

The End Times

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes the signs of the End Times, the importance of remaining faithful, and the ultimate hope found in Christ's return.

Duration: 37:25

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 24:14, Matthew 24:36, Acts 1:11, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Revelation 21:4, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "End Times"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not conforming to the moral code of the world, but rather following the moral code set by God. He warns that the majority in spiritual matters is often wrong and encourages listeners to seek guidance from the Bible and prayer. The preacher also discusses the prevalence of war and betrayal in the world, highlighting the destructive nature of these actions. However, he reassures the audience that God is in control and will bring peace. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the importance of spreading the message of the kingdom of God to all nations.

Transcript

Immediately, after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven. The powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with purpose. And he shall send his angels with the great sound of the compass, and they shall gather together his elect from the four corners of the earth, from one end of heaven to the other.

Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and put as forth, though the summer is nigh, so likewise he. When ye shall see all these things, know that here, even at the door, verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all will fill it.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. But of that day and hour shall the Son of Man know, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. Now there are a few more in that same chapter.

I want to speak a little today. I rarely do. I think this will be the second time in a hundred years that I have given any word on the prophetic scriptures.

But they are here before us. It's variously estimated that a third or a half of the Bible is devoted to passages telling us what will be, some fulfilled, some yet to be fulfilled. It is quite a significant thing that when the World Council of Churches mentioned that they chose for their theme Christ, the hope, with strong emphasis upon his return to earth.

I understand that the others meant to the American leaders, who were playing down and have been playing down the thought of the coming of Jesus for a great many years. Partly because they have other plans for the world than the Christ over. Partly because to believe in the coming of Christ would mean to separate from the world and clean up, and that they do not wish to do.

And partly because those who do believe in prophecy have made themselves ridiculous by their prophecy, their own speculations, and so confusing the whole thing. But the European leaders came strongly emphasizing the doctrine of Christ's return. Our Lord taught that he would come back to earth again, and his holy apostles taught that he would come back to earth again.

And the Church Fathers always held this as the final, ultimate hope of the Church of Christ, that our Lord himself should come back to earth again. The very angel that saw him go away dressed in white, and he said, this same Jesus which is taken from you up into heaven shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go unto heaven, said that meant the destruction of Jerusalem. But of course that's so ridiculous that there would be no reason for my attempting to refute it.

And then others have said it was death, which would mean that every Christian that died from the day of heaven had a return of the Lord again to earth. Whereas the scriptures teach that Christ makes two visits to heaven, one to die and the other to reign, so that if Christ came every time a Christian died, it would be again, for it would mean Christ's return had to be repeated every time a Christian died. The Bible has other things to say about when a Christian dies.

It says they are carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, and that otherwise they go to heaven, not by the coming of Christ. Now, it is taught here in the passages before us that our Lord is coming. I believe that we are living in grave days, but we're living in grand days as well, grand, dramatic days, greater days than you and I know.

Not even the ubiquitous newspaper can possibly have any true concept of how great and how grand, how solemn the times are in which we are now living. And of course we're helpless to predict what is to come. Nobody knows that.

Nobody's smart enough to know it, and nobody is taught enough in the Bible to know it. The Bible will give a schedule like a local train, giving the name of every stop and the time that it will leave. Thus to interpret the Scripture is to misinterpret the Scripture.

The Bible is a book of grand outlook, and it tells us of the future, but tells us in great strokes like an artist painting a picture across the sky. The size is so tremendous you have to get away with it. He does not go in for tiny details, but for vast, bright strokes that are startling.

So I cannot tell you what may be on tomorrow. I do not know. Not even the angels know.

Who art in heaven knows that alone. But if we common people are helpless to predict tomorrow, the great leaders of the world are helpless. You know, brethren, it's awfully hard to have any brains in the day in which we live and not get blamed for it.

It's hard to have any insight. It is hard to be realistic and not be considered pessimistic. Just make any statement when everybody's waving flags and screaming until they're all flushed and their tears are something somebody's doing or saying.

Look through it and see what it really is. And with a sentence or two, you can name it and label it and say this too will pass away, and they'll turn on you with anger and say you're a cynical pessimist. Why don't they? But five months or six months later, they'll be looking back on that same thing and seeing it just as you forethought.

You need to foresee a little bit or see through. It is a wonderfully stabilizing ability. It is also an ability that brings you much criticism and much hostility and not see.

Now, there are great earth leaders. The reason I said that was that I was going to say this, that the great earth leaders are converting soothing speeches, which they make over the air and on television these days. I'm for these.

I think that Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles and Churchill and all the rest of them have been, were, and are great men. They wouldn't be where they are. They certainly, politics aside, must have some abilities we plain people don't have or they wouldn't be where they are or they'd be here.

