

Warning: Perilous Times Ahead

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[0:00] What's the world coming to? The Bible shows us about perilous times. In other words, dangerous or violent times, times that are hard to deal with, times of stress.

Sounds a lot like today, doesn't it? Sounds a lot like the present time. It's interesting, way back in 1969, the head of the United Nations, a man called Hugh Thant, said he thought that the world could only make it another 10 years.

That was 1969. So we're living on borrowed time. We're living on borrowed time, I'll put to you. And it's interesting, in current events lately, people would have heard in the news about many high-level players going to a place called Davos for the World Economic Forum just this last week.

And what are they talking about? Global pandemics, energy scarcity, rapid inflation, geopolitical tensions and risks to food security and the economy.

And here's a quote, they're saying this, the world today is at a critical inflection point. The sheer number of ongoing crises cause for bold collective action.

[1:08] Perilous times, I'll put to you, perilous times. We go to the scripture now, 2 Timothy 3, from verse 1 through 5. And the Bible foretells of times of peril ahead of us.

It reads there, verse 1, This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. It says, for men shall be lovers of their own selves.

Covetous. Covetous has got the sense of lovers of money. It goes on, boasters, proud, blasphemers. There's a bit of that going on, isn't there? Disobedience of parents.

In other words, no respect to parents. To authority, really, isn't there? Unthankful. Unholy. Without natural affection.

So, unloving. And then it says, truce breakers. In other words, unforgiving. There's a lack of love, there's a lack of forgiveness, isn't there? False accusers, it says.

[2:04] People are slandering. Incontinent, which means uncontrollable. Fierce or brutal. Savage. Despisers of those that are good. In other words, they're hateful, they're hostile to those that are good.

It says, traitors. They're going to be treacherous. Heady, which means reckless. High-minded, which means conceited. High-minded. Then it goes on, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Tells of a world where sensual pleasures and vain amusements will occupy their thoughts and affections more than lovers of God.

In verse 5, it says, of these having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such, turn away. 2 Timothy 3, perilous times shall come.

The Bible gives us many indicators, many signs, many marks of these unholy, perilous times to come. And times of rampant lawlessness, really, isn't it?

[3:09] Really, it's the outworking of man's rebellion and blasphemy. They're going to be lovers of themselves, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. And so we see perilous times.

And I'm just going to talk through just some remarks that kind of highlight what's going on in our world today. What's the world coming to? Perilous times.

Think of these times that we live. It's apparently the case that there's 275 million children exposed to domestic violence in the home. That's a breakdown of the family unit.

Half of all South Australian marriages end in divorce. Violence is ramping up. Thousands of Australian men, women and children are seeking emergency shelter from violence in the home.

Now, just this afternoon, we had reports. There was a lady who left her bag on the table out there. And someone came in and took that bag with their mobile phone and her car keys.

[4:11] And she was stranded. Stolen her bag out of the foyer of our church. That people would be so brazen. To come into the foyer of our church and steal someone's property, someone's bag.

So don't leave anything out there tonight. But it's sad, isn't it? There's this real increase of crime. We see an impact of drugs exploding all around us. Apparently drugs are very easy to come by for those that are looking for them.

Slavery is actually something that's happening in our world today. Strangely enough, we think slavery is something of the old time. But apparently there's 50 million people who are slaves around the world of different kinds.

You know, forced labour of children and such things. Forced marriages. Many are obsessed with materialism today. Gambling. Skyrocketing, isn't it?

It boggles your mind when you might notice the pokies there. And people just in this hypnotic state, aren't they? Just the money just feeding the machine down the tubes.

[5:15] 45 million Americans are currently on antidepressants. So-called happy pills. 45 million Americans. I don't know how many Aussies, but you can imagine similar situations.

Of course, some people might need such things, perhaps. But there's just an indicator, isn't there? Of the depression, the sadness in people's lives.

Perilous times. Perilous times. We're living in times, too, that are marked by deception. It says 2 Timothy 3, verse 13. But evil men and seducers shall wax, worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Perilous times. I put to you one of the indicators is deception. Deception. There's all kinds of deceptive miracles and signs and marvels. In 1 Timothy 4, verse 1, it reads, Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving head to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

There's a spirit of deception. It's happening. It's happening. Sadly, even in churches, there's a rampant apostasy and a deception that's going on. We've all got to wake up and try to be alert.

