

STUDY NOTES

A SERMON *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Signs, Signs, Everywhere Signs” on 9/10/17 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 24:1-14

WHEN IS THE END COMING?

People have been asking this question (or a variation of it) since the beginning of recorded history.

- *Why do you think people have been asking this question since the beginning?*

SIGNS, SIGNS, EVERYWHERE SIGNS

Thank goodness the disciples asked Jesus when the end was coming. They asked Jesus for a sign of the end. He responded with nine:

- (1) people other than Jesus will claim to be the Messiah;
- (2) “wars and rumors of wars”;
- (3) international hostility;
- (4) famines and earthquakes (natural disasters);
- (5) persecution;
- (6) apostasy and betrayal in the church;
- (7) false prophets;
- (8) spiritual life will grow cold;
- (9) gospel preached everywhere.

- *How many of these do you see already fulfilled or being fulfilled?*

Yes, there are signs to watch for, but Jesus says something else after listing all of these signs. **Read Matthew 24:32-35.** It is crucial to observe the fulfillment of all these preliminary events prior to AD70 when Jerusalem and the Jewish temple were destroyed. This demonstrates that everything necessary for Christ’s return was accomplished within the first generation of Christianity, so that every subsequent generation has been able to believe that Jesus could come back in their times.

- *Why do you think it would be important for every generation to believe that Jesus is coming back soon?*

Is the world getting worse? Maybe. But the human heart isn’t more sinful than it used to be. To believe that would be to deny the bible. Let’s not make the same mistake every generation has made:

God uses human beings and human events as signs for the end, but they aren’t THE sign of the end.

- *How is it easy to get caught up thinking that current day is as evil as it has ever been? What has been some horrific evil of times past?*

BUT THERE IS A SIGN—THE SIGN!

Read Matthew 16:1-4. The only sign Jesus will provide of the coming of His Kingdom is the “sign” of Jonah. Jonah in the fish for three days parallels the period of Jesus’ death. Since Jesus would remain dead for three days, the “sign” must include his resurrection as well.

Jesus dead. Jesus resurrected. That’s the sign!

- *How should Jesus’ death and resurrection be enough for us to believe that he is coming back?*
- *Even Jesus himself said that he didn’t know when he would return (Matthew 24:36) How can we be ready for Christ’s return, but not get caught up in trying to predict it?*
- *What does it mean to be ready for Christ’s return?*