



St Cloud 7/15/18

We sing songs with the words, "I will follow you!" But do we and will you follow and obey his teachings? Another song says, "I'm willing to lose this life for you..." Many professing Christians say that they would die for Jesus, but could it be as Jesus taught the rich young ruler or those wanting to bury their dead? He was not only telling his followers that they may have to actually die for their faith, but could be as he told some of his followers, that they must lose THIS life today. Are you willing to lose friends, jobs, hobbies, *YOUR* dreams and goals, your life that you are living today?

There are world events happening all around us, catastrophes, and natural disasters. Do we get caught up in it like those of this world? Do we hang on the latest news release, or fall for the fake news? Are we drawn into the politics of the day, the latest debate or the latest disaster? As followers of Christ we should be responding and thinking differently about these things! We are *IN* this world, not *OF* it. If we have put our hand to the plow, we can't be looking to the left or the right. Our lives won't be straight if we do.

Pharaoh of Egypt experienced plagues of his day. He was arrogant, then he had a little fear of God, but that fear didn't last, although he should have feared God because God was in control!

The Israelites had hope during this time, and although the same things were happening around them, **they trusted God** – yes, some of the plagues didn't happen to the Israelites that happened to Pharaoh because they were protected through their faithfulness and obedience (blood on the doors) and then eventually freed!



When it comes to science, world happenings, and politics...**do we fear or do we trust God?** Do we cave in to the big mouth left or false proclaiming scientists? Do we speak boldly? Do we even speak up? Are we biblically educated enough to speak up? **Do we truly believe?** We will never speak up if we are not convinced of it ourselves.

People get so worked up on what's happening in the world around us...

Politics...

Facebook...

News....

So what do we do? Do we get sucked in to the uproar or the panic? Do we think we need to protect or save the world? What we do and what we should do are often two different things. As Christians we must follow Jesus' example and his teachings, at all costs, even if the life we love is at stake.

BEGINNING OF BIRTH PANGS...

“Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them, “**See to it that no one misleads you.** ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will mislead many.

⁶ You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

⁸ But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

Matthew 24:3-8

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We have heard teachings on Matthew 24 and the end of this present age before, but here are a few new thoughts to consider today. I would like to think about these birth pangs in real world examples and how we respond.

Jesus told us about the last days and those prior to his coming so that we would not be mislead or deceived. He desires that we be prepared and not afraid.

READ Matthew 24:3-8

So, How do we respond when we are living among these birth pangs? It’s nice that we help out. We definitely should be helping our brothers and sisters in need! But does global aide take our eyes off the plow and get us looking to the left and right? Does it get us worried about all the things we hear and see? Do we get caught up in how can we help or protect ourselves?

Satan will use what he can to distract and frighten us!

World Events



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The birth pangs: wars, nation against nation – even nation against itself, famines, earthquakes, natural disasters...

How do we respond? How will we respond when it gets really bad during the Great Tribulation? Do we feel an urgency to tell people about the hope that we have?!

When you look at these photos, what does it stir up inside you? Maybe you feel bad for these people or start thinking how you, or we as a country, can help. Maybe you think that is why we send armies to other lands, send food to the starving, or we send disaster relief? Those things aren't bad, but they are not what Jesus instructed his followers to busy themselves doing. We can let others do that. If we don't preach the kingdom to the nations and offer them the hope that we have, most likely nobody will, although many will offer physical help.

Do we stop to think of those DYING or soon to die without ever hearing the gospel, the good news, of the future hope of the kingdom, of God's righteous rule on the earth, of no more wars, no more tears, sickness or dying? What is more important? Physical needs met today or being resurrected when Jesus returns?

What we do and how we handle these issues must be a matter of obedience and not just emotion!

MANY WILL COME IN MY NAME

- 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 1:7-8

Jesus came in the flesh (was human)

- Son of God
- Anointed One



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Are we prepared to help people know the true Messiah?

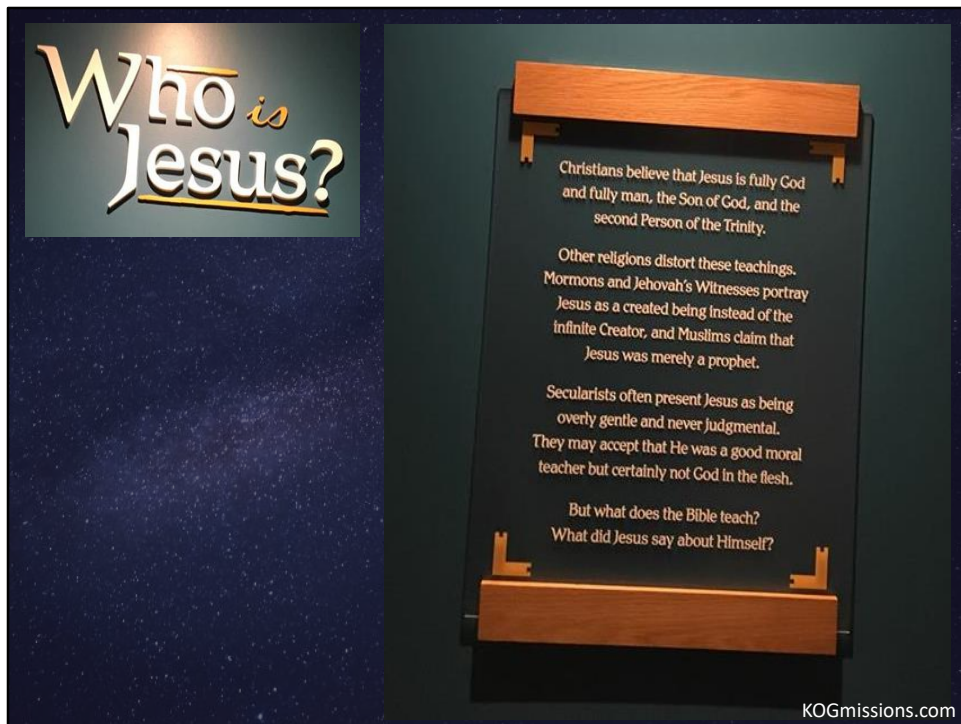
READ:

1 John 4:1-3 “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many **false prophets** have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that **Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God**; ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the **spirit of the antichrist**, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.”

2 John 1:7-8 “For many **deceivers** have gone out into the world, those who **do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh**. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸ **Watch yourselves, that you do not lose** what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.”

We have seen this since Jesus was taken up into heaven. The early church was warned about such false messiahs and their false teachings that came and would come into the church. They were warned that most of it would come from within, not without. History testifies to this! Jesus said in Matthew 25, on that day (of his coming) many will say, “didn’t I do this and that in YOUR name?” These are people who think they are followers of Jesus – professing Christians. They are coming saying that they are in Jesus’ name, but we must ask, WHICH Jesus?!

Other anti-Christ... Muslims believe in Jesus, just not the true Jesus. Is this any different? One believes Jesus to be God and part of him died... and the other just a prophet, not son of God, not crucified and raised from the dead. Which one worse? Which one sounds cornier?!



This is from the Creation Museum... Doesn't it make you want to go stand by the sign every day and share who Jesus really is?! I felt irate reading this!

This is what Jesus was talking about? Does this sound biblical? Let alone logical? This is a FALSE teaching. The Trinity is a lie. It denies Jesus truly coming in the flesh as a human. He was a unique human, as was Adam in his beginning, but he was still human in every way. He just had a miraculous birth.

Do you think that we have a responsibility to share who Jesus really is? These people obviously feel strongly to get their beliefs, albeit false beliefs, out about who they think Jesus is. Is it not much more honoring to proclaim his humanity and lack of sin, than some sort of god-man who couldn't sin or had some innate ability to not sin. If he is some "god-man" he could not have been tempted like we were.

HEAR OF WARS

- Iraq
- North Korea
- Afghanistan
- Civil Wars



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Fear or Trust?

Since the beginning there has been fighting, killing and war. Today there are wars all over the world – many we never heard of or here about. Jesus tells us that this is expected. He never told us to do anything about them or make the world a safer place or bring our form of democracy to others. **Jesus did tell us to bring the good news of God's future righteous government to the nations.**

We are not fear these wars, other governments, or even our own government! We are to tell people about the kingdom in spite of them!

When people seek God and His truth earnestly and genuinely, they come to this same conclusion. It is happening all over the world! Men in the military are resigning. Men whose wives have been murdered are putting their weapons down. They all desire to obey Jesus more than they want to keep their hate or position in life.

FAMINES

- Central African Republic
- Timor-Leste
- Niger
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Chad
- Madagascar



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Fear or Trust?

People in famished countries are hungering and thirsting for the good news of the coming kingdom of God. There is no way that we or the rest of the world can feed or save all the people who are hungry. Yes, again, we should help our brethren as we can, but the rest of the world needs a greater help. **They need the seed of the kingdom.** This seed offers them much more than a whole bag of seeds to plant in the ground.

EARTHQUAKES

- Turkey
- Iran
- Nicaragua
- Indonesia
- Hawaii

- Natural Disasters



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Fear or Trust?

What do we do when we hear about these things?

Egypt sure was hit with natural disasters! How'd they respond?

How does God tell His people to respond? He says FEAR NOT. What were some of Jesus last words to his followers? Go! Make disciples. Baptize. Tell the world about my Father's coming kingdom! (And fear not! AND, don't be deceived!)

We must look for opportunities to do this. We must have eyes and ears open to the opportunities around us!

How Will You Respond?

“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.¹⁰ At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.¹¹ Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.¹² Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold.¹³ But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.¹⁴ **This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.** [Matthew 24:9-14](#)

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Read Matthew 24:9-14

Notice what Jesus tells believers...preach the kingdom. **In other words, tell people about it!** All this bad stuff is happening and the people need hope. He didn’t say fight the lawlessness, feed the hungry, send relief to the natural disaster places.... Those all good things and many do them, but not many are telling people about the kingdom. **If we don’t who will?!**

If we want Jesus to return, we must be busy sharing his gospel, the good news about the coming kingdom of God! (Matthew 24:14)