[6:29] Try to search the scriptures. What does the Bible say? Then we can discern truth from error. Our Lord warns us in Matthew 24, verse 11, Many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many.

Many false prophets. Here's one of them, William Branham. Many false prophets shall rise. William Branham is one here. People look up to him, even in the current charismatic movement, they look up to him as a prophet.

He's a false prophet. Whatever he prophesied, supposedly prophesied, didn't come to pass. So the Bible calls him a false prophet because what he said did not come to truth.

Yet he is revered today in the Pentecostal movement. Many seem to care little about godliness and truth. When there's fraudsters, when there's false prophets like this man, people still follow on. They still swallow the lies, the falsehoods that he promoted. And so the Bible warns us of such a thing, of following those that have ungodly ways and methods and falsehoods.

[7:33] The Bible talks about, in Jeremiah 7.31, the valley of tophet, which means the place of the drum. And the crowd would dance around to the music, to the drum beat, in a drug-like trance, and they would sacrifice their children to their false gods.

And we don't have such a thing today, but you could think, even in Aaron's time, We see Aaron pictured here as he constructed the golden calf. He was a man of God, and yet he fell into this deception that he would worship a golden calf and construct it so that others would fall down and worship it instead of God who brought them out of Egypt.

Now this is a telling picture, isn't it? Nowadays we see this commercialisation of Christianity. Some churches are bankrupt of the truth. So we must wise up, wise up to such a thing.

We should wise up to the prospect of deception. The Bible warns us over and over again to take heed. To take heed. 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 3 it reads, Let no man deceive you by any means.

For that day, talking about the day of the Lord ultimately, that day shall not come except become a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed. It reads, verse 9, Even him, the Antichrist, is talking about, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and science and lying wonders.

[8:57] Verse 10, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie.

It's telling us here the Antichrist is coming. It's telling us there will be a real Antichrist, an Antichrist. He will come. And he will exercise a global control.

Think of the control systems that are going on today. People call that such an idea, such a concept. Big brother. Of course, harking back to George Orwell's 1984.

And the Bible talks about an Antichrist who's going to exercise total control. We're seeing in our day this rising of tracking systems.

Tracking systems. Think of it. And really, mass surveillance, it is a reality. Smart devices, facial recognition, DNA databases.

[9:56] In fact, on any given day, the average person is now monitored, surveilled, spied on and tracked in more than 20 different ways by both government and corporate eyes and ears.

We're being listened to, watched, tracked, hacked, followed and mapped. It's happening all the time. In fact, there's actually a bit of a protest coming up in the city of Salisbury.

I've been in touch with some people who are putting out a protest about such things. And I'll just read some of the points here.

Now, they're not particularly a Christian group, but I think there's Christians amongst them. But here's what it says. Stop Big Brother Technologies being introduced by the Salisbury Council. Salisbury Council, they're making it a smart city.

Smart, S-M-A-R-T. It's an acronym for self-monitoring analysis and reporting technology. Did you get that? Self-monitoring analysis and reporting technology.

[11:01] In other words, surveillance. It reads on, do you want total surveillance where every movement by car, bike or on foot is tracked 24-7? Why are ratepayers paying for the purchase, installation and maintenance of these technologies?

And it's got a picture there of Senator Alex Antic. People might have seen it. You can watch it on YouTube where he's alerting people to the smart technologies that are being rolled out in Adelaide, the city of Unley.

There's an interesting clip you can see. If you're interested, I'll send you the link. And so they're asking people, there's a bit of a fly going out, they're asking people to rally for the next Salisbury Council meeting to protest such a thing.

Say no to smart city technologies. Now, I'm not sure how far you take some of this stuff or whether you're interested in such a thing. Of course, you can get off on a tangent with such stuff, but I think there's cause enough to say, yeah, there's something a bit fishy.

This smells a bit fishy. What's going on? So let me get back to the sermon now. So thinking about this, tracking about this concept, there could be an antichrist. Well, there will be an antichrist, and he will exercise the total control, the control of really people's lives.

