



Sugar Land
BIBLE CHURCH
Bringing the Bible to life.

2021

THE CORNERSTONE



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9AM TO NOON

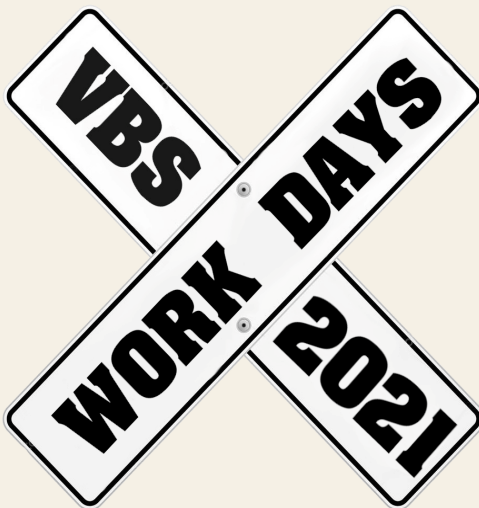
JUNE 7-11, 2021



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May 6th 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

May 15th 8:00 a.m. to Noon

May 20th 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

May 22nd 8:00 a.m. to Noon

May 23rd Crew Leader Meeting
Immediately after service. Lunch provided.

Missions for the Month

JIM AND PHYLLIS MYERS

Dear Friends,

What a year this has been. I doubt anyone will forget 2020 with all of the tumultuous events, the chaos, confusion and panic: impeachment, riots, pandemic, and the election fiasco, lockdowns, quarantines, shuttered businesses, restrictions on church attendance, travel bans, etc., etc., etc.



What a great time to be alive! What a tremendous opportunity to manifest the grace of God, His provision to a lost world, and to give a reason for the hope that is in us. What a comfort to know that our sovereign Lord is ruling over all. The world is not spinning out of control but is moving in the exact direction that He has planned. *In His book they all were written, the days fashioned for us when as yet there were none of them.* He saw this year in eternity past and made perfect provision for His children to go through it with peace and joy, with confidence and assurance. He put you where you are at this very time for His own purposes. We have opportunity to shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. We do not despair. *We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair (2 Corinthians 4:8).*

In the midst of everything we had to make many alterations to our usual way of doing things. We had to cancel our annual trips to Africa and South America. I was scheduled to teach for two weeks in Estonia, but that had to be postponed. I was planning on teaching a course in eastern Ukraine, but that was scrapped at the last minute due to the Covid-19 panic. For several months our church could not meet face-to-face because of government restrictions. So we held services at our house with 10-15 people in person and the rest joined us live stream on the internet. Because people were confined to their homes for weeks on end, we started having Bible classes online every night of the week. This has abated somewhat so that we now have livestream classes four times a week, but the church is now able to meet in our usual place on Sundays.



Dr. Andy Woods
Pastor

Signs of the Times for 2021 (Part 15)

In our first installment, we observed that the Bible places much emphasis on the signs related to Christ's return (Matt. 24:33; Luke 21:28; Heb. 10:25, etc.). Observing these signs helps us ascertain that general time of human history in which we find ourselves. We noted that if the signs of the Tribulation period are rapidly approaching, and the rapture of the Church precedes the Tribulation period, then the rapture must be coming even faster. Thus, we began to ask ourselves, what are some of these signs that are now setting the stage for the coming Tribulation period? We selected the following *seven* signs as deserving of analysis to be covered in this series:

- Signs related to Israel
- Signs related to international politics
- Signs related to economics
- Signs related to technology
- Signs related to spirituality
- Signs related to society
- Signs related to understanding Bible prophecy

Therefore, this series is dedicated to exploring the *seven* signs related to the soon return of Jesus Christ. As a result of this teaching, may we all grow in our understanding of the unique time in which we now live. As dealt with in the prior installments in this series, there are several signs meriting discussion concerning the modern state of *Israel* and *international politics* and signs related to *economics* and *technology*. In this installment, we continue to turn our attention toward the predicted *spiritual signs* of the last days.

5. Signs Related to Spirituality

The Bible has much to say about the *spiritual* climate that will characterize the world at the time of Christ's Second Advent. While there is much to consider, for our purposes we will limit ourselves to just six categories. These include the advent of *global persecution against believers*, *global religion*, *ecumenism*, *ridicule of the doctrine of the Second Advent*, *the last days apostasy of the Church*, and *the rise of Antisemitism*. Having already explored the trend toward *persecution* and *global religion* in the prior installments, let us now turn our attention to *ecumenism*.