But the fact they're where they are indicates that they're great men. But if I am not mistaken, it was the earth that were crying in the book of Revelation for the mountains to fall on them, to hide them from the wrath of the man. And as taken there was one, not one lone great man that recognized God, great man recognized.

Only the plain people heard him gladly, but the great did not. There is something in greatness rather, does something to the human mind that indisposes it for fine spiritual insight. Man do not have spiritual insight.

The very effort they're making to have peace, peace, peace, peace all the time, it's commendable. We all wish for peace and we could all wish that we might live into implements of agriculture and could exchange all our technical secrets and race of living for all humanity. We could all wish that and so we cannot commend and but commend and approve the efforts.

But they're not Bible students or they would not even that is that oh there should be peace round the world. I say our leaders don't know either. They don't know where we're going and they don't know.

I said to another one, well, and we smile at true, we don't know, a game of ball. We do what we have because the other fellow has done something that's compelled us to do what we're supposed to do. It's like the year ahead you're forced to do and nobody can predict except as one great statesman said, the next war will be fought in the future.

That of course was a prediction that could not possibly have failed. Well, I do not, I cannot name the immediate, is going to fall when a nation is what its religion is and its morals will be what its religion is and follow up there may be next. But I only know there is a more sure.

I know that ethical interpreters have grown up around prophecy at the same time they're up this morning not to a large truth. Now Christ has, he tells us that there are to be certain evidences of his near coming. And he made characteristics of the day just before he comes.

Let, let me name them briefly for you. Verses 5, 11, and 24, the anic delusion, I might call it. One that says, for many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ and shall deceive.

Verse 11, and many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many. And 24, there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and signs and wonders inasmuch that it were possible they should deceive the very elect. Now let me explain something to you here.

But Mr. Tozer, how can it be possible that you could make the fact of false Christ to be a proof of the coming, near, near coming of Christ? False Christ always. Well, it's like this. There never is a period any time from January 1st to December 31st, regardless of what kind of weather it is or where it is, that there are not polio.

There never has been, there is not a period from January 1 to December 31 at midnight that there are not polio somewhere throughout the world. But there are certain peaks when polio incidence, as they call it, becomes so prominent that it can properly be called a season for polio. Now, there never has been a time since Cain slew Abel, when some wild-eyed fanatic did not think he was God or that he was sent to redeem the world.

The Messianic delusion has never been off the earth from the time that man set history. But Jesus taught that there would be a period when, like the high peak of the polio, when the incidence should, that it might properly be called the season for it. He said just as there may be a few scattered around over the world for all time, when there will be a great many messiahs, saying, I am messiah and deceiving many.

I just have no knowledge of what's going on in the world. I don't have to make applications or read out of Time magazine. You know, and so we'll pass on.

I am Christ. I have the answer. I know how to bring peace to the world.

I can lead you into the promised land. In comes tomorrow, the millennium. Next day, prosperity.

We have these messiahs, some of them political, a great many of them. It's wonderful. And we have them everywhere, all kinds of people that are claiming to be messiahs.

Then he said, and ate these words. He said, ye shall hear wars and rumors of wars. See that you be not troubled.

Things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and earthquakes in diverse places. And elsewhere he teaches that it would seem that in the end or to that time when our Lord shall return, there should be increased military power.

You know, you're the same person living in the same world. Right after the first world war, we broke out in a war, anti-war, no more war, war pacifism. And the preachers were all pacifists then.

And there were staff Wolfitz's saying, we outlaw war. And they had their many wars. Man has learned, there will be no more war.

Now the refuge, there will be no more war. The generation that grew up right, the flapper generation, grew up believing that there could be no more war. Japan and they, and blazed for years.

And then we dropped Hiroshima and brought the thing to an end. A five minute period from that day to this, when the military is taken over. The strong, the military, the generals control things to a great extent.

We had an army of civilian people, which the military speaks of, the little generals and great men were to take. And we're going back to where Europe was a few years ago with the great wars. You say, was there ever a period of 50 years in human history that there wasn't a war? A tribal was a peak when war is in season.

And when the talk is, I defy any man to listen for 15 minutes to any broadcast. Fifteen minutes now, just some little local political thing, that's different. But any newscast of any stature coming out of New Listen, 15 minutes.

You're not here about war from somewhere. War that is, war that doesn't just end at truce and betray one another. You, of course, know betrayal and disloyalty and hatred in your own family.

