

The God of Prophecy

IF YOU EVER have the misfortune of reading *The Purpose Driven Life*, you will come across this statement:

When the disciples wanted to talk about prophecy, Jesus quickly switched the conversation to evangelism. He wanted them to concentrate on their mission in the world. He said in essence, “The details of my return are none of your business. What is your business is the mission I have given you. Focus on that!” (*The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 285)

That statement is a blatant lie. Jesus did not do that *even one time*. Don’t take my word for it though – see for yourself! Let’s take a look at the time when the disciples asked Jesus about prophetic matters:

Matthew 24:3: “And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”

Now at this point, if you believed Rick Warren, you would expect Jesus to say “Look, guys, don’t worry about it. Just focus on preaching the gospel and everything will be fine.” But if you read the very next verse you’ll discover that Jesus didn’t say anything remotely like that. Instead He said this:

Matthew 24:4: “And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.”

Jesus then spent the *entire rest of the chapter* talking about matters relating to end-times prophecy – *and He continued the discussion throughout the entirety of the next chapter as well!* So, instead of telling His disciples “Hey, end-times stuff is none of your business!” as Rick Warren claims, Jesus actually spent two entire chapters of Matthew talking about it. Two entire chapters! Let’s also not overlook the fact that the entire book of Revelation is a revelation *from Jesus Christ* that He gave to His Church so they would be aware of prophetic end-times events (Revelation 1:1-3). If Jesus really thought that it was “none of our business” do you think He would have given us an entire book of the Bible dedicated to it?

Jesus did *not* want His disciples to be ignorant of prophetic matters; in fact, He actually wanted them to be very informed so that they would not be deceived. His big concern was that false teachers would come along and tell lies, and people would fall for those lies and be deceived. Jesus wanted His followers to understand end-times prophecy. In fact, Jesus wanted His followers to be constantly watching out for His return. In Mark 13 He repeatedly commanded His disciples to be alert:

Mark 13:32: “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

Rick Warren would have you believe that Jesus didn't even want you to be thinking about His return. He claims that Jesus went around telling people “It's none of your business”. The real Jesus, however, is quite different. He *commanded* His disciples to think about His return and to be watching for it with great alertness.

There is an attitude in the Church today that prophecy isn't very important and that the right thing to do is to be “pan-millennial”. People claim that we just need to live our lives and wait for everything to “pan out”. That attitude, though, is not biblical and does not honor God. It is not a good idea to tell God “I don't really care what you have to say about prophecy; I'm just going to ignore it”.

I urge you to avoid being pan-millennial. Do *not* take a “who cares?” approach to prophecy – or to any Bible doctrine, for that matter. The “who cares?” attitude is exactly why Jesus condemned the church at Laodicea; He absolutely detests it.