

The **LAST** Generation

Prophecy Teaching Series
Pastor Dan Betzer / First Assembly of God / Fort Myers, Florida 2013
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HOW THEN SHOULD WE LIVE?

1 This is the final episode in our current study, "THE LAST GENERATION."
2

3 Matthew 24:34

4 **Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be**
5 **fulfilled.**
6

7 What things? All these issues we have attempted to discuss or cover in the past several
8 months - the signs of the times, the Rapture of the Church, and the onslaught of the
9 coming Trinity from Hell: Satan, the Father; Antichrist, the unholy son; and The False
10 Prophet, the blasphemous unholy spirit.
11

12 Are we seeing these momentous events in our lifetime? It would seem that they are
13 either occurring or preparing to do so. This could well be the last generation of
14 Christians to live on the Earth as we now know it just before Jesus "catches us away" in
15 the Rapture.
16

17 That being the case, HOW THEN SHOULD WE LIVE? The Apostle Peter gave us
18 some sound recommendations:
19

20 2 Peter 3:1-18

21 **This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your**
22 **pure minds by way of remembrance: [2] That ye may be mindful of the words which**
23 **were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the**
24 **apostles of the Lord and Saviour: [3] Knowing this first, that there shall come in the**
25 **last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, [4] And saying, Where is the**
26 **promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they**

1 were from the beginning of the creation. [5] For this they willingly are ignorant of,
2 that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the
3 water and in the water: [6] Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with
4 water, perished: [7] But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same
5 word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition
6 of ungodly men. [8] But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is
7 with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. [9] The Lord is
8 not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering
9 to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to
10 repentance. [10] But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the
11 which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt
12 with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
13 [11] Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons
14 ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, [12] Looking for and hasting
15 unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be
16 dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? [13] Nevertheless we,
17 according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth
18 righteousness. [14] Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be
19 diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. [15] And
20 account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother
21 Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; [16] As
22 also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things
23 hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do
24 also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. [17] Ye therefore, beloved,
25 seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the
26 error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. [18] But grow in grace, and in
27 the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and
28 for ever. Amen.

29
30 What is Peter instructing us to do in this passage?

31
32 1. Don't be intimidated by the scoffers!

33
34 Today we are seeing a proliferation of mockery toward the things of God. Television is
35 perhaps the leading false prophet in this regard with Hollywood close behind. But lest
36 we grow smug here, I have preached on the coming of the Lord in churches and saw
37 people in the pews smirking in derision.

38
39 The Bible clearly depicts the scoffers as "ignorant." Not only "ignorant" but "willingly
40 so." (2 Peter 3:5) My responsibility toward the scoffers, the mockers, is to pray for

1 them, love them, reach out to them, BUT NEVER BE LED BY OR INTIMATED BY
2 ANY OF THEM! Peter likes these people to those around Noah long ago. But where
3 was the mocking when the heavens split wide open and the fountains of the bowels of the
4 earth spewed out their contents?
5

6 2. Our conversation and our day-to-day lives should be holy and godly.
7

8 Psalm 19:14

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy
sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer

9
10 More than ever before, in the light of this possibly being the last generation, how then
11 should we live in the way we speak and live?
12

13 3. We should be looking for - diligently so - the return of the Lord! (2 Peter 3:12)
14

15 It was reported in recent news that 70+ percent of Americans consider themselves
16 Christians. Of course, the question there is, "What is their definition of 'Christian?'" I
17 wonder if 70 percent of all Americans are living in keen anticipation of the return of the
18 Lord?
19

20 4. We must be DILIGENT (constant and earnest in effort and application - Webster)
21 that we be found in Christ to be in PEACE, without SPOT and BLAMELESS (VS. 14).
22

23 Note the word "blameless" - not "faultless." What is the difference? A small child
24 could accidentally spill something all over the floor or knock over an expensive vase. He
25 or she did not mean to; however, it was still the baby to blame for the damage. But the
26 parent would not discipline a child who did something like that accidentally. We may
27 "drop the ball" in our lives on occasion; but as we DILIGENTLY seek to live for the
28 Lord, He will find us BLAMELESS..
29

30 5. We must be steadfast - unmovable! (Vs. 17)
31

32 There are those today who are easily shaken, easily offended, easily hurt. The Word of
33 God tells us, in effect, to SHAKE IT OFF.
34

35 The follower of Jesus Christ HAS TO BE CONSTANTLY AWARE OF "THE BIG
36 PICTURE" - in a way, seeing the world the way God sees it. There is an old chorus
37 that we used to sing with this lyric:

1 *With eternity's values in view, Lord...*
2 *With eternity's values in view....*
3 *May I do each day's work for you, Lord...*
4 *With eternity's values in view.*
5

6 Jesus' followers are always aware of impending eternity, of the coming of the Lord, of the
7 scriptural command to evangelize the world. And to that end we remain steadfast and
8 unmovable.