Ecumenism

Ecumenism involves the urge to merge. It is a trend highly related to the predictions concerning global religion spoken of previously. As humanity is being pushed in the direction of global spirituality, Christendom will simultaneously develop a propensity to merge with other groups that fail to hold to its same core biblical convictions. Emergent Church leader Robert Webber explains this *ecumenical* mindset in his book *Ancient Future Faith*:

Pastor's Corner

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A goal for evangelicals in the postmodern world is to accept diversity as a historical reality, but to seek unity in the midst of it. This perspective will allow us to see Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches as various forms of the true church—all based on apostolic teaching and authority, finding common ground in the faith expressed by classical Christianity. [Robert Webber, *Ancient Future Faith*, 85].

Notice here that Webber places Roman Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy, and Protestantism on equal theological footing and as equal variants of the one true faith. This *ecumenical* mindset works its way out through movements like *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* (ECT), which seeks to find common theological ground allowing them to become co-belligerents against various social evils, such as abortion, pornography, or Communism. Mega-church Pastor Rick Warren espouses this very mindset when, concerning the common ground supposedly shared by Roman Catholics and Protestants, he says:

We have far more in common than what divides us. When you talk about Pentecostals, charismatics, evangelicals, fundamentalists, Catholics, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, on and on and on and on. Well, they would all say we believe in the trinity; we believe in the Bible; we believe in the resurrection; we believe salvation is through Jesus Christ. These are the big issues. Sometimes Protestants think that Catholics worship Mary like she is another god. But that is not exactly catholic doctrine. . . . and people say well what are the saints all about? Why are you praying to the saints? And when you understand what they mean by what they are saying there is a whole lot more commonality. Now there are still real differences, no doubt about that. But the most important thing is if you love Jesus, we are on the same team. The unity that I think we would see realistically is not a structural unity but a unity of mission. And so, when it comes to the family, we are co-workers in the field on this for the protection of what we call the sanctity of life, the sanctity of sex, and the sanctity of marriage. So, there is a great commonality and there is no division on any of those three. Many times, people have been beaten down for taking a biblical stance. And they start to feel, “Well, maybe I am out here all by myself.” No, you are not. [Matt Slick, “Rick Warren’s Comments on Roman Catholicism,” accessed July 20, 2015, <http://www.carm.org>].

Of course, Protestant Theology has nothing in common with Roman Catholicism. If this were not true, then there would have been no need for the Protestant Reformation back in the sixteenth century. The five “solas” (meaning “alone” or “by itself” in Latin) clearly differentiate Protestantism from Roman Catholicism making it impossible for these two trains to ever meet. These five “solas” include: 1. *Solus Christus* or salvation in Christ alone, 2. *Sola Fide* or salvation by faith alone, 3. *Sola Gratia* or salvation by grace alone, 4. *Sola Scriptura* or authority derived from the Scripture alone, and 5. *Soli Deo Gloria* or all to the glory of God alone.

In addition to Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT), yet another outworking of *ecumenism* is the attempt to merge Christianity with Islam. This movement is sometimes known as *Chrislam*. Interestingly, the attempt to mix Roman Catholicism with Islam is already well under way, as is expressed in the following news article:

Pastor's Corner

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The declaration signed by Pope Francis and Sheik Ahmad el-Tayeb, the grand imam of al-Azhar, during the Pope's trip to the United Arab Emirates 'is a clarion call for robust dialogue that leads to peace,' said the Catholic chairman of the National Catholic-Muslim Dialogue and the chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs... 'We, who believe in God and in the final meeting with him and his judgment, on the basis of our religious and moral responsibility, and through this document, call upon ourselves, upon the leaders of the world as well as the architects of international policy and world economy, to work strenuously to spread the culture of tolerance and of living together in peace,' the document said. [U.S. Catholic officials welcome Catholic-Muslim document signed by pope-Feb 8, 2019. <https://www.ncronline.org/news/quick-reads/us-catholic-officials-welcome-catholic-muslim-document-signed-pope>].

Rick Warren similarly seeks to find common ground with Islam for the purpose of working together on joint social projects. For example, Warren, sometimes referred to as "America's pastor," says:

To my Islamic brother here from Italy, I would say I am not really interested in inter-faith dialogue; I am interested in inter-faith projects. We have got enough talk. So . . . a few weeks ago, at Georgetown University, we brought in three imams, we brought in three Catholic priests, we brought in three evangelical pastors, and we brought in three Rabbis and we said, "What can we do about AIDS?" And we started on some common ground on those issues; what can we do [on issues] that we all care about? [http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=nu7_rtUQiE0].

Rick Warren similarly showcased his ambition to find common ground with Islam when he prayed the following prayer at President Obama's inauguration ceremony:

...I humbly ask this in the name of the one who changed my life, Yeshua, *Isa*, Jesus [Spanish pronunciation], Jesus, who taught us to pray... [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=tJeNsPIC3vE].

