

# Last Things Last

by A.W. Pink

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of leaving last things, such as eschatology and prophecy, until the last, and instead focusing on doctrine, practical living, and devotional incentives.*

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 8:2, Deuteronomy 32:29, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 11:3, Colossians 3:2, 1 Timothy 2:11-12, 2 Timothy 2:15, Hebrews 5:12-14, 1 Peter 3:6, Revelation 1:3

**Topics:** "Spiritual Priorities", "Eschatology"

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## Description

A.W. Pink emphasizes the importance of prioritizing 'last things' in our lives, warning against the human tendency to procrastinate on matters of eternal significance, such as preparing for death and meeting God. He reflects on the need for a solemn review of the past year, urging believers to recognize God's guidance and grace while acknowledging their shortcomings. Pink critiques the modern church's focus on sensationalism and prophecy at the expense of foundational teachings, arguing that young converts should first develop their character in Christ before delving into eschatology. He warns that the inversion of divine order leads to spiritual incompetence and distracts believers from their true purpose. Ultimately, Pink calls for a return to the essentials of faith, urging that 'last things' should be addressed only after mastering the foundational truths of Scripture.

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## Transcript

We opened the year by writing upon "First things First," so it seems appropriate that we should offer a few remarks upon Last things in this closing issue of 1939. The subject suggested by this title could be dealt with in various ways. We might, for example, consider that procrastinating tendency of fallen human nature to put off till later things which ought to be seriously attended to now. Death was the last thing in the experience of the countless millions whose bodies now lie in the cemeteries: how many of them were prepared to pass out of time into Eternity? Like we, they knew that their life span would be but a comparatively short one at best. Yet, like most of our generation, it is greatly to be feared the majority of them lived as though they were going to continue here indefinitely, with plenty of time before them for preparing to meet their God. Here is a case where last things must not be left to the last. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deut. 32:29).

Or, we might well dwell on the fact that the closing days of another year call for a solemn review of the months now behind us: how far we have redeemed the time, or to what extent we have trifled it away. "Thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee" (Deut. 8:2). We should be humbled

at the recollection of how frequently we grumbled because His way was not the one we desired. We should judge ourselves unsparingly because we so often lagged behind, and sought to turn aside into forbidden bypaths. We should ponder the amazing grace of God in condescending to lead us across this trackless desert, and think, too, of His infinite forbearance in continuing to lead those so ungrateful and intractable. We should praise Him for having kept us in the Narrow Way, which we had certainly forsaken had we been left to follow the bent of our own evil lusts. And we should return fervent thanks that we are now a year's march nearer our Heavenly Home.

Again, we might consider how this order of last things last is now being so extensively displaced in the modern world. In 1 Timothy 2, where the Holy Spirit issues the command, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (vv. 11, 12), He points out, "for Adam was first formed, then Eve" (v. 13). Headship was therefore given to the man (1 Cor. 11:3). In the church and in the home the man and not the woman is to bear rule (1 Peter 3:6). But more and more this Divine order is being defied, and those who should be in subjection are taking the lead, the last (in the order of creation) insisting they should be first. The harvest we are beginning to reap from this evil sowing is indeed tragic: seen in the unruliness and selfishness of the rising generation.

But it is quite another instance of this turning of things topsy-turvy against which we would here protest--one that seems to have escaped the notice of many--or at any rate, one which is now being widely tolerated. We allude to the course being followed in so many quarters of the insistent pressure of Prophecy upon young converts. No sooner do a number of young people make a profession of salvation than (in many places) Bible study classes are organized for their benefit, where, for the most part, they are entertained with a lot of sensationalism, drawn from the politics of the present national and international situation, under the pretence that such is the accomplishment of Divine prediction. Things of vital moment are relegated to the rear, and matters of far less importance are pushed to the fore: doctrinal instruction, practical teaching, devotional incentives are largely ignored, and exciting disquisitions on future earthly events are substituted in their place.

In theological textbooks "Last things" (Eschatology) are rightly left for the closing chapters. We say "rightly," for that is the order which God Himself has followed in the New Testament. Seven times over is the Apocalypse designated a "prophecy," yet this is not placed at the beginning of the New Testament, but at the end--not that it is of least importance, but because we are not ready for it until we have digested the contents of the 26 books which precede it. It betokens gross spiritual incompetence, as well as carnal impudence, for self-styled Bible teachers to invert and so pervert this Divine order, and it results in harm and not good to those who sit under them. In our day-schools, teachers have too much sense than to turn their scholars to the last chapters of a textbook on grammar or arithmetic before they have thoroughly mastered the earlier ones. Alas, that the children of this world are so often wiser than the children of light.

Incalculable harm is being done by this putting of "Last things" first in the lives of young converts--this bringing before them the mysterious subjects of "the Revelation" before their characters have been formed after the example of Christ in the Gospels and by the precepts of the Epistles. Such a policy is as senseless and fatal as would be the teaching of infants how to fly an airplane. Instead of being exercised as to how they may please God, young converts are now having their minds diverted to how soon the battle of Armageddon is likely to be waged--a matter about which no one on earth has the slightest inkling. Instead of seeking a fuller knowledge of the Divine will for their own daily lives, babes in Christ are being occupied with profitless speculations as to how far Bolshevism and Fascism correspond to the "clay" and

"iron" of Daniel 2:41. Instead of being instructed to seek a closer conformity to the image of Christ, they are puzzling their poor brains over the number and image of the Antichrist. Instead of giving themselves to earnest prayer for the revival of vital holiness, they are dotting upon a "revived Roman empire."

Moreover, at least nine-tenths of what is now being given out upon the subject of "Last things" is but vain speculations. Russellites [Jehovah's Witnesses] and Adventists are capitalizing on political events by trading upon the credulity of the ignorant, and at the same time are fattening their purses at the expense of lovers of the sensational: but both blind leaders and blind victims all end in the Ditch. What is going to happen next among the Nations is no concern of those whose citizenship is in Heaven: our rest is not here, and therefore it is the part of wisdom to set our affection upon things above. God has given us "the Revelation" not to stimulate the spirit of curiosity, but to humble us into the dust over our ignorance. Any attempt to lift the veil of futurity is not only futile, but impious. Let those who are called to feed the flock of Christ see to it that they give them the nourishing milk of God's Word, and not the filthy water of current happenings in the world. Leave "Last things" until the last!

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