

The **LAST** Generation

Prophecy Teaching Series
Pastor Dan Betzer / First Assembly of God / Fort Myers, Florida 2013
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1 **Matthew 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these**
2 **things be fulfilled.**

3 – Jesus Christ
4

5 As we studied last week, Jesus and His disciples were in Jerusalem. They had just left
6 the magnificent Temple (built by Herod the Great) and were going to cross the Kidron
7 Valley to the Mount of Olives. The disciples were very impressed with the Temple and
8 wanted the Lord to stay there for a bit and dwell on its beauty. But Jesus shocked the
9 men with the following:

10
11 **Matthew 24:1-3**

12 **And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for**
13 **to shew him the buildings of the temple. [2] And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all**
14 **these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another,**
15 **that shall not be thrown down.**

16 **[3] And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately,**
17 **saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming,**
18 **and of the end of the world?**

19
20 Then came our Lord's startling prophecy in verse 34: **Verily I say unto you, This**
21 **generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.**

22
23 What things? What is the definition of a generation? What should you and I be
24 looking for? What are some of the primary keys of prophecy? And - in understanding
25 the events around us, **how then should we live?**

26
27 **DECEPTION**
28

1 While our Lord listed a number of “signs of the times,” He usually only mentioned them
2 one time. But note from Matthew 24 how MANY times Jesus listed DECEPTION:

3
4 Matthew 24:4-5

5 **And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. [5]**
6 **For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.**

7
8 Matthew 24:11

9 **And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.**

10
11 Matthew 24:23-24

12 **Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. [24]**
13 **For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and**
14 **wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.**

15
16 Already in this discourse, Jesus lists DECEPTION (and especially the DECEPTION of
17 believers) three times!

18
19 As a pastor, I have never seen a time when there is so much heresy in the professing
20 church, the Body of Christ on this earth.

21
22 *(1) Professing believers will accept “new revelation” even though it conflicts with the*
23 *revealed Word of God. This will lead to opposition to Biblical truth within the*
24 *churches. 1 Tim. 4:1*

25 *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the*
26 *faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

27 *2 Tim. 3:8*

28 *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men*
29 *of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. (Jannes was a magician of sorts who*
30 *withstood Moses and Aaron by duplicating some of their miracles. Paul, who was*
31 *familiar with rabbinical traditions, named him along with Jambres as types of evil men.*
32 *See Exodus 7.)*

33 *2 Tim. 4:3-4*

34 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own*
35 *lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; [4] And they shall*
36 *turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

37
38 *Those who preach a distorted gospel may even gain strategic leadership positions in*
39 *denominations and in theological schools (Matthew 7:22 Many will say to me in that*
40 *day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out*

1 *devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?) enabling them to deceive and*
2 *misled many within the church (Galatians 1:9 As we said before, so say I now again,*
3 *If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be*
4 *accursed.*

5
6 *(2) Throughout the world millions will be involved in the occult, astrology, witchcraft,*
7 *spiritism and Satanism. The influence of demons and evil spirits will multiply greatly.*

8
9 *(3) Protection against being deceived is found in an enduring faith and love for*
10 *Christ, in a commitment to the absolute authority of His word and in a thorough*
11 *knowledge of that Word.*

12
13 LIFE IN THE SPIRIT BIBLE - FOOTNOTES / ZONDERVAN / PAGE 1,460

14
15 **Be Aware!**

16
17 There are several ways in which Satan (the father of lies) deceives people - even some
18 believers fall for his pitch.

