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# Truth & Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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*"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."* Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

A publication of the  
**Wellsburg  
church of Christ**  
Which meets at:  
112 Sunset Ave.  
Wellsburg, WV 26070  
304-737-1422

*We appreciate so much your presence here with us today. We would like to extend an invitation to join us at any of our other times of worship.*

## TIMES OF SERVICES

### SUNDAY

Bible Classes\* 10:00 AM  
AM Worship 10:45 AM  
PM Worship 6:30 PM

### WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes\* 7:00 PM  
(\* Bible Classes for All Ages)

## Today's Lesson:

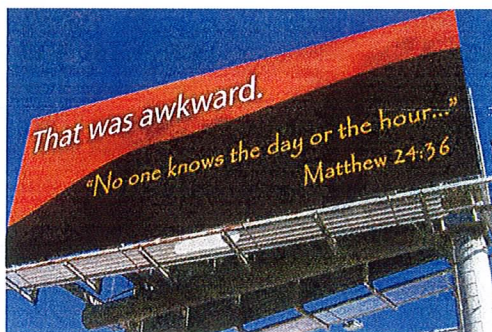
**TEOTWAWKI**  
*The End Of The World  
As We Know It*

*Audio CD's are available  
free of charge in the foyer.*

*Please visit our website:*  
**www.truthandright.org**

*If you have any questions regarding  
what we teach and practice, please  
feel free to ask*

*It's (Not) the End of the World as We  
Know It, Since Everyone's Still Here*  
By—Ethan R. Longhenry



of anyone being "raptured." Things continue as before.

Much could be said about the problems with Camping's theology and methodology. The theology is dispensational premillennialist to the core, something the New Testament does not really teach. Furthermore, to associate the "rapture" with a moment 7,000 years after the Flood, while interesting, has no substantive basis in Scripture. The mathematics and attempts to make contact with other aspects of Scripture is perhaps fascinating but ultimately proves to be a baseless foray into mental gymnastics. Perhaps that is why other noted dispensational premillennialists have been fairly quiet about Camping's prediction-- he was already wrong in 1994, and he is wrong again in 2011, and even they likely saw it coming.

Whereas the overall Christian community did not make too terribly much of it, such cannot be said for the media. The event was widely discussed in ways that took it far more seriously than it deserved. It is as if, all of a sudden, Camping and his mathematical gymnastics really represented what Christians believe and to what Christians look forward. And now, since it did not

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take place as envisioned. it won't just be Camping and his crowd that will look foolish-- Christianity itself is disrespected by the whole endeavor.

Nevertheless, focusing too much on Camping and the substance of what he said is less relevant and important in the long run. Time will tell how he will respond to this latest disappointment. He might confess that he was wrong and that the entire endeavor was wrongheaded. That would be nice but remains unlikely. It is more likely that he will suggest again, as in 1994, that the basis of the calculation was wrong, but that the principles are still correct. Or perhaps he will try to argue that God had mercy and gave man a bit more time, or that it was really some momentous spiritual event that humans could not see that took place today. And that, ultimately, is the real and pressing issue that does need addressing-- the entire basis of Camping's theology and methodology, accepted by so many.

Ever since Jesus spoke of His return there have been many who speculate about the nature of that event. Calculations are as old as the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and 2 Peter 3:8 has been being misused toward those ends ever since. The Creation, the Flood, the time-frame of Daniel 9:24-27 have proven to be fertile grounds for speculation about when the Lord would return. How many dates have been suggested? 1000. 1843, then 1844. 1914. 1975. 1994, then 2011. And will it stop now? Of course not. Someone else will come up with a new theory involving some Biblical moment or event, extrapolate it out for a few thousand years, and come up with a date.

The problem is that all of this colossally misses the point on many different levels.

Quoting Matthew 24:36 in the face of the Camping date has been popular; he's quite familiar with it, as are all of those who advocate his position. In fact, the Family Radio people do not take kindly to those who are convinced that the date of Jesus' return cannot be known. Nevertheless, the principle is valid, and perhaps even better established by Matthew 24:44: "*Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh.*"

It is not just a matter of no one knowing when the Lord is coming; the Lord has *expressly stated* that He is going to come *when He is not expected*. We can safely reject, therefore, any date that man advances as the day of the Lord's return categorically. Jesus

would never return on May 21, 2011, *precisely because* Harold Camping and Family Radio predicted that He would do so. (TRH- I disagree with this statement)

It is the ultimate lesson in humility and degradation-- anyone who establishes a date is setting him or herself up for a very public humiliation. In Matthew 24:36-25:13, Jesus very intentionally pours cold water on any attempt to pinpoint the date of His return; Paul does a similar thing in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10, right after the passage that is alleged to teach about the "rapture" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Camping's entire operation-- and the operation of quite a number of people-- is therefore fundamentally flawed and ought to be rejected. Yes, it is true that God reveals what He is going to do, as He told Amos in Amos 3:3-8. But notice, dear friend, that God *has* revealed what He is going to do-- He will return when unexpected, as a thief in the night (Matthew 23:36-25; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10). We ought to trust that.

