

## End Times Truth

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By [Nathan Jones](#)

### What is the period called the Last Days actually referring to?

This question was put to me recently by Doug Harris from Britain's apologetics television program "Simply the Truth." In this first episode of Doug's new Show "End Times Truth," he sought along with me and other guests to define what the Last Days are and how we should live in them. The following is an excerpt of that program.



*Doug Harris:* Is the Last Days the period of the First Century immediately after Paul was writing about the topic to Timothy, or is it pointing to some remote time in the future? Maybe indeed those days lie in the future.

These among other questions I put to Nathan Jones of Lamb & Lion Ministries. Nathan, we began by looking at this whole introduction to end times by reading 1 Timothy 1:4, which we'll address more later. We then read about the "latter times" in 2 Timothy 3:1 and we also find the term "last days." Are these talking about two different periods? If so, what's the difference? And, where are we in the scheme of things?

*Nathan Jones:* The best answer to your question leads us to the Parable of the Weeds which Jesus told in Matthew 13. This is the story where Jesus declared that humanity is coming upon a great harvest. A time is coming when the weeds, that is those who have rejected Jesus Christ and His salvation, will be rooted out. Also at that time the good wheat, which are those who are saved throughout history, will be brought into the barn, which means brought into Heaven. It's to be a time of reaping and a time of harvest. That same imagery Jesus uses in Revelation 14 which describes a great reaping upon the earth.

We can go back to the Old Testament and read that the prophets often used the key end times term "latter years." For example, we can find it used in Ezekiel 38, which also uses the term "last days." Jeremiah 37 cross-references those days when he talks about the "time of Jacob's trouble." We can also find in the New Testament the same terms "latter days" and "last days," but those texts also call that time the "Day of the Lord" in Acts 2:20 and 1 Thessalonians 5:2.

From these scriptures we know that in the "latter years" there will be a time of reaping and harvest upon the world, and we can specifically attribute that time to be the Tribulation. The Tribulation is a seven year time period that will befall the human race and scourge the entire planet. It will be a time beginning soon after the Rapture which has taken the Church up to Heaven beforehand. The people on the earth will be left to experience 21 terrible judgments for the purpose of trying to get them to turn their hearts to God and give their lives to Jesus. The specific focus of the whole reaping is targeted on Israel, because God wants a remnant of the Jewish people to accept Jesus, also called Yeshua, as their Savior.

Now, when we talk about the "latter days," it can also refer to the days leading up to the Tribulation. That means the Church Age, which Revelation 3 describes and which we are living in right now. The last of the seven churches Revelation describes is the Church of Laodicea. It's the apathetic church that defines our very time period in Church history.

So, in summary, the "last days" and "latter years" specifically are about the seven year Tribulation, but they can also generally refer to this Church Age which is the final phase of human government before the Messianic Age is ushered in by Jesus Christ's Second Coming.

*Doug Harris:* Very interesting! So, there are two periods of time described there. We've got the "latter day," which obviously takes a period of time to reach, but then there's the actual end of those days. Are you saying that we are now living in that period of time towards the end of the "latter days"?

*Nathan Jones:* I believe so. When we read Luke 21 and Matthew 24, Jesus is describing what will be going on in the "last days" or the "latter days." We also read in Revelation 3 how the end of the Church Age which we are in right now is defined by the Church of Laodicea, again known for its apathetic and weak faith. Laodicea is Christianity watered down and weak and very apostate, which we call can see clearly is the case and sign of the times.

Back to Luke 21 and Matthew 24, Jesus said that human morality would get to the point as it was in the days of Noah. Before the Flood in Noah's days, people did whatever they wanted to. They were totally evil except for Noah and his family. Jesus said when we see humanity return to the days of Noah, or the morality of Noah's time, that would be an indicator that the world was in those last days. That coincides with the Rapture of the Church which must happen before the judgments of the Tribulation befall the earth.

So, while the actual definition of "last days" and "latter days" can apply to the Church Age we are living in as Jesus describes it, I would add that the culmination of the last days is the final seven years of human government, which is the period of the Tribulation.

*Doug Harris:* Whenever the "latter days" are specifically, the point is that we are living in them now. Many do seem to really believe we are living in the end of the "latter days," though not necessarily the Tribulation.

### **How do we avoid deception in these last days?**

*Doug Harris:* First Timothy 4:1 warns the believer to pay attention so as not to be deceived by deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. It becomes very obvious if people pay attention to these things that sooner or later they will want to communicate with these evil spirits and will want to draw closer to that which is deceitful — the doctrine of demons.