And if the families in Russia today would be dead loyal within the family circle in ten years' time, it depends upon so subverting of the individual that he thinks not in terms of his family or his church, but in terms of his own country and world conquest, so that he would sell out his aged mother to get in good with the men that betrayed other men. Cain slew Abel in one awful act. Judas betrayed Christ and men have betrayed.

But this is betrayal season. It is the incidence of betrayal. The philosophy of betrayal is every one of you to be afflicted and shall kill you and you shall be hated of all.

So we seem to be in the persecution season. The most interesting, how the Christians are coming over, who's furnishing me this information, lives in Hong Kong. And I said, now remember, if we're to say you're publishing hearsay, we're going to have to know that.

Quite sure that it will mean persecution, banishment, and death for many Christians now behind the bamboo curtain. And then verse 12 says to us, because iniquity shall be increasing of iniquity, shall fall away. And it seems that this is happening in our time.

I know there are times when the church went very low. I also know that we are now living in polio season for lawlessness. It is not safe to go down the street.

When you drive down on any of the streets, I recommend you keep your doors locked, so that when you stop at a red light, there isn't somebody who hasn't yet learned to shave, but has learned to use a clip gun, or a clip knife and a gun, will stop you and murder you and take your car. Lawlessness and spiritual falling away. Brethren, it is very easy for me to stand here and say, woe, everybody that's following me.

And it's easy for you to hear me and say, all churches are backslidden to some extent except this church. Well, I'm a questioner too. Not to accuse, but just to rouse your thinking.

How ardent is your love for the Lord Jesus Christ? The love of many shall wax cold in that terrible period just before. How ardent is your love? All right. I want to ask you a second question.

To prove what is your Christianity costing you. You know what we are, brethren. We're a bunch of small, well-groomed showpieces of Christianity, middle class, well-to-do.

It costs us nothing. The nine tenths that we have left is still 100 times more than our fathers used to have. So it doesn't mean very much now.

It ought to be for God's sake, but it doesn't cost us. The old man of God said, shall I offer God anything that costs me? I'm asking you, what has your Christian faith cost you this last week? Think about it now. You say, but it would have been just as hot before you'd stayed home.

It didn't cost you anything. You meet your friends and it's a pleasure to go to church. That didn't cost you anything.

I gave my tithes and you had enough left to put some in the bank. That didn't cost you anything. I taught my Bible class.

It didn't cost you anything either. What has your faith cost you this last week? And then I want to ask you what it's cost you this last month. Let's start with January.

What has your faith for Jesus Christ cost you? That we serve the Lord at our convenience? Is it not true that we see to it, we Protestants see to it, that our Christianity is very good? Our friends over on the other side of the fence, at least they have fast days, but the average Protestant doesn't fast. He doesn't practice it. We don't put ourselves out at all.

We're the slickest bunch you ever heard of in getting our religion for nothing. We let Jesus do all the suffering and all the sweating and all the bleeding, dying, and then by faith we take over all of his bloody dying, and we pat ourselves on the back and go galloping along. Christianity to the average evangelical is simply a tale of a good time with a little devotions on the end as an excuse.

And we in this church ourselves, what has my faith cost me? Offering to God a bloodless sacrifice like Cain? Offering to God that which costs me not one ounce of blood or sweat or tears? We let our missionaries do all the suffering. We let them leave their home and go into the jungle. We let them stay away years at a stretch.

We let them sleep in under thatched huts and drive out ducks and goats in order to get it quiet enough to rest at night. We let them do all the suffering, and we pay them out of our tithe. And then we're believing that such were the prophets which were before us.

Better than we Christians in this church need to get on our knees with an urge to search our hearts. We'll be shocked at what we find. Remember it was the middle class, well-fed, well-set-up crowd that killed Jesus when he came back to earth.

The riffraff that you and I don't want in our church, they believed in him. The harlot we wouldn't admit, she believed in him. And the publican with his evil name, the middle-class people didn't.

Well, anyhow, because iniquity shall abound, money shall wax cold. Pray for me, will you? Don't pray for the things commonly people are praying for. Pray for me.

I won't end up a petered-out, tired old preacher haunting a place to roost that costs me something down to the last gasp. Then verse 14, full of the kingdom shall be preached, and all the world for a witness unto all nations, then shall the end come. I don't have to tell you activities are greater now than they've ever been in the history of the world.

Not even Paul had as many irons in the fire. Not even the early missionaries out going in all directions as we do in our day. Will you steady us and hold us steady in this awful hour? There is.

The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached. And what is a kingdom without a king? And how could there be a kingdom without a king? The answer is, no matter how lawlessness increases, how wars are fused and puzzled our great men are, or where the powder keg is going to blow, and no matter what betrayal and disloyalty and perfidy may be found every place, no matter, my brethren, there is a king. Men scream in thunders and beat their breasts and send out their bombers to destroy, but God reigns.