9
10 PETER ADDS TO THIS "WAY OF LIVING IN THE LIGHT OF ETERNITY" IN
11 ANOTHER OF HIS WRITINGS:

12 1 Peter 1:6-9 and 13-16

13 **Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in**
14 **heaviness through manifold temptations: [7] That the trial of your faith, being**
15 **much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might**
16 **be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: [8]**
17 **Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing,**
18 **ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: [9] Receiving the end of your faith,**
19 **even the salvation of your souls. [13] Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be**
20 **sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the**
21 **revelation of Jesus Christ; [14] As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves**
22 **according to the former lusts in your ignorance: [15] But as he which hath called**
23 **you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; [16] Because it is written,**
24 **Be ye holy; for I am holy.**
25

26
27 *God is holy, and what is true of God must be true of His people. Holiness carries the thought of being separated from the ungodly ways of the world and set apart for love, for service and for worship of God. Holiness is the goal and purpose of our election in Christ. It means being like God and being dedicated to Him - living to please Him. We are made holy by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, by the power of the cross in delivering us from sin (Romans 6), by being renewed in the image of Christ and by an infusion of grace to obey God according to His word.*

28
29 This entire study, THE LAST GENERATION, is nothing more than an exercise in
30 academics unless it influences the way we live. For if Jesus is coming back and will
31 eventually institute His theocracy (God-rule) over all the world, (and it is a fact that He
32 will do both!) our faith should inspire us to better living in holiness and obedience to His

1 Word and commands. Otherwise, we have basically wasted our time.

2
3 6. Peter adds yet another responsibility to us, in the light of impending eternity, and it is
4 this:

5 2 Peter 3:18

6 **But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**
7 **To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

8
9 Grow in grace! That's a powerful admonition. Some unknown poet wrote:

10
11 *We mutter and sputter;*
12 *We fume and we spurt;*
13 *We mumble and grumble;*
14 *Our feelings get hurt.*
15 *We can't understand things;*
16 *Our vision grows dim.*
17 *When all we need*
18 *Is a moment with Him.*

19
20 I must tell you there are issues of life that were once very important to me; but now they
21 don't matter much. Time gives a person a perspective often lacking in younger years.
22 Perhaps this is known as "growing in grace and ind the knowledge of our Lord and
23 Saviour Jess Christ."

24
25 Paul put it like this: 1 Cor. 13:11-12

26 **When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a**
27 **child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. [12] For now we see**
28 **through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I**
29 **know even as also I am known.**

30
31

<p>When I was eleven, my folks gave me a Christmas present I treasured - a set of Lincoln Logs. I tell you in those days I could play with those things by the hour, building little houses and forts. When Darlene and I visit our favorite vacation place, Big Cedar Lodge in the Ozark Mountains, in the main lobby there is a huge area filled with Lincoln Logs. Children can be seen there laughing and playing with wild abandon. I have never one time been tempted to join them. Why? I am no longer a child with childish desires. All around that place are beautiful forest-laden hills, a deep massive lake filled with large-mouth bass, great friends living in the immediate area, caves to explore, etc. The Lincoln Logs are of no interest to me. But sometimes I come across followers of Jesus - saved now for years - who still want to play with life's Lincoln Logs. And I wonder to myself, "Why don't they grow up?"</p>
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1 Now I come to a major part of this final study in this series:

2
3 **HOW THEN SHOULD WE LIVE – WE SHOULD LIVE A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE TO**
4 **THE GREAT COMMISSION.**

5
6 Mark 16:15-17

7 **And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every**
8 **creature. [16] He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth**
9 **not shall be damned. [17] And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name**
10 **shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;**

11
12 Matthew 28:18-20

13 **And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in**
14 **heaven and in earth. [19] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in**
15 **the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [20] Teaching them**
16 **to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you**
17 **always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**

18
19 Jesus was not giving us “options” here; He was giving us ORDERS!

