

# How The Church Responds In The Last Days

by Sandeep Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing the signs of the last days as described in Acts 2:17-18, focusing on the need for believers to prophesy and be filled with the Holy Spirit. It challenges Christians to prioritize seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance and developing a prophetic ministry to encourage others in the church. The message stresses the significance of humility, obedience, surrender, and faith in preparing for the final day of the Lord's coming.*

**Scripture:** Acts 2:17, Isaiah 13:9, John 7:37, Mark 9:24, Isaiah 30:20, Acts 13:9, Matthew 11:28

**Topics:** "Signs of the Last Days", "Empowerment through the Holy Spirit"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I wanted to share from Acts chapter 2 verse 17, this is the first sermon that was preached after the disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit and he quotes from Joel, this is what he does here, a passage and verse 17 and 18, he talks about the last days. This is what will happen in the last days. If you want to know whether you are in the last days, if you want to know whether we are in the last days, here's one evidence of what will happen in the last days.

Verse 17, your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions and your old men will see dream dreams. Even on my bond slaves, both men and women on those days pour forth my Holy Spirit and they shall prophesy.

That is what we who are Christians can attest to the fact that these are the last days. There's a great desire in us for us to look outside and see certain signs and say, this is happening, wars and rumors of wars and pandemics and go to those verses and say, that's the proof that we're in the last days. But if we who are Christians, if we who are sons and daughters want to prove that we believe that these are the last days, then we will seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to prophesy.

So you may say that you believe that you're in the last days. You may say that you believe that the Lord is coming soon, but with your actions, you don't prove it. With your attitude to verses 17 and 18 is the proof that you don't believe it because you don't have a heart and a longing for the Holy Spirit to be poured on you so that you can prophesy, which means to encourage the brothers and sisters in the church.

It's as simple as that. It can't be made any clearer than I'm hopefully trying to say. That'll happen in the last days.

That's what happens in the church. What happens out there in the world is something different, but what will happen in the church in the last days is that the sons and daughters of God, our own children will have a longing and desire that they may prophesy. Where are they going to learn to prophesy if the parents aren't being a good example to them.

And whether you're slaves or free, it says in verse 18, the Lord will pour out his Holy Spirit. So this is where we have to prove that we believe we're in the last days. So easy, dear brothers and sisters, to get caught up with so many articles, Facebook posts, WhatsApp channels, the things that are pointed your way and conspiracy theories and all kinds of YouTube videos that look outside.

And the devil is saying, you're in the church. I don't want you to look inside. I want you to go look.

And it tells you what will happen outside too, in verse 19 and 20. But that's not what we as children of God should be looking at. We as children of God should be looking at verse 17 and 18.

Why is it that we're so attracted to verse 19 and 20 that talks about the sun being turned to darkness in verse 20 and the moon being turned to blood. And whenever you see the moon that's red and color, you're like, hey, the last days or different wonders in the sky above. We're so excited about that.

We're not at all excited about 17 and 18. That's what Noah and his children were doing. They were building the ark.

They didn't see the black sky and think, oh, that's it. That's for the rest of the world. But for us who are part of the church, we should be saying, Lord, these are the last days.

Acts 2, 17 and 18 must be becoming true. And the purity of my prophecy should be getting stronger and stronger. It should be more and more of a prophetic word that's coming through my lips week in and week out.

We've said this many different ways over and over again. It's not the teacher who prophesies. It's the church that prophesies.

Every single person ought to have a heart to prophesy. The teacher gives and feeds the body of Christ so that we can prophesy. We have to be laser focused on that.

We have to have clarity about the mission. Our mission is to go and be with God one day. And if that's the mission, it's getting closer.

It's like astronauts are going to the moon. They've got three more days to go or seven more days to go. Well, the clock's ticking.

I hope all the bolts are tightened. I hope all the hatches are well-seamed to go to the moon. There's no coming back out of that.