[12:18] Think about it today. Think about it for yourself. They're tracking you based on your spending, your consumer activities, with every smartphone that we buy, every GPS device we install, every Twitter, Facebook, Google account we open, every frequent buyer card we use for purchases, every credit and debit card that we use to pay for our transactions.

It's all being collected for corporations and government counterparts on who we know, what we think, how we spend our money, how we spend our time.

It's a constant surveillance system. It would be very convenient for such a figure as an antichrist to use such technologies, I put to you. Think about banking.

There's moves underway for central banks to have control over our finances through digital currencies, digital currencies. And the stage is set for a great worldwide financial crash.

Think of the US today. It's in debt by over 31 trillion, trillion dollars. It's a mind-blowing amount, isn't it? Australia is heading the same way, really.

[13:26] Even local, state governments, massive debt. It's just ramping up. There's talk of a massive economic meltdown. And there's plans being drawn up to withdraw all currency.

They want to take away all the cash, replace it with a cashless system. And our authorities are telling us that cash is going away. A cashless system which is going to play a prominent biblical end-time role.

We can see that in the Bible. They can't buy or sell without the mark. And we can see that, can't we? It's all leading up to this, I put to you. And it's interesting, more than 100 nations are exploring what they call central bank digital currency.

Central bank digital currency, according to the IMF, the International Monetary Fund. And the Biden administration is pushing this. So I'm telling you all this to seek to illustrate that what the Bible says will come, the stage is being set, that it can come through such means.

It would be relatively easy to put all of that under a global government such as the Antichrist will have.

[14:45] So we think about on the church front, even on the church front now, there's this loss of truth, the Lord Jesus talks about deception, that we who should know the truth, we that are believers in Christ, we should be wising up to all of this.

Yet it seems like some just only give lip service to the truth. So the next one, 2 Timothy 4, verse 3, it reads, For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lust they shall heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

It seems like some preachers dwell overmuch on foolish stories and just all experiential stuff, man-made fictions, rather than the Word of God.

Apparently 67% of Americans say there's no way to know that something is objectively right or wrong. There's no absolute truth.

And that kind of sentiment, it's even amongst Christians, that they don't believe the book. They don't believe there is absolute truth. They're so deceived that they follow the world's thinking.

[15:57] There is nothing that tells us what is objectively right or wrong. There's nothing that tells us this is black and this is white. This is sweet and this is bitter. And they confuse the two, don't they?

Our Lord warns us over and over again of this theme of deception I put to you. Matthew 24, we read, verse 3, So again, repeating that theme of deception.

Verse 5, we see that the Antichrist will be a miracle worker. Verse 5, it says, When we go witnessing, often people say, oh, they kind of slam the door on us because they think we're Jehovah's Witnesses or some other false cult.

But we're just Bible-believing, born-again Christians. And yet there's such confusion out there about what's true, what's right and wrong. Our Lord tells us here, it reads, it says, Be not troubled.

Be not troubled. Brother, sister, he's telling you, don't be troubled by all of this. I know there's a bit of, it's a bit scary, some of what I'm saying, what I've been saying.

[17:26] But yet, for you that believe, he says, be not troubled. You don't have to be alarmed. You don't have to be disturbed in your mind. You don't have to be scared. So there's lots of good things that are happening.

There's lots of good signs. For example, the signs in the nations. On May the 14th, 1948, Israel was miraculously a nation again. And this rebirth of Israel was really, I like to Isaiah 66, verse 8, where it predicts that this would happen in one day, in a day, that God would resurrect a nation, Israel, after this 2,000 years of non-existence, and now to protect it supernaturally amid countless wars and bring such blessing as Israel enjoys today.

So there's some good things, some good things happening on the news front. But the Bible tells us, as we read right here about wars, rumours of wars, verse 7, it reads on, of a nation rising against nation, of kingdom against kingdom.

It tells us of famines and pestilences and earthquakes in diverse places. And the Lord says, all these are the beginning of sorrows. So there's many wars happening. There's these serious trouble spots around the world today.