20
21

There is an old legend - certainly fictitious, but helpful - that upon the return of Jesus to Heaven He met Gabriel. He informed the great angel that He had completed His divinely-appointed task on Earth. “And what is your plan,” inquired Gabriel. “How is the Gospel to be spread? Did you leave a strong organization on the Earth with well-defined plans?” “No,” answered the Savior, “I left no organization, only a small company of disciples, mostly of very humble birth. They are to tell the world.” “But suppose they fail you,” persisted Gabriel. “What other plan to have then?” Jesus answered solemnly, “I have no other plan.”

22
23 Now let me get VERY practical:

24
25 I grew up in a church that was strong, growing and faithful. It was known as “the
26 regional Assembly of God Church” - the region being Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and
27 Minnesota. I remember well during WWII that hundreds of people attended that great
28 church, led by my pastor A. M. Alber - who was an incredible leader, a giant of a man.

29
30 When we moved to Missouri in the fall of 1952, the church was still strong and had a
31 purpose for existence and a plan for growth. Then the church lost its way. It was led by
32 people who considered it “a business” - that is, let’s have money in the bank and let’s
33 own a couple businesses to support the work. Missions went by the wayside as did

1 local outreach. Today, that once-great, thriving House of God houses a Buddhist
2 Temple. When churches lose their way, they fail. Count on it!

3
4 Consider these down-right frightening verses:

5
6 Ezekiel 3:17-19

7 **Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear**
8 **the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. [18] When I say unto the**
9 **wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to**
10 **warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall**
11 **die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. [19] Yet if thou warn**
12 **the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall**
13 **die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.**

14
15 Does any serious student of the Word really think God just shrugs it off nonchalantly
16 when His followers just ignore His directives? Hardly! God makes it very clear here
17 that if we do not get the Gospel to everyone we can - and those people die in their sins -
18 not only do they lose their souls, **BUT GOD WILL REQUIRE THEIR BLOOD AT OUR**
19 **HANDS.**

20
21 Now....what do you think of that? The SUPREME task of the Church is global
22 evangelization!

23
24 SHOCK!

25
26 Down through decades of pastoring, I have said to me on occasion, "We don't like large
27 churches. We only go to small churches because they are so much more spiritual deep."

28
29 If a church - the Body of Christ - is located in an area with great numbers of people in the
30 vicinity, and it is not growing, something is spiritually wrong. Healthy bodies grow and
31 get stronger. So do healthy churches.

32
33 Now here is a stat that will amaze you: A recent study was made within the Assemblies
34 of God churches and it showed:

- 35
36 • Assemblies of God churches that average 200 or more in attendance have
37 GROWN in the past decade by 237,110 people.
38 • During that same time, the number of people attending the more than 10,000 AG
39 churches under 200 in attendance showed a net LOSS of 2,064. Now - pray tell -
40 what is SPIRITUAL or HEALTHY about that?
41

1 Often these churches become self-serving. They build massive cathedrals costing
2 millions of dollars while tribes of nations have not heard of Jesus or eternal life. When
3 churches - and individual believers - start looking inwardly, rather than outwardly, their
4 future is severely jeopardized.

5
6 THE SUPREME TASK OF THE CHURCH IS MISSIONS. IT IS
7 EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD. When God loved, He loved a WORLD.
8 When He gave His Son, He gave His Son for the WORLD. When Jesus died, He died
9 for a WORLD. God's vision is a WORLD VISION. Yet so many churches are only
10 local in their outlook.

11
12 Acts 1:6-8

13 **When they** (Jesus and the eleven remaining disciples following Judas' death)
14 **therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time**
15 **restore again the kingdom to Israel? [7] And he said unto them, It is not for you to**
16 **know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. [8] But**
17 **ye shall receive power**, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be
18 witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto
19 the uttermost part of the earth.

20
21 *This is the key verse in the book of Acts. The primary purpose of the baptism in the Spirit*
22 *is the receiving of power to witness for Christ so that the lost will be won over to Him and*
23 *taught to obey all that Christ commanded. The end result is that Christ may be known,*
24 *loved, praised, and made Lord of God's people. "Power" designates "strength in*
25 *action."*

26
27 Pentecostal people are "harvesters," for the Holy Spirit was given to humanity on the
28 Jewish Day of Harvest. Churches that aren't harvesting are not Pentecostal, no matter
29 what they might profess in spiritual gifts.

30
31 The fact is, Jesus is coming. The LAST GENERATION may well be this one. And our
32 work is not finished.

33
34
35
36 (I will start a new series on Wednesday night, April – THE CHURCH THAT
CHANGED A CONTINENT based on First Corinthians. Please tell your friends and
know that I think this is one of the most important and relevant studies God has ever laid
on my heart.)

37
38