

GROUPS

Week of 3-7-21

The following group discussion topics are from the first message in the series: "The End Times" at Stockbridge Community Church and was presented by Pastor Jeff Daws.

ICEBREAKER (If your group needs it) What are some of the craziest things you heard growing up about the end times, even if they are accurate, but still just sounds too crazy to be true?

#1 In the message, Pastor Jeff shared with us three things to do while we wait for the return of Jesus. The first of those was to look for the signs of Christ's return. Let's take a moment and read, from Jesus' own words in Matthew 24:32-33...

FOLLOW UP In that passage, Jesus used the example of the fig tree to represent the nation of Israel. Historically we know that Israel ceased to be its own nation in 70AD and was not re-established until after World War 2 happened, being its own nation again starting in 1948. The rebirth of Israel wasn't something that anyone saw coming, especially after the Holocaust, but God promised it, and it happened. **What are some other promises that you've held onto from the Bible that weren't probably - but God showed up and made them happen?**

#2 If God said it, you can count on it - whether you like it or not. Another sign of Christ's return was prophesied in Daniel as the increase in knowledge. Knowledge, and the ability to gain it doubles every 13 months. There was a time that you had to go pretty far out of your way to find an answer, maybe even going to the library and borrowing a book or an encyclopedia even. Now, answers to most things are just a google search away. Youtube teaches in minutes what used to take years of experience to learn. **How has the "increase in knowledge" changed from previous years when you were younger?**

#3 The third sign of Christ's return was prophesied in 2 Timothy chapter 4. The first two verses teach of the importance and urgency of preaching the Word of God. Let's read verses 3 and 4 which teach us why...

FOLLOW UP These two verses make it clear that turning from God's Word and mis-using God's Word was once unheard of within followers of Jesus. Now it's an everyday thing. People manipulate and change the Bible today to fit what they want it to say. **What examples come to mind when you think of people changing around the Bible to fit their own agendas?**

#4 Let's read our key verse for today: *....therefore encourage each other with these words.*
1 Thessalonians 4:18 NIV

FOLLOW UP QUESTION The encouraging words this verse speaks of words of hope for the church when Jesus returns. Words that build up one another in times of uncertainty. When those we love are experiencing anxiety, fear, or panic over what may be happening in the world it's our job to encourage them that for the church, Jesus is coming back for us. **How often, and you can be honest here, do you use the promise of Christ's return to encourage other believers through the fear and anxiety of what is happening in the world around them?**

#5 Finally, we are called to listen for the trumpet sound, signalling Jesus' immediate return - and to live for him today. **How are you living your life right now as if Jesus was coming back at any moment?**

GROUP CHALLENGE Each month SCC serves on the first Saturday of the month with very few exceptions. This coming Sunday the 14th however, the Love Week catalog (events we do for a whole week leading up to our Easter services) will be released for sign-ups. The challenge is to choose one of the daily events to do as a group. Be prepared next meeting to talk through which one we want to do that will fit the most of our schedules.

Closing Prayer/Requests:

Announcements/Next Steps: Growth Track begins anew on March 7th. This is a great time, with a brand new class lesson, to take your first step!