We're really on the brink of a world war. They're actually saying that. Worldly commentators are saying that. Secular news sources are telling us this, that it wouldn't take much for Russia to get provoked into escalating things to the next stage.

[18:59] When you think about it, numerous nations are supplying Ukraine with billions of dollars' worth of weaponry. When's Russia going to say, we're not going to put up with this anymore?

You know, we're on a brink of a world war. We really are. And that's not, you know, scaremongering, fear-mongering. This is, worldly commentators are saying just that. Military commentators are saying just that. War is raging. And it's, there's all kinds of dangerous new weapons on the horizon that are being developed.

There's such things as what they call seismic warfare that could harness nuclear shockwaves to unleash earthquakes and tidal waves. So, we should be very mindful about the situation of the world today.

And the Bible says, there shall be wars and rumours of wars. We also read about famines. I've heard it said that in North Korea, that there's no dogs, cats or rats.

[20:01] They've all been caught and eaten. Because that's the situation there. And, apparently, families in North Korea are boiling tree bark into paste in order to survive.

It's another world for some, isn't it? People are living on the edge. Apparently, about 10% of the world's population regularly go to bed hungry.

There's a global food crisis. Our Lord says, there's going to be famines. The United Nations is setting up a world food authority to control the distribution of food.

CNN are reporting that we're facing, and this is a current report, we're facing the worst food crisis in modern history. It's so catastrophic in some nations.

They're running out of food right now. And, meantime, because they're saving the planet from climate change, they're actually paying farmers not to grow food in some countries.

[20:59] They're telling them, don't grow food, we'll pay you not to plant your crop. In the EU, there's plans now to impose direct carbon taxes on individuals.

And, countless farms are being permanently shut down all across Europe. In the meantime, there's people starving, there's famines. It's only going to get worse. And, there's this increasing control of food.

The US Rockefeller Foundation now controls seeds of 95% of the Earth's major cereal crops. So, wheat, barley, and corn.

95% is controlled by the Rockefeller Foundation, another global kind of entity that is controlling things.

And, there's a global seeds conspiracy such that total ownership of the world's seeds and ultimately the survival of mankind itself is in the hands of an elite cartel of multinational corporations.

[22:00] Our Lord says there's going to be famines. And, he talks about pestilences. Next one. Meantime, we also have pestilences. Worldwide epidemics. Of course, we've had a bit of a preview, a bit of a taster of that with the COVID going on and all that stuff.

Infectious diseases, horrendous plagues. Apparently, there's new ones coming out all the time. Of course, we're hearing about new variants, aren't we? I've heard it said new scarians.

Apparently, over 10 million people die of cancer every year. This is a reality. These are true statistics from current times. The World Health Organization has warned about the rise of drug-resistant germs.

And here's a quote from the World Health Organization. The world is heading towards a post-antibiotic era in which many common infections will no longer have a cure and once again will kill unabated.

Another sign, our Lord says, is of a rising sentiment against Christians. Verse 9, we read on, then they shall deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you.

[23:08] You shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And they shall many be offended and shall betray one another and shall hate one another. Friends, right now, these are current statistics.

there's over 360 million Christians suffering persecution. 360 million of our brothers and sisters around the world. They're getting persecuted. That's one out of every seven Christians in the world is suffering a high level of persecution and discrimination for their faith.

And I just read this lately, 2022, last year, in fact, was the worst year for Christians worldwide as far as persecution.

as far as intensifying violence, discrimination and exclusion. Our Lord says it would happen. Our Lord says that you'll be hated of all nations.

Verse 11, we read on, and many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many. As I said before, post-modernists have no sense of God, no sense of right or wrong.

[24:15] It's like there's no standard there to measure things by. It was reported this month that a survey of 1,000 Christian pastors across seven major denominations revealed that only 37% of clergy have a biblical worldview.

Only 37% of these 1,000 pastors stated that they had a biblical worldview. So what is their worldview? It's secular.

It's non-biblical. They've lost the plot. They've got away from the word so much that they just think like the world thinks rather than, actually, we've got what God thinks, what God says right here. That should dictate what we believe. But no. And verse 24, it reads on, for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

We're told of powerful signs and wonders. Signs and wonders. We've got churches down in Elizabeth Vale that say signs and wonders on their sign board right opposite the hospital.