Why say ye to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountains, for lo, the wicked bend their bow that they may privilege you to the upright in heart. His holy temple and his throne is in heaven, and his eyes behold, and his eyelids cry, the children of men. What we see around about us is the trial of God Almighty crying us and trying us.

He's trying the nations and he's trying the kingdom of the nations. But don't get scared and fly as a bird to your mountains. There's no mountain to fly.

There isn't any place to look. There is a kingdom, and there is a king, and there is a king sitting upon the throne. God will look after his people, and God steadies me in this hour.

Another thing is, and here's what I delight in, our Lord Jesus Christ looked down the years as with a telescope, and saw everything, and told us in sufficient detail that it could not have been guessed. Nobody can guess ahead on all these things. The Lord knew, and he who was born of the blessed virgins, crucified under Pontius Pilate, and who ascended to the right hand of God the Father himself, was God.

And he had lived all our tomorrows when he walked in Galilee, because he is God. He told us all these things and said, lift up your heads and look and watch, because my coming will be unexpected. If he could foretell the future 2,000 years in advance and more, it dates way back to the early process.

If he could foretell the future 3,000 years in advance, he must be more than man. If he could foretell it, he must have foreknown it. And if he could foreknow it, he can handle it.

Another thing is that we can fortify ourselves and should fortify ourselves against getting panicky. This is the day of the nervous breakdown, the day when people have to take long, expensive vacations from loafing in order to keep from having a nervous breakdown. But don't get panicky, Christian brother.

Christian, dost thou see them on the holy ground? They are surrounded by a visible fire. And every true Christian, every true child of God is faithful to the Lord. I wrote a series of editorials in which I said, in effect, that all this great work is going on in our country and all over the world, and I'm not believing that I would be nailed to the wall and be called everything.

But at the end of the day, I have gotten letters from all over about those articles and everybody agrees with me that it's written up to now One Methodist preacher tried to help the Christian in this conversation, and he said, Furthermore, suppose this should turn out to be of the Holy Ghost, then you would be found to be fighting against God. Well, if fear to tell the truth lest you be found fighting against God, there would be no Noah, there never could have been a Moses, there never could have been an Isaiah, Elijah would have hidden in a cave and stayed there till he died of old age. There couldn't have been an Ezekiel and Jeremiah.

There never could have been a St. Bernard, there never could have been, never could have been. All right, you won't be found fighting for everything God's for, and I'm happy. Then tell me that it's fake.

Nobody is going to give me fool's gold and tell me that there is no fear I might be found. No, no trouble there, brethren. We're more likely to fight if we put our broomstick over our... With the legions of the one-third saved.

To say the half-saved. But I've changed. They're saved, and this is the doctrine.

All life, and their attitude towards sin in the world. Another thing we've got to watch out for is the modern moral code. You know, every generation has its moral code, and we have our moral code.

And we continue to be Buddhism worshippers. It is the moral code, it's the code of the majority. Spiritual things is always wrong.

Go to your Bible, get on your knees. They help you to look out on the world and see it as easy. Enduring to the end.

What shall we endure? I've got three minutes yet to go. Well, we've got to endure some fears. We've got to endure suspicion and distrust.

And he that endures unto the end, the same shall be said. We've got to endure temptation and outlook. Failures of others bring somebody, and they failed us.

We thought they were a Christian, and they proved they weren't. And that's always shocking. We've got to endure the continued decay of religion round about.

Confusion. We've got to endure. It just thinks it is.

God being God, and this Bible being his book. This I can tell you. However bad the world, evil cannot continue to win forever.

God and righteousness will win at last. Those who have been found on the side of righteousness will wear some kind of crown along with their Lord. Those who have been compromised, popular, and because it seemed to be winning, they will hear the words, Depart from me, I never knew you.

God is our refuge and strength. Even in these deadly, grave, dangerous, awful, dramatic hours, God is our refuge and strength. The very present health in trouble.

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth bear mountains, be carried into the midst of the sea. For the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There's a river.

The streams thereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, and she shall not be moved. God shall help her when the morning appears.

For ages when kings were moved, God uttered his voice, and the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

Come behold the revelations yet made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease. Unto the end of the earth.

He, not the U.N. He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder. Be still and know that I am God. I recommend you turn off your radio.

Turn off your TV. Give orders that you're not to be bothered if the phone rings, unless it's a matter of life or death. Get alone with God every day.

And be still and know that I am God. I will be heathen. I will be exalted in the earth.

The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge. Fear not little others.

Good pleasure to give you, the King.

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