19
20 1. **SAME-OLD, SAME-OLD LIES.** Have you noticed how many alleged Christian
21 books, articles, TV shows, etc., have to do with "self"? "You can be everything you
22 want to be!" etc. Paul had to fight this tooth-and-nail in Galatia as there were those who
23 taught the blood of Jesus was not enough to save a person....that somehow, in someway,
24 you had to DO SOMETHING YOURSELF (works) to be saved. It is observed that
25 what the world's religions and philosophies have in common is SELF-
26 RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT ADVOCATES SOME FORM OF SALVATION BY
27 WORKS. But the Bible makes it clear we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, not works:
28 Ephesians 2:9 **Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

29
30 2. **CONFUSION.** There are popular religions (and even the "whiff" of these teachings
31 in some alleged Christian books) that teach that we humans will evolve to godhood.
32 Eastern mysticism even has its superstitions raised among us again and again.
33 "Meditation" and "contemplative" religion are popular among many who have no concept
34 of God's Word. But it "sounds" good. It satisfies the "human spirit."

35
36 3. **COMPROMISE.** The Bible asks what fellowship light has with darkness? The
37 answer: **NO FELLOWSHIP AT ALL.** And yet there are professing Christian religions
38 that cozy up to pagan groups that espouse "traditional family values" (not always
39 espoused in God's Word), "Mother Earth," and other teachings that appeal to the human
40 intellect

1 4. FOLLOWING FALSE PROPHETS. How often do you make up your mind about
2 an issue - not because of what you read in the Bible - but because of what you heard
3 someone say on television or in person. It is a dangerous thing to set up gurus within the
4 Body of Christ who are subject to higher authority or criticism. We are told, "Touch not
5 God's anointed." This glib response takes out of context the story in I Samuel 24 in
6 which David would not KILL the King (Saul).

7
8 **So - how can we insulate ourselves against spiritual deception?**

9
10 1. Earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit (who will guide us into all truth - John 16:13) will
11 keep us correctly comprehending the Word of God and eliminating non-truth from our
12 minds.

13
14 2. Stay as close to the "source of truth" as you can - that is, God Himself.

15
16 3. Cling closely to that which you already know from God's Word. James reminds us
17 that our Heavenly Father is immutable - that is, He does not change. Nor does His truth
18 fluctuate.

19
20 4. Avoid false teachers like the plague. The fact that they might be popular does not
21 give us the liberty to "cozy" up to them.

22
23 5. Recognize these false teachers (prophets). False prophets will lead you AWAY from
24 intimate fellowship with God.

25
26 **W A R S**

27
28 Matthew 24:6-7

29 **You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed.**
30 **Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. [7] Nation will rise against**
31 **nation, and kingdom against kingdom.**

32
33 In all my many years of life *there has never been one single day without war somewhere.*
34 The 20th Century was a bloody one with over 160 million people killed in wars. I
35 checked back to 1900 and found 115 wars fought since that time. Some of the wars
36 were global vis-a-vis World War I from 1914 to 1918 that took 20 million lives and
37 World War II from 1939 to 1945 that claimed 55 million lives. There was Korea, Viet
38 Nam, the Persian Gulf, Iraq and the list goes on and on and shows no sign of any
39 lessening despite all mankind's peace efforts.

1 The question is, "How can the world know peace until it commits itself to "The Prince of
2 Peace?"

4 NATURAL DISASTERS

6 Matthew 24:7-8

7 **There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. [8] All these are the**
8 **beginning of birth pains.**

9
10 One has to be careful when it comes to discussing the frequency of such disasters. For
11 one thing, scientific ways of reporting them (such as seismographs for registering
12 earthquakes) are far more sophisticated than they used to be. Are there more
13 earthquakes now? Possibly - Or it could be we have just been able to register than more
14 accurately in recent years. But few would dispute the fact that this old earth of ours has
15 been battered and torn in recent years by earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, etc. We
16 who live in Florida have gone through hurricanes in recent years. I have been in
17 tornadoes in Missouri and Wisconsin - scary things, those! Many declare we are having
18 global warming. Perhaps - perhaps not. The weather cycle through the generations can
19 be wide-ranging. The rather sobering truth in this passage is Jesus' warning, THESE
20 ARE THE BEGINNING OF BIRTH PAINS.....!

22 HATRED AND BETRAYAL

24 Matthew 24:10

25 **And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one**
26 **another.**

27
28 It is kind of a bitter-sweet thing to me when I hear people moan, "I have been hurt....."
29 No kidding. I submit to you that it is virtually impossible to live your life in these times
30 without going through some kind of "hurt" or "betrayal."