[25:24] I know that they're going across the road to actually see those signs and wonders. but the Bible talks about powerful signs and wonders that will be of the evil one. These false prophets, these false Christs, they're going to show powerful signs and wonders.

So, we've got to measure things. We've got to examine things. I'm not saying God can't work signs and wonders but we need to be careful. Are they God's signs and wonders?

It seems like we're on the threshold of our Lord's return. Our Lord's return. The stage is being set for Antichrist. We see the storm clouds. We see the storm clouds gathering, don't we?

It's like there's a storm coming. There's a coming storm, a coming crash. Thankfully, also, the coming Christ, our Lord. There's so many signs, so many deceptions and I put to you that there's many warnings here we should take heed of because God always gives a warning first before he sends judgment and I believe that Australia is facing the judgment of God.

the judgment of God. We see increasing immorality, corruption, violence, the rejection of God as it was in Noah's day, as it was in Lot's day. We see entertainment so-called is just filled with obscene language, isn't it?

[26:43] And immorality, godlessness. Just days ago, just a few days ago, the Cambridge Dictionary has undefined man and woman to suit the transgender views.

So, what mankind is known as a man and what mankind is known as a woman, ever since day dot, they've redefined that now to include those that identify as a man, as a woman, just to suit these radical transgender views.

Think of our nation. There's around 100,000 abortions in Australia every year. And as I mentioned last week, we've got this increasing access to euthanasia.

And I'll put to you that Australia is following Canada. Now, what's happening in Canada? There's more than 10,000 people killed by euthanasia in Canada every year. 10,000.

And it's coming here. It is coming here. We're following them. Health Canada and the federal government, they've actually developed a new colouring in book, a colouring in activity book for children that teaches them about assisted suicide.

[28:02] Unbelievable. I know, this is shocking. It's almost, how could that be? But that's what is happening. So that children, I guess kindergarten, primary school age children, can learn all about assisted suicide.

I guess it's to explain when granddad or grandma, book him to get killed so they know what's going to be happening. It's normalising something that is shocking and disgusting.

Friends, there's a rising of a new world order, a world government. And again, this is recent stuff. There's something they're calling hackable humans.

Hackable humans. And what does it mean? They're planning to actually read our minds. To actually read our minds. I know some of this might sound a bit left field, conspiracy theory, just wacko.

But look, I'm reading from sources that I believe are reputable sources. And in fact, this quote is actually from someone, one of their number, someone from the World Economic Forum.

[29:04] Her name is Nita Farahani. And she said this at the recent gathering at Davos, the World Economic Forum. I quote, we can pick up and decode faces that you're seeing in your mind.

Simple shapes, numbers, your pin number to your bank account. They're saying they can actually read our mind. That's the technology that's coming around the corner.

That they can actually know that you're thinking about your pin number and they can capture it. That's pretty shocking stuff, isn't it? And that's from the mouth of one of these, of the elite from the World Economic Forum.

That's a recent quote, just a few days ago. And so we see this overwhelming control that's happening and it's going to shut down every discordant voice.

So I'm sure that they'll shut down this church soon enough. The World Economic Forum is on the record and what they're saying is this, that misinformation is the top global risk.

[30:14] So when someone says some things that I've been talking about here, that's called misinformation. In other words, that's the word they use for truth. Misinformation.

In other words, you can't tell the truth anymore because that's a global risk. Oh, you're talking against the narratives of this or that. So I'm telling you these things because really this is what's happening.

This is what's happening in our planet today. And we see as the Bible talks about 666, tells about a coming one world government in Revelation 13 of this one, the beast, who's going to have the mark, this total world control.

This is setting the stage for all of that, I believe. We're already seeing all the signs. There's a world parliament, global governance, there's a ramping up of control systems everywhere.

Now we've heard about COVID lockdowns. There's been a bit of that, hasn't there, the last few year or so? There's been these lockdowns to save us from COVID.

[31:17] And now they're talking about climate change lockdowns. This is something else. In the UK, residents of Oxfordshire now have to get a special permit to go from one zone of the city to another.