Hopefully, the rocket is all good to go. Imagine how Noah, if he believed that there was a flood going to destroy the whole world, how he must have been very careful to make sure that whole ark was properly sealed. Those were the last days in Noah's time for everybody else.

Noah, he had to build that ark correctly. So we have to be clear about our mission in the last days. It's to build the body of Christ so that it's ready to be the bride of Christ, which means we have to focus on our mission.

Lord, am I having an ever-increasing prophetic word that is coming out of my lips in the circle of life that I'm in, as we heard, Acts 1, verse 8, to myself, to encourage myself in the Lord as we read 1 Samuel 30, to encourage my family, and then beyond that. So that should be our focus. That should be our mission.

That's what we wake up every day to do. We don't need anybody else to encourage us. We encourage ourselves in the Lord, and then we build that out from there.

Then the world sees these signs in Acts 2, verse 19 and 20. The sun may be darkened. All kinds of signs might happen.

But by then, it's too late in a sense because He's at the door. It's when you see the really dark clouds or something, and it's right about to rain. You better have hoped that the ark was ready by then because it's going to rain any minute now.

So don't wait for the sun to be darkened and the moon to turn into blood. Now is the time because in the last days, the church gets a warning and says, during the last days, I'll stop prophesying. Start being earnest to prophesy, being eager to prophesy.

And that doesn't mean speaking in amygdala groups. It's much more than that. It's having the Holy Spirit and knowledge of tongue day by day as we listen to Him day by day.

As we heard in Isaiah 30, we more and more say, Lord, there used to be a days when it was a famine. Maybe you can turn there so that you can see that reference if you didn't turn there when Brother Santosh, I think we shared it, right? Isaiah 30 verse 20. There used to be days of privation or famine, oppression.

Those used to be the days before. I barely heard a word from the Lord, just dry. And we used to be encouraged, but now it's different.

Now you'll see the teacher and you'll hear a word. Verse 21, Isaiah 30 verse 20 and 21. Walk in this way, do this, do this, do that.

And we'll hear it daily. We'll hear it over and over again. Lord, this is what you're trying to share to me.

And out of that, we'll have words to give to other people. And if we don't have that, we have to mourn, we have to hunger and thirst and say, Lord, I want your righteousness to be proved in my life. I don't want to just be casual about it.

This is my mission, not because I'm an elder in the church, not because I'm somebody who's got some ministry. No, because I'm a member of the body of Christ. It is my mission to build the body of Christ.

It wasn't Noah alone who did it. It was Noah's wife. It was Noah's three children.

It was Noah's three children's wives. It's the body of Christ that has to build the ark. And so dear brothers and sisters, you're hearing this over and over again.

Be earnest to prophesy. Not be earnest to share, be earnest to encourage. It's not once a week.

It's seeking to have that heart and say, Lord, give me words. And we must be listening seven times more than we speak at least. We must be slow to speak and quick to listen.

So we may not have much to speak because we're not been listening much. And we've not been asking the Lord and having a yearning desire to be part of building the body of Christ. And so we're caught up in our own dramas or hangups.

We're not listening. This is all the challenges that we have to shake ourselves off of. And this is the reason why we meet is to remind ourselves of these things.

To say, I want to repent. I want to reset. I want to have my mission statement clear.

These are the last days I need to be building up the body of Christ. I don't want to share what God has blessed me with as if that's just learning. But I want to have a prophetic lips to my children.

I want to, without even knowing it, be speaking to their needs, even though they're not telling me about it. And I'm able to say a word of encouragement or correction or conviction or whatever it is. That should be the desire of our heart to become ark builders, to become prophesiers in the last days.

And that that's the desire that we have. Lord, I don't care if my children understand mathematics as quickly as they need to. But Lord, that my sons and daughters may prophesy.

We want them to be born again, but that's not good enough. We want them to become people who can prophesy. And you know, I wanted to point that expression back in Acts chapter two.

It's something that I learned as I was reading one of my dad's books. Acts chapter two, verse 20. It says, the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon into blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come.

