

Birth Pangs of Tribulation

March 15, 2020

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

3 As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

John 16:13 ESV

13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

Luke 24:49 ESV

49 [Jesus, immediately before His ascension] And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

4 And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray.

The greatest danger to the Church and the Christian in the end times will be deception.

1 Timothy 4:1 ESV

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons.

Matthew 24:24-25 ESV

24 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

25 See, I have told you beforehand.

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ' (Christos - anointed), and they will lead many astray.

A false Christianity will arise.

"Earlier this year, South Bend, IN, Mayor and presidential hopeful Pete Buttigieg quoted the Bible in an attempt to speak to the question of abortion: 'There are a lot of parts of the Bible that talk about how life begins with breath, and so even that is something that we can interpret differently.' If we applied the Bible in the way Mayor Pete suggests, abortion would be justified up until birth, a position now firmly embedded and championed across the Democratic Party."

"One of the ways Mayor Pete has distinguished his candidacy from all of the other Democratic hopefuls for president is through constant reference to his religious faith. Already, Buttigieg has applied (and often, misapplied) the Bible to support far-left positions on several cultural issues, including economic policy and same-sex marriage."

—John Stonestreet, BreakPoint, 12/27/19

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet.

*"America has been at war 93% of the time – 222 out of 239 years – since 1776. The U.S. has only been at peace for less than 20 years total since its birth."
—Freakonometrics / Wikipedia*

America is currently involved in the longest war (Afghanistan - 19 years) of its history, closely following the 2nd longest war of its history (Vietnam - 17 years).

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.

Are the wildfires, earthquakes, tornados random acts of nature?

Isaiah 24:19-21 NASB

19 The earth is broken asunder, The earth is split through, The earth is shaken violently.

20 The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard and it totters like a shack, For its transgression is heavy upon it, and it will fall, never to rise again.

21 So it will happen in that day, that the LORD will punish the host of heaven on high, And the kings of the earth on earth.

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

8 All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

People fear calamity for two reasons:

- *how they will have to suffer*
- *what's on the other side - if the other side even exists*

The principle of the birth pangs is that there is no new life without pain and suffering, but the pain and suffering brings fresh hope and assurance that new life is imminent.

John 16:21 ESV

21 When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

Romans 8:22-23 ESV

22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

9 **"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake.**

"The Southern Poverty Law Center has provided the FBI with information on hate groups. Since 1981 the SPLC has published a quarterly Intelligence Report that provides updates on its monitoring of what it describes as radical right hate groups and extremists in the United States, providing information on the organizational efforts and tactics of these groups. It has been cited by scholars as a reliable source on right-wing extremism and hate groups."
—Wikipedia

"We have a culture question from a pastor who asks this: 'Pastor John, hello! In a recent TGC podcast, Sam Allberry said the following about campus outreach ministry:

"People have often thought Christianity was a bit quaint...But increasingly, what we're seeing in a more secular context is people actually saying to us, 'Your faith is a danger to society.' And that's a new space for us. And we're used to being looked down on and slightly patronized. I don't think we're used to feeling like we are the enemy. People used to say, 'I don't like Christianity because it's too moral.' Now, they're saying, I don't like Christianity because it's too immoral.' And whether it's people saying Christianity is responsible for gay teenagers committing suicide, or for fostering intolerance, those arguments carry far more emotional force than some of the previous objections I would have dealt with ten or fifteen years ago."

—Pastor John Piper, Interview, *Desiring God*, January 10, 2020

"Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-D) said religious liberty advocates and the Trump administration are 'weaponizing and abusing Scripture to justify bigotry,' according to the Washington Examiner.

"In a House Oversight Committee hearing to discuss LGBTQ rights, Ocasio-Cortez called out those who use Scripture to take away rights from gay people. She also compared religious freedom advocates to white supremacists."
—Christian Headlines, March 2, 2020

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

10 **And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.**

2 *Thessalonians 2:1-3* NASB

1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy [falling away, defection from truth, rebellion] comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.

"New research from the Barna Group found that the share of practicing Christians in the United States has nearly dropped in half over the last two decades — a shift the group warns will have "major repercussions" for church leaders.

The latest research from the evangelical Christian polling firm, which examined the role of Christianity in the American Church, reveals that that just 25 percent of Americans are practicing Christians, compared to 45 percent in 2000.

Barna defines a “practicing Christian” as someone who identifies as a Christian, agrees strongly that faith is very important in their lives and has attended church within the past month.”

—Christian Post, March 8, 2020

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

11 And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.

12 And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

Judges 17:6 ESV

6 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Matthew 24:3-13 ESV

13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Luke 18:8 NASB

8 ...when the Son of Man comes, will He find [the] faith on the earth?

2 Timothy 4:7-8 ESV

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.