ to be evacuated, when in reality its orders are to invade, conquer, and liberate the peoples. That in a nutshell is what happened to the evangelical church in America over the last _____ centuries. This is a major factor in the church's _____ of cultural potency and our society's downward _____ spiral.

- This puts the MEC decidedly out of step with the _____ church and with our _____ forefathers who were the major moving force behind the original American colonies. To them, Christ's 1st Advent was the great D-Day victory and turning _____ of human history, with Christ's people on offense ever since.

- Many battles and hardships lie _____ of us, and there will be deaths and defeats along the way, but none of that changes the fact that the crucial victory has been _____ by Christ, and the ultimate victory and success of the great commission is _____. That is what Christ's _____ means. And that is what the MEC needs to _____.