31
32 The Word makes it pretty clear that all believers in Christ may expect trouble in their
33 walk on this earth. Suffering for Christ is a real physical disaster to multitudes of
34 believers in other lands as the numbers of martyrs increases primarily because of rabid
35 Islam.

36
37 The late Chuck Colson wrote an article in which he claimed that over 45 MILLION
38 Christians were killed for their faith since the beginning of the 20th century. To indicate
39 how this number is rising, historians believe the TOTAL NUMBER of Christians
40 martyred since Calvary is about 70 MILLION. The hostility to Jesus even in this

1 country at present is astounding.

3 AN INDIFFERENT CHURCH

6 Matthew 24:12-13

7 **And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. [13] But he**
8 **that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**

9
10 One of the most difficult things for me to deal with in this ministry is the number of folks
11 who once attended here who have (by their own admission to me) left First Assembly to
12 go to churches where “they don’t expect so much from us.” Some years ago, a person
13 offered the church a check for several million dollars “if Pastor Betzer promises to never
14 have another missionary here.” The person said to me face-to-face, “I am tired of
15 hearing about missions.” Churches crop up again and again where people are promised
16 a more “friendly” mission. Our stand on missions, on alcohol, on marriage, on sex, etc.,
17 are biblical positions and sometimes not even professing believers want any part of it.
18 Like Demas (2 Tim. 4), they forsake their foundations “having loved this present world.”

19
20 Jesus said thee would be a proliferation of this in the last days. But note verse 13: HE
21 THAT SHALL ENDURE TO THE END.....shall be saved. We all ought to take heed of
22 that!

23
24 For those who don’t want to hear about missions....the next verse should keep them
25 awake at night:

27 THE GLOBAL AWARENESS OF CHRIST

29 Matthew 24:14

30 **And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness**
31 **unto all nations; and then shall the end come.**

32
33 As I have heard some preachers, much wiser than I, declare, “See....it isn’t a matter of
34 ‘IF’ the Gospel will be preached everywhere....it’s only a matter of ‘WHEN.’ And I
35 want in on it!”

36
37 The escalation of the spread of the Gospel is an amazing phenomenon right now. There
38 is still a whole lot of work to do, but many in the Church looking for Christ are doing
39 their utmost in that evangelistic enterprise. And that certainly includes First Assembly of
40 God here in Ft. Myers. Since 1980, the people in this church have sent out dozens of



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20 **AN ARTIST'S CONCEPT OF THE COMING RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH INTO GLORY**

21
22 full-time missionaries and scores of short-term missionaries, many of them going into danger spots to
23 declare the Gospel. In addition, First Assembly has given well in excess of \$30 million to missions at
24 home and around the world during that period of time. Why does God bless this church? It isn't a
25 mystery! Read Mark 16 to find your answer.

26
27 Now between verses 14 and 15 of Matthew 24, some years go by, started by that great moment when
28 Jesus raptures the Church.

29
30 **THE RAPTURE**

31
32 In the Assemblies of God, as is the case with most Protestant evangelical churches, we
33 believe that BEFORE the tribulation strikes this earth - those seven hellish years under
34 the diabolical reign of the Antichrist - Jesus will take His followers, living and dead, to
35 Heaven. Critics of this teaching say, "They are just trying to escape." You better
36 believe it! Later in this series, when we study the tribulation, you will want to escape,
37 too!

38
39 We believe that the resurrection of those believers who have died and their translation
40 into glory instantly along with those believers who are still alive and remain is the
41 **IMMINENT** and **BLESSED HOPE** of the Church.

1 1 Thes. 4:16-17

2 **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the**
3 **archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: [17]**
4 **Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the**
5 **clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

6
7 Romans 8:23

8 **And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even**
9 **we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption**
10 **of our body.**

11
12 (This is the same passage from The Message:

Romans 8:23

But it's not only around us; it's within us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We're also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance.