Just how can we test out what is truly from God and what is taught by demons when things are spoken of concerning the End Times. How can we begin to test these things out? What can we do to insure that we are not led astray?

The answer is clear — we certainly need to bring everything back that we've heard to the Word of God. If what's being said is clearly found within the Word of God, then there is absolutely no problem with that end times teaching.

If however, what you've learned is not found within the Word of God, but it's also not denied by the Word of God, well we might not be able to be so sure. We end up holding those teachings up and conclude they're probably true, but debatable.

Stand strong on the belief that anything that is not clearly taught within Scripture, or is clearly denied by Scripture, means we cannot build our future upon it. We need to be discerning. The Bible advises us to be diligently seeking. I hope that's something we always do from the Scriptures and with others.

However, even at this point we are not left helpless, because 1 Timothy 4 goes on to give the antidote to avoiding deception and the accepting of wrong teachings. The answer is that we are to be nourished by the words of faith and of sound doctrine. Just how vital is that today? How should we be living in these days?

Nathan, what do you have to say? In 1 Timothy 4:6, we get in the King James this phrase about being nourished. I'm very interested in that phrase. Just how are we to be nourished in these last days? When I think of nourishment, I'm reminded that nourishment always gives you strength. Nourishment always gives you the ability to do things. We as believers in Christ are going to face difficult days. We are in fact even now facing difficult days, knowing that we are going to face even more difficult days to come. How do we get nourished and be able to face them?

*Nathan Jones:* The Apostle Peter gave us a great description of what being nourished looks like. Second Peter 3 is an entire chapter dedicated to talking about living in the "last days" or "latter days." Peter gives us ten points that we can follow to be nourished and to exist wholly in these last very difficult days.

1. Peter tells us to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the commands given by our Lord and Savior through the Apostles. We should remember the words of Jesus. Remember the words of the Apostles. In other words, read your Bible!
2. Understand that in the last days scoffers will come. Peter was telling us that in the last day people would declare that Jesus isn't coming back. They'll claim such a belief is nonsense and not to believe in it. They'll scoff at the Bible. They'll scoff at God even existing. And, they'll scoff at primarily the Creation story. In other words, Peter is prophesying the advent of the teaching of Evolution.

3. Peter warns us not to forget God's promise that He'll return. We are to abide in His salvation and model His patience. That Jesus is so patiently waiting for everybody who is supposed to in this age come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and get saved demonstrates God's amazing love.

4. Peter reminds us to live holy and godly lives. While we are here on this earth, as Christians we are to live holy and godly lives while we wait for Christ's return.

5. Look forward to the day of God. Look forward to the time when we live with God up in Heaven with dwell with Him forever. That's really something to look forward to! And, it will give you hope and perspective.

6. Speed the Lord's coming, Peter says. In other words, get the Gospel out. Share the Good News with people so they may hear the Word of God and get saved. Time is short, so be active in evangelism.

7. Look forward to the New Heaven and New Earth, which is the home of the Righteous. We are here in this world only temporarily. This here is a temporary home. Our real home, though, is the New Jerusalem. That's Heaven! Heaven will come down to earth one day so that God will dwell with redeemed Man. Such knowledge gives us believers great hope and something to look forward to.

8. Peter says we are to be found spotless and blameless and at peace with God. Again, live those holy and spotless lives, but strive to live at peace with one another. Christians are an ornery bunch, but we need to practice peace with one another now, for we'll be spending eternity with each other later.

9. We need to be on guard so that we may not be carried away by the error of lawless men. During the Last Days, one of the main signs that Jesus gave is that we would know His soon return is coming due to the proliferation of false prophets and false teachers. That's why Peter warns the Christian to be on our guard be prepared for battling doctrinal error. To be able to do that, we need to know our Bible so that we can refute the false doctrines that are being taught.

10. The last nourishment Peter gives us is the directive to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Grow in the grace of God and become more Christ like.

That there is the ten "nourishments" Peter gives us.

*Doug Harris:* Brilliant, brilliant info! Two points came out to me there. It's sort of like you almost were talking about both a looking back and looking forward. We are to look back to what God has said in His Word; never forgetting what He said, never forgetting what's written down, and never forgetting what's there. But, also, wherever we are, we're to be looking forward to what is yet to come. As Paul had said, this difficult time that I am going through now is nothing compared to what glory is to come. So, Peter is giving us two directions to pay attention to: looking back and looking forward. That's very important.

*Nathan Jones:* Amen! As difficult as the world is now for Christians to live in and growing worse every day with the massacres in Nigeria, the concentration camps for Christians in North Korea, and the loss of our freedoms in the Western world; it's going to get worse. Conditions are going to get worse because evil hates God. Evil hates the thought that we represent God and so wants to destroy our belief in Christ. But, Jesus says that even as bad as it is now and how tough our last days time period is, it's nothing compared to the last of the last days, which is the coming Tribulation.