And it's this 15 minute zone. There's this basically, as far as you can drive, 15 minutes, you can't drive any further.

Or you've got a special permit and certain restrictions about numbers of times you can go out of your zone. They're talking about this at this high level.

The WEF, the World Economic Forum, they're talking about all this stuff. They want to roll it out. They want to roll it out. They want to roll it out here. Ultimately, they will want to do that.

So national sovereignty is going to give way to this one world government. We hear about there's an international criminal court now. Friends, I put to you, as the Bible tells us about the Antichrist, the beast that will come, it's going to have his system, this 666 system that will mandate that every woman, every man, every child on planet Earth will be issued a mark system.

[32:35] We can see the preparations for that. There's already high-tech smart ID cards, the universal biometrics card. It would allow the New World Order's police to track and link every man, woman and child on planet Earth.

They can track you, they can link what you're doing. Our activities can be managed and monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There's what's called Project Lucid, it's a network of highly sophisticated computer systems designed to track and number all people worldwide.

And there's these super-secret security organisations that are being readied worldwide to persecute undesirables. Oh, you're a born-again Christian, you're one of those.

Undesirable, they'll mark you, they'll know you. And there's these mooster biochips that are planted in people's skin. This is happening now.

It's happening now in our world. Another sign of the end days is witchcraft really, isn't it? There's an increasing interest in that. I've heard people talking about Reiki and this and that, fortune-telling, seances, palm reading, astrology.

[33:44] Really, it's the antichrist spirit. You hear some people saying, oh, I go to the spiritualist church. They don't realise it's the devil there. It's just satanic. And they're getting blatant with all this stuff.

Apparently in Virginia, in the USA, the satanic temple there wants to start an after-school club for children. They want an after-school club, the Satanists, to help these children learn about Satanism. Our world is turning away from truth big time, isn't it? It's a deception. And as one example, we see what they call United Religions, is what they call it, which is a worldwide interfaith network supported by the United Nations.

Oh, United Religions, that sounds nice. It seems like our modern culture is tolerant to everyone but Christians. Everyone but Bible-believing Christians.

So there's clear signs here, I'll put to you that fit with the description of the Antichrist. Of course, we trust who will be taken before he starts to exercise his reign. In full, they will be taken out in God's timing.

[34:52] But we see the signs that he could easily take rule and power with all of these signs that we're seeing already that are happening.

Now, we see the temple is one of the things that will be in the last days. It tells of in Daniel 9, Matthew 24, 2 Thessalonians 2, it tells about a temple, the temple, which is still future, the Jewish temple that the Antichrist will defile.

And we're seeing preparations now underway for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Like I've mentioned before, that Julie and I, in our one trip of a lifetime, when we actually went to Israel, we saw the menorah, the golden menorah that is already prepared.

prepared, it's got it in a glass case, and it's under high security because it's worth mega dollars, and that they've prepared the menorah already, the seven-standing candlestick to prepare for the temple to be built.

When it's built, the temple's vessels and priestly clothing, we went into this place, it's called the Temple Institute, and we saw some of these things with our own eyes. And the Temple Institute in Jerusalem has spent over 30 years researching and preparing the furnishings for the third temple.

[36:13] They're currently training Levites to serve as priests there. And the Israeli government is planning infrastructure for the coming temple, which includes a train that will run from Ben-Gurion Airport to the Temple Mount, because they expect many visitors will want to visit the new temple.

And this rail system is going to be completed in April 2023. Just as with King Belshazzar of Babylon, the handwriting is on the wall, as in Daniel 5.

Perhaps the end won't come as swiftly as it did for this ancient king, because as soon as he saw the sign, hours later, the Persian needs killed him. But the signs are there.

I put to you, the writing is on the wall, that God's judgment will soon fall on this world. And Australia is racing to judgment. We live in a godless society. Think of it. Australia.

I think of numbers of people that identify with this church that we haven't seen them for weeks and weeks and think they're not even attending church. Even our own folk are not attending like, really, they could.

[37:21] Let's be honest. We're living in a godless society, godless society. Less than 2% of Australians attend church regularly. I mean, attending church is one thing. Being saved, being born again is another, isn't it?