That's an expression, the day of the Lord. And that day talks about when things are wrapped up. That's when the flood begins, so to speak.

And that's when it's game over, so to speak. Right. So that's what's called the day of the Lord.

The day of wrath is another place, I think, in Revelation is called the day of wrath. And I want to show you this verse in Acts chapter 13, verse nine, which my dad pointed out to her and was really blessed by. I'll give you a moment to turn to Acts chapter 13, verse nine.

He also talks about the day of the Lord that is coming. This is the prophet Isaiah. In Acts chapter 13, verse nine, he says, behold, the day of the Lord is coming.

Same. Remember in Acts two, that the sun will darken, the moon will be turned into blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord. And that expression, day of the Lord, appears a few times.

And it's relating to that final day. And see in Acts chapter 13, sorry, Isaiah chapter 13, verse nine, he says that. Right.

Isaiah 13, verse nine. I'm sorry if I kept confusing you, Acts or Isaiah. It's Isaiah.

Okay. So Isaiah chapter 13, verse nine. It says in Isaiah 13, verse nine, behold, the day of the Lord is coming.

Again, that expression, the day of the Lord, cruel with fury and burning anger. Right. It goes on to the verse nine.

But I wanted to show you the thing that my dad underlined in verse 11. Thus I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity. I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud and abase the haughtiness.

This is what will end in the day of the Lord. All arrogance, all pride. That is when, that is what should be being reduced to zero.

We heard about being nothing so that Christ can be everything. And if we are something, then God is not everything. What does it mean to be nothing? It means to be perfectly humble, like Jesus was perfectly humble.

And that Jesus did nothing of his own initiative. That's how we should be trending towards that. Because on the day of the Lord, which is coming, then God says done.

Done with all pride. That's when it completes down to zero. And for some of us, it may be a 1% shift where God says, okay, you were 1% proud.

Yeah, now you're transformed into being 0% proud because that's the day of the Lord. But for some of us, it may be a greater percentage if we're even going to make it to heaven. But hopefully that's a clear mission statement of what should be being decreasing as the day of the Lord decreases.

Is that arrogance should be decreasing day after day after day. Reliance on self should be decreasing day after day after day. And obedience should be increasing day after day after day.

Faith should be increasing day after day after day. I think one of the sisters said the greatest power is faith in God's promises. That should be increasing greater day after day after day after day till it's complete faith in all of God's promises.

That's Jesus. And we should be getting as close to that. We should be getting as close to complete faith in all of God's promises.

Complete obedience like Jesus did. Reduce down to zero pride or complete humility, complete dependence, more and more dependent, more and more surrender. They're all the same words.

You can talk about faith. You can talk about obedience. You can talk about surrender.

You can talk about humility. They're all the same thing. You want to know how humble you are? Just tell me how obedient you are, how dependent you are, how surrendered you are, how much faith you have in God's promises.

That tells me how humble you are. And I don't have the time to show you all the different ways I come up with the verses for it, but the Lord has shown me that that is humility, faith, obedience, surrender, all the same thing. And because of those words, I'm able to not look at the dictionary and say humble is somebody who puts his head down or is very quiet or always has no opinion about himself.

No. I find a person who has a strong dependence on God is an extremely humble person. They may have different personalities, but that's what's going to happen in the day of the Lord.

He's going to reduce all arrogance and pride down to zero. And so I hope the message is very clear for us that as the day of the Lord is coming nearer, if we're all saying that, yeah, God is coming soon, Jesus is coming soon. Let's put our money where our mouth is.

Let's put true Christianity on display, not just with our words, with our lifestyle. And so what that means is if we believe the day of the Lord is coming and these are the last days, one, we will have an eagerness and a growing earnestness to want to prophesy, to share spirit-filled words with our tongues. And we will not have that if we're not listening so much with our ears more and more.