To Warren's multifaceted prayer, researcher Eric Barger appropriately responds:

'Isa' in no way represents the Jesus of the Bible but is instead the false Jesus of the Qur'an (Koran) and the Muslim Hadith. 'Isa' (pronounced 'eee-sa') is the Islamic Jesus who was but a prophet and who certainly did not experience a sacrificial death on a cross let alone resurrect from the dead. In fact, in Islam the prophet Isa is actually the destroyer of Christianity—not it's Savior. Obviously, this is simply NOT the same Jesus as is Yeshua. [Eric Barger, "Rick Warren Invokes the Name of Islamic Jesus at Obama Inauguration" (January 2009), accessed January 4, 2015, <http://www.ericbarger.com/emailers/2009/update1-21-2009.htm>.]

Of course, when evangelicals naively sit down with Muslims to find common theological ground, they discover that the game was rigged from the onset. The interfaith dialogue was never initially designed to

move Islam closer to Christianity. Rather, the original intention was just the opposite. The Muslim Brotherhood's senior theoretician, Seyyid Qutb, was transparent in the true agenda behind Islamic participation in interfaith dialogue, when he wrote:

The chasm between Islam and the *Jahiliyyah* [the society of unbelievers] is great, and a bridge is not to be built across it so that the people on the two sides may mix with each other, but only so that the people of the *Jahiliyyah* [the society of unbelievers] may come over to Islam. [Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*, Salimiah (Kuwait: International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations, 1978 [written 1966]), 263.]

If the previously described attempt to merge Protestantism and Roman Catholicism is a biblical and theological impossibility, how much more is the futile attempt to merge Christianity with Islam? Although such attempts are ultimately to no avail from a biblical and even logical standpoint, they are sadly common in today's last days ecumenical environment. Such an environment is anticipated in the prophetic Scripture and thus represents yet another key spiritual sign of the last days.

In sum, according to prophetic Scripture, the last days spiritual scenario will involve a trend toward *persecution of believers*, the ever-increasing call for a *global religion*, and *ecumenism*. In our next installment, we will briefly examine other spiritual signs such as the *ridicule of the Second Advent*, the *apostasy of the church*, and the rise of *anti-Semitism* as last days' signs related to spirituality.

(To Be Continued...)

THE 5 SOLAS OF THE REFORMATION

SOLA SCRIPTURA

Scripture Alone

SOLUS CHRISTUS

Christ Alone

SOLA GRATIA

Grace Alone

SOLA FIDE

Faith Alone

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Glory of God Alone

May 2, 2021



May 2, 2021
After Main Service



May 2, 2021
3:00 p.m.



May 8, 2021
Noon - 3:00 p.m.



May 23, 2021
9:45 a.m.



June 7-11, 2021



Scripture of the Month

Hold fast to the

Faithful Word

to exhort others in sound doctrine

Titus 1:9

Springtime at SLBC

Sunday School

Adults: The Rapture — Pastor Woods in the Sanctuary

Youth Group— Gabe Morris in the Upstairs Youth Room

Children's Sunday School Downstairs:

Children's Director: KC Cunningham

Sidney Reichardt: Junior Church

Tuesday Bible Studies

Women's Bible lesson taught by Betty Cooke

Morning at 9:00 am

Evening at 7:00 pm

Men's Bible lesson taught by David Sandlin

Evenings at 8:00 pm

Wednesday Evening Services

Meal at 6:00 pm

Adult Prayer at 6:45 pm in Sanctuary

Adult Bible Study (The Book of James) at 7:00 pm in Sanctuary

Youth – Youth Room Upstairs

Children — Classroom 110

I have been teaching a group of 15-20 people on Sunday evenings in a town about an hour and a half from our home. We are hoping that this will develop into a local church there. I had an interesting experience there the first Sunday in December. There were two teenagers, a brother and sister who wanted to be baptized. The man at whose house we meet has a small above-ground swimming pool. Even though the temperature was only 15 degrees, we had the baptism outside. I was delighted to do this, of course, but this is not an experience I look forward to repeating with any regularity.

Classes at the college continue unabated, although it has been necessary to conduct some of them online. This has required us to do some juggling in schedules, though, due to the time difference between Ukraine and the US. American professors would start teaching at 7:00 or 8:00 in the morning, which is 4:00 or 5:00 in the afternoon here. So, the students here finish at 8:00 or 9:00 in the evening. But this was really a minor inconvenience.

As we come to the close of this memorable year, we give thanks to our loving Lord who has enabled us to carry on the work. We have been blessed with good health and abundant provision. We also give thanks to all of you who have been so faithful in supporting us in prayer and with your financial support.

We do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:9-10).

All by grace,

Jim

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