13
14 Titus 2:13

15 **Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and**
16 **our Saviour Jesus Christ;**

17
18 (Some of my friends - even some in ministry - believe that Christians will go through the
19 tribulation. That is NOT a blessed hope. I will deal with this issue later.)

20
21 1 Cor. 15:51-52

22 **Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**
23 **[52] In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall**
24 **sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

25
26 The word "mystery" there means a "previously unrevealed truth of God." And the word
27 "sleep" should be translated "die."

28
29 Jesus taught that He will return to earth. He was careful to warn His disciples to be
30 constantly prepared for this. Matthew 24:42-51

31 **Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. [43] But know**
32 **this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would**
33 **come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken**
34 **up. [44] Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of**
35 **man cometh. [45] Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made**
36 **ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? [46] Blessed is that**

1 servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. [47] Verily I say unto
2 you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. [48] But and if that evil servant
3 shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; [49] And shall begin to smite his
4 fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; [50] The lord of that servant
5 shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware
6 of, [51] And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites:
7 there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

8
9 Matthew 25:1-13

10 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their
11 lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. [2] And five of them were wise, and
12 five were foolish. [3] They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with
13 them: [4] But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. [5] While the
14 bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. [6] And at midnight there was a
15 cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. [7] Then all those
16 virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. [8] And the foolish said unto the wise, Give
17 us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. [9] But the wise answered, saying, Not so;
18 lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy
19 for yourselves. [10] And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that
20 were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. [11] Afterward
21 came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. [12] But he answered
22 and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. [13] Watch therefore, for ye know
23 neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

24
25 Luke 12:37

26 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching:
27 verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat,
28 and will come forth and serve them.

29
30 The New Testament epistles refer often to the coming of the Lord and the theme of
31 IMMINENCE runs through all the passages of Scripture dealing with this subject.
32 Believers of Jesus back in the early days of the Church lived in a state of expectancy.

33
34 Critics emphasize that the word "rapture" is not found in Scripture. However, the word
35 "rapture" has been used so widely that one of the definitions of "rapture" in Websters's
36 Third New International Dictionary Unabridged is "Christ's raising up of His true church
37 and its members to a realm above the earth where the whole company will enjoy celestial
38 bliss with its Lord." The word "raptured" is really the translation of the phrase "caught
39 up," which most certainly is found in Scripture.

1 With this great truth in mind, we come to Jesus' next warning in the Matthew discourse,
2 this of the coming Tribulation period, led by Satan, Antichrist and the False Prophet.

3
4 Matthew 24:15-22

5 **When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel**
6 **the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) [16] Then**
7 **let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: [17] Let him which is on the**
8 **housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: [18] Neither let him**
9 **which is in the field return back to take his clothes. [19] And woe unto them that are**
10 **with child, and to them that give suck in those days! [20] But pray ye that your flight**
11 **be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: [21] For then shall be great**
12 **tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor**
13 **ever shall be. [22] And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh**
14 **be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.**

15
16 The term in verse 15, "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel," can be found
17 in Daniel 9:27: **And he (Antichrist) shall confirm the covenant with many for one**
18 **week (7 years): and in the midst of the week (after 3 ½ years) he shall cause the**
19 **sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he**
20 **shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be**
21 **poured upon the desolate.**

22
23 Daniel 11:31 adds to the grim picture: **Daniel 11:31 And arms shall stand on his part,**
24 **and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily**
25 **sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.**

26
27 I will deal with this later, but it really has to do with the betrayal of Israel by the nations
28 and Satan's unholy trinity (Satan - the god of the earth; Antichrist, the false Messiah; and
29 the unholy spirit). As we see nation after nation turning away from Israel in these days
30 (including our own nation), we should be looking more and more for the return of Christ.
31 This is one of the great sagas of history to come and I will deal with it in detail.

32
33 **NEXT WEEK: FALSE CHRISTS AND THE DECAYING CARCASE**