*Doug Harris:* Wonderful words! I hope all believers understand the need to be nourished by the Bible's words of faith and sound doctrine.

### **What worldly fables lead us away from the truth of Jesus Christ?**

*Doug Harris:* First Timothy 4:7 in the King James reads, "But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness." We are told here concerning worldly fables not to take any notice of them, because if we take notice of these worldly fables we are going to be led away from the truth.

Nathan, when looking through the lens of the end times, what do you think some of those worldly fables are that can actually not only lead us away from the truth, but possibly lead us into fear since we would no longer then be holding firmly on to the Jesus Christ and what He has done for us on the cross?

*Nathan Jones:* I love the NIV84's translation which calls these worldly fables "godless myths and old wives tales." Think back while growing up about the old wives tales you were told. For example, like when a bell rings an angel receives his wings. Or, if you grow ivy on your house you are protected from witchcraft and evil. Or, if you put a picture up in your house of an elephant it will bring you luck, but only if that picture is facing an open door. These beliefs are crazy! The people who have come up with them are very animistic in their view of nature,

meaning that we have to ward off the spirits of demons. Animistic beliefs are godless. Those are not Christian teachings and are actually satanic in origin. We as Christians need to stay away from demonic beliefs like those.

Doug, there are three main deceptions today that are leading people away from Jesus Christ and their salvation and hope.

1. The first is the false teaching that all paths lead to God.

Jesus in John 14:6 emphatically declared, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me." Clearly Jesus said faith in Him as the Son of God and Savior is the one and only way to get to Heaven. Instead, there are authors like Paul Young who wrote *The Shack*, along with others, who offer multiple options to be saved. This non-biblical teaching is called Universalism. It's the idea that there are many ways to reach the Father based on our works and our own personal system, but again that's definitely not truth. Only faith in Jesus Christ who did the ultimate work on the cross is the one and only way to get to Heaven.

2. The second deceptive false teaching is a big one, and that's works based salvation.

Works based salvation is the idea that we don't need Jesus to get to Heaven. We can just work our own way and do enough good deeds to get to God. But, according to the Bible, that method is clearly not true. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast."

What are works for then? Ephesians 2:10 tells us, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared for us in advance to do." In other words, we aren't created to have to do work to get salvation, rather once we are saved then we naturally do good works. People seem to get that vital difference confused. No, Jesus did the only required work on the cross, so there is no such thing according to the Bible of a works based salvation.

3. One of the greatest deceptions of this time goes along with what Peter said in 2 Peter 3 about scoffers who say that Jesus isn't really returning.

The general idea behind this deception is that time is just going to keep on marching on and God's never going to return. Jesus isn't going to finally institute justice and law by His earthly kingdom. These are the people from 2 Peter 3:3-7 who we are warned about — "in the last

days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, 'Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.'" The chapter goes on to teach us that eventually there will be a day of destruction for these ungodly men. Today we are seeing a general rejection both in the secular world and a good part of the Church that really doesn't believe that Jesus is returning. And yet, Jesus promised He's going to return, and He will return.

*Doug Harris:* Great as ever, Nathan, I really appreciate your input. You underline the fact that there is only one way to God, and that is through Jesus Christ alone.

Let's sum up today's conversation. What's important to remember is that there are lots of myths and there's lots of "facts" that we've got to check out before we give them any credibility.

Back in 1 Timothy 4, I want to underline three truths. First of all, the Spirit explicitly (that's the only time that Greek word is used in the whole of the New Testament; explicit meaning expressively and outspokenly by and from God), says what is in 1 Timothy 4 is from God and not from man, and because of Who the Source is, it will happen.

The second truth I want to underline is this — that we need to be careful that we are not listening to deceivers. We are not to be listening (the root of that word is roving like an imposter), to those who mislead us. There are many people out there who want to bring false doctrines in who in reality are the enemies of Christ. They are not always absolutely upfront about it, so they bring their deception in very subtly. Therefore, we need to nourish ourselves on the Word of God.

Finally, the third truth is that we must have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives tales. Do not listen to unconfirmed conspiracy theories. Discern everything through the Word of God. Whatever your belief of the end times is, let us insure that we are being constantly being nourished on the words of faith and of sound doctrine. Spend more time on the truth, on the reality, than on the issues that are negative and are taking us away from God's eternal teachings.

End times truth whatever else is this: God is in control. Never forget that. Trust and walk with the Lord and always be ready for what He is going to do.