And if we're all caught up with our own voices that we're hearing in our ears about this situation in this world or that situation in the world or this trouble or that emotion, we won't get to hear the word of the Lord. Who is blind like your servant? Who is deaf like your servant, who has made himself deaf to every feeling and everything that's out there and says, Lord, I want to hear your voice. Such a servant will hear the word of the Lord.

And from that produce of words and words, God will give them something to give. Every time they meet with some believer, it'll be a small fraction of what he's listening to, but that'll be the input and output. The input will be rivers and what will come out may not be rivers at first because God may not give us those opportunities, but it'll have the same quality as the rivers of living water that are flowing into you.

And then God may give us more opportunities to speak, but let's seek the Lord to be earnest to prophesy. Say, Lord, give me an opportunity. Give me somebody who I can call and spend a few minutes with.

Give me a word. I've got no idea what they would say, but I want to have a prophetic lip. And the way you get a prophetic lip is to have a really anointed ear that is so surrendered and constantly shutting out every other frequency except the Lord's.

And the other point was in the last day, all arrogance will cease. So that should be something that is a great measurement that we should be tracking. Our true humility, our true obedience, our true surrender, our true faith in God's promises should be increasing in the months.

It's been two and a half months since California shut down our society for most parts and shelter in place began, I think, middle of March. Now it's June. Is that a long enough time to see shifts in listening to God's word, in having a prophetic lip? Has it gone backwards for some of us to where our lips and our prophetic voices has become dull? I think we're going in the wrong direction.

Thank God for trials. Thank God for situations where he gets us to depend on God's word so that we can have an anointed word every time we speak. And we can talk about all kinds of things with our brothers and sisters.

You know me, whenever I've talked to you, I'm not the one who's always pounding the Bible and the truth and always trying to just constantly do it. But there's a desire in me to say, Lord, I want to have, even if it is one sentence, I want to have a prophetic ministry. I've experienced that from you, dear brothers and sisters, from some of you in a casual conversation.

You may not even know it, but something the Lord lays on your heart has been specifically for me. And I may not have always had the opportunity to tell you, but the Lord has used you to speak into my life. So it's in us.

And God wants to grow that and increase it and magnify it. And every time, no matter what happens, no matter what conversation we have, if at least one sentence or one word, or maybe every word that is anointed by the Holy Spirit. So I desire, dear brothers and sisters, I hope I'm not trying to make it some kind of super spiritual idea that every word has to be far be from it.

If you've hung out with me long enough, you know that I talk about every circumstance and I joke and I do those things, hopefully in a pure way. I try to be as normal, but I want my heart to always have a year for a prophetic word, knowing that the Lord just has to say one sentence, one word, and that's enough. But it comes from listening a lot, looking at his face, seeking to see his face in every situation, seeking to draw my heart away from the troubles of this world and say, Lord, show me your face.

Then he can give me a face that reflects his face, a tongue that reflects his tongue. May the Lord help us. Let's close in prayer.

Father, we pray, Lord Jesus, that the Holy Spirit may be poured out to us, dear brothers and sisters, Lord Jesus. For those of us, Lord, who believe it is in the last days and genuineness, not looking at the signs outside, but have a tugging in the Holy Spirit inside of us saying, these are the last days. The Holy Spirit groans with us, Lord Jesus.

We pray that we may claim these promises, that we may have an earnestness and a hunger and thirst for righteousness, that we may see our great poverty, rivers of living water to flow through us, that you may pour out your spirit, Lord Jesus, and that may be the longing of our heart, that more and more these rivers of living water may come where there was an open sewer, where the sewage and the stink of our flesh used to dominate. We want to claim, Lord Jesus, that John 7, 37, that rivers of living water can come out of it. We want to seek that transformation and see it, Lord Jesus, in the days to come.

These are the last days, Lord. We don't want to be content with perfumes that mask the sewage. We don't want to be satisfied even with a blocked up sewage and a trickle.

We want to seek a growth and a burst of waters and rivers of living water. May this be true in our personal lives as we encourage ourselves in the Lord. May it be true as we hang out with our families and with our friends.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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