In reality, this obsession over number-crunching is an insipid form of idolatry. We humans frequently bow down to the god of knowledge. It rarely seems to matter whether we can do anything about what we know or not-- we still just want to *know*. We cannot change the weather, but we surely want to know what the weather is going to be like, and we curse the people who make false predictions about it. We cannot stop the fact that evil exists and much evil is done, but how many have wanted to know how and why such evil takes place? We give far too much credence to the view that we have to know in order to be secure. First of all, there's no true security outside of our confidence in God (cf. Matthew 6:19-21; Romans 8:33-39). Secondly, that knowledge is merely a drug-- it does not necessarily change anything, but it just makes us feel better, as if we have some kind of control because we at least have knowledge. Thus, it becomes a power ploy-- if we know exactly when the Lord is returning, we can have control over how we react to it.

But here's our big problem-- that control is not for us to have. It's God who has that power. We're not supposed to have it, and that's why He continues to hold onto it after 2,000 years and counting.

And that's why the whole endeavor is an idol, a failure, and ultimately a cause of discouragement from what God would have us be and do. A lot of this has to do with a lot of what passes for the Christian view of the present and the future.



For many, much is made of that which we are to expect in the hereafter. Philippians 3:10-15 is highly venerated. Many take the view of being sojourners and exiles to the point of being presently useless in their hopeful expectation of the future. Because of this highly future-oriented form of Christianity, the here and now is dismissed as mostly irrelevant. The now is merely the vehicle to get to the future.

But let's return for a moment to the way that Jesus and Paul encourage believers to look at the hereafter. They do point out that we are not going to know, which irritates us, of course, because we always want to know. God will maintain that power over us, not despotically, but for our own good, *because God wants us to always be living as if in the moment of eschatological fulfillment.*

Notice the imagery: Jesus twice describes His moment of return in terms of servants working (or not working) and the consequences those servants will reap (Matthew 24:45-51, 25:14-30). In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10, Paul envisions believers as prepared no matter the circumstances, no matter whether the Lord comes sooner or later, just as Jesus does in the parable of the foolish and wise virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. Our understanding of Philippians 3:10-15 must be tempered with Philippians 1:19-28, where Paul understands that he lives because he has work to do in order to advance God's purposes, and the Philippians do also!

Despite bad theology and misconstrued passages, Christianity is not a fundamentally future-oriented belief system. Instead, those who profess Christ are exhorted strongly to reflect His image in the here and now, secure in their hope for their future redemption, so as to bask in the glow of glory when that day comes (Romans 8:17-25, 29; 1 Peter 1:3-9). This itself is modeled by Jesus, who did not shrink from His purposes of seeking and saving the lost and proclaiming the message of the Kingdom throughout His life so as to obtain the glory awaiting Him (Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 4:15; 5:7-8; 12:1-2).

Indeed, Christians are exhorted to see themselves presently as a new creation, the breaking-in of the Kingdom of God into the sin-darkened world (2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 1:13)-- taking seriously the exhortation of the Lord's prayer that "[God's] *will be done on earth as it is in Heaven*" (Matthew 6:10). Christians are called to look forward to the resurrection and the "*new heavens and earth*," however constituted, the complete restoration

of God's purposes for humanity as indicated in the Garden of Eden, not some disembodied spiritual state of bliss as has become so popular (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:35-58; Revelation 21:1-22:6)-- in short, the redemption not just of the soul but also the body and the creation (Romans 8:19-25).

This is a far cry from Camping's-- and really, the entire dispensational premillennial establishment's-- view of the end of the earth as the saved being whisked away while the unbelievers suffer with the earth as the latter is thoroughly devastated, with the only "redemption" for earth the 1000 year reign of Christ that is ultimately ended with-- you guessed it-- a return to disembodied spiritual eternity. It seems, at times, that adherents to this belief system eagerly await such vengeance, for God to come out like Rambo or the Terminator against all those who have spurned Him.

This is why dispensational premillennialism is so insipid and dangerous-- it plays toward man's carnal side and has precious little room for the grace and mercy of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. It takes a dim view of the creation, which God declared to be "very good" before it was corrupted by our sin (Genesis 1:31). And, worst of all, it distracts people in the very ways that Jesus and Paul were attempting to avoid-- focusing so much on the moment of eschatological fulfillment that the more important business of serving God in the Kingdom of Christ is overlooked until then. As with life, so with the end-- it ultimately is about the journey more than the destination.

