

Introduction

How intrigued are you by the subject of the end times? Have you ever thought that you/we might currently be in the end times?

Have you read any of the books related to the end times? (Left Behind, etc.)

If you knew the world was ending this week, what one thing would you do that is on your bucket list? (List of things you'd like to do/experience in your lifetime.)

Discussion

Was there anything that stood out to you in the message this week? Was there any idea or thought that personally challenged you?

Norton stated in this message that because of 3 reasons we shouldn't focus on the end times. Did you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with him and why?

***Reason 1:** Because we will never be able to know or predict when the end of the world comes.*

***Reason 2:** Because people in every generation thought they were living in the end times and that Jesus was about to come back . . . and they were wrong.*

***Reason 3:** Because it's not about escaping this evil world to go to heaven, but bringing heaven to this evil world.*

Read these verses and discuss the questions below:

3 Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. 4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." 5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. 8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. 11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

What stands out to you in these verses? Is there anything that you find hard to accept or challenged by?

Are there any verses here that affect your understanding of God and his character? For good or for bad.

In light of verse 11, Norton shared that we are to be the messengers and agents of that love and grace and salvation. To live lives that are holy and godly—which simply means—to live lives that are a witness to how God actually wants the world to be.

In what ways have you seen this modeled by in other Christians or yourself?

Verse 13 refers to a new heaven and a new earth. Read about it in Rev 21:1-4,

1 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

Does this encourage you about what is to come? Which part are you most intrigued by?

Norton offered some practical advice. Which one would be the hardest for you to apply and why?

Which is the most helpful?

- a. Be very wary of any books or movies about the end times.
- b. Ignore anyone who says that we are living in the end times.
- c. Whenever you come across a passage in Scripture about the end times, don’t ignore it, but ask the question, “in light of this, what kind of person should I be now?”