The Lord Jesus Christ will return one day. That day may come during our lifetimes; it may not. But we don't have to wait for that day before we can live in God's Kingdom-- we can-- and must-- live our lives according to God's will. We must make it clear that in our lives, the Kingdom has come, and we are seeking to live our lives on earth "as it is in Heaven." We are to live for Christ today anchored in the hope that the Lord will redeem not just our souls but also our bodies and the creation around us, that the end is really the day of the ultimate reconciliation between the Creator God and His creation. It will be a day full of glory when God again dwells in the midst of His covenant people in His creation, and we should pray for that day to come (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:22; 2 Peter 3:12; Revelation 22:20). But until then, we are to be busy in His vineyard, making Him known to all mankind through our words and deeds.

**Maranatha!**



# Those Serving This Week

## Sunday AM

<b>Class Prayer</b>	John Lemal
<b>Announcements</b>	Chuck Isinghood
<b>Song Leader</b>	Dan Marton
<b>Scripture</b>	Luke 9:1-17
<b>Reader</b>	Matt Ferrell
<b>Prayer</b>	Nathan Marshall
<b>Speaker</b>	Tim Henderson
<b>Lord's Supper</b>	
Bread	Wayne Campbell
Fruit of the Vine	Earl Miller
Serve	Ken Prager
Serve	CJ Isinghood
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Bryan Legg

Please inform the one in charge of announcements if you are unable to fulfill your responsibilities.

## Sunday PM

<b>Announcements</b>	Chuck Isinghood
<b>Song Leader</b>	Harold Marshall
<b>Scripture</b>	Luke 9:18-36
<b>Reader</b>	John Lemal
<b>1st Prayer</b>	Wayne Campbell
<b>Speaker</b>	Tim Henderson
<b>Communion</b>	Matt Ferrell
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Ken Prager

## Wednesday

<b>Class Prayer</b>	Don Coen, Jr.
<b>Announcements</b>	Chuck Isinghood
<b>Song Leader</b>	Singing/Praying
<b>Invitation</b>	Tim Henderson
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Dave Harless

# *News N Notes*

- Ladies Class tonight after services in the auditorium.
- Men's Training class tonight after services in class room 2 & 3. Tonight we're discussing Prayer

**Please remember these in your prayers:**

### **Sick/ Poor Health:**

- **Leighla Brady**, Nancy Morris' daughter
- **Don Coen, Sr.**
- **Nicholas Edwards**, suffering from organ dysfunctions following surgery, is in ICU
- **Zeda Goddard** is in the hospital at Weirton Medical Center, room # 648
- **Robert Schwerferger**, Alberta Headen's brother-in-law.
- **Grace Lancaster**
- **Ronald & Charollette Lancaster**
- **William Louthen**, Charissa Erdman's grandfather. His address is: 127 10th St., Wellsburg, WV 26070
- **Virginia Malick**, Peggy Miller's mother
- **Alfred and Mary Jane Myers**
- **Jim Moore**, Nancy Morris' nephew
- **Jimmy Roberts**, Ed & Marie's son
- **Jim Roberts**, Ed Roberts' father
- **Marie Roberts**
- **Gabriel Taylor**, 5 year old great grandson of Don Coen, Sr., dealing with cancer.
- **Trudell Tennant**

## **Don't forget our Shut-ins**

### **Ann's Retreat:**

- Josephine Clow

### **Brightwood Center:**

- Shirley Campbell

### **Valley Haven:**

- Ethel Mahan
- Pauline Sellers

### **Weirton Geriatric:**

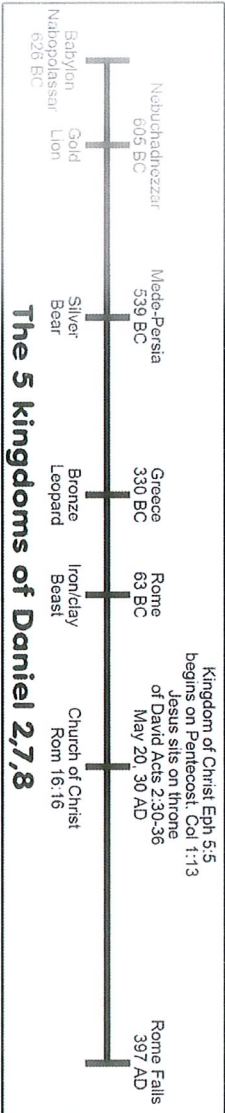
- Kitty Morgan

### **At Home:**

- Mabel Fleming
- Zeda Goddard
- Betty Hunter
- Pauline Midcap
- Ann Rudolph

Send them a card—give them a call—let them know we are thinking about them.

If someone needs to be added to this list, please contact Tim Henderson



Steve Rudd  
[www.bible.ca/rapture.htm](http://www.bible.ca/rapture.htm)