But there's this increasing control over Christianity. Today, the largest Christian publishers are owned by secular corporations, with shares held by Wall Street investors.

The largest Christian publishers are largely secular owned. And as ministries turn into big businesses, theological integrity can easily give way to marketing considerations.

corporations. They want to market what the market wants. They want to sell what the people are going to buy. Zondervan was purchased in 1988 by Harper Collins.

It's a publishing segment of Rupert Murdoch. Zondervan, one of the main Christian publishing houses. We think of the church. It's become consumer friendly, yet spiritually bankrupt, isn't it? [38:24] It's lost the cutting edge. The old gospel is lacking. Friends, we should get ready for Christ to come. We should be ready. Every Old Testament book, except two, refer not only to the first coming, but also to the second coming of Christ.

Virtually every Old Testament book. Our Lord's coming is promised 300 times in the Bible. 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4. It reads, verse 13, Paul tells the Thessalonians, he urges them, don't be uninformed here.

Don't be ignorant here. It tells us then of a glad assurance that we can have. Verse 14, it says, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. So in other words, we won't go before those that are asleep.

It says, verse 16, for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

[39:41] So here we see the shout, the word of command, the shout of war, the trumpet call, the shofar, the blast of the trumpet. And then it says, verse 17, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Friends, I know I've said a bit of a sad scene of the telling situation that we're in of current events but the glad hope that we have as believers, that we that know the Lord, we that are saved, that have trusted Christ as our Lord, we can look forward to that time of his coming back, of his coming back for his church and we're going to be caught up together.

We are going to be meeting the Lord in the air. Now that could be, I like to think sometimes, that could be the next meeting. We're going to be caught up, that could be the next meeting. We might not see the Wednesday night meeting.

But we're going to be caught up, that could be the next meeting. We're going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord. So there's a comfort there, there's an encouraging there. And Titus 2 tells us that we should be looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

So for you that believe here tonight, there's a great assurance, there's a great comfort, there's a blessed hope, there's a happy hope, the glorious appearing of the great God, of our great God, our great Saviour, Jesus Christ.

[41:16] And one thing that the early church would do as they greeted one another, you know, there's different greetings in different places. In Hawaii they say, Aloha, don't they? So they say, Aloha, when you meet them and they say, Aloha, when you say goodbye.

And we might say our own version of that, whatever language, culture we might come from. But the early Christians would say, Maranatha, Maranatha.

When they greeted one another, it was a frequent greeting between believers as well as the triumphant cry of the martyrs. Maranatha, I'm ready.

And what does it mean? The Lord cometh. The Lord cometh. 1 Corinthians 16, 22. The Lord cometh. Maranatha. That can be our catch cry, can't it?

Come Lord Jesus. Friends, it's later than you think, isn't it? It's later than you think. Be ready.

[42:18] Christ is coming. Are you ready? Is your house in order? Our Master says, Occupy till I come. And we read in the Bible, it says, Revelation 1, verse 7, every eye shall see him.

That's yours. Your eyes are going to see him. Aren't you looking forward to that? Amen. Your eyes are going to see him. Amen. And Revelation 22, 20, it says, He which testified these things saith,

Surely I come quickly.

Even so, come Lord Jesus. And friends, it tells us one day that we're going to get a crown. It says, those that love his appearing. Don't you love his appearing?

Don't you love your Lord? And you love the sense, the fact, the truth that he is coming again. You're going to love that his appearing. He's going to come and you're going to see him. And it says that you will receive a crown, you that love his appearing.

We've heard of many signs here tonight. Signs that we see in our contemporary world. And just the last scripture there, Luke 21, 28, it says, when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads.

[43:26] Your redemption draweth nigh. In other words, your deliverance is just around the corner. When you see these things, it's not cause for distress or concern.

He says, be not troubled. When these things come to pass, lift up your heads. Look up. Your redemption draweth nigh. Amen. Jesus is coming.

That's our glad hope. We're looking for the upper taker, aren't we? We're looking for the one who's going to take us up. And so keep looking up. Lift up your heads. And really, speaking, of course, speaking to believers.

And so I pray that's your heart trust tonight, that you know Christ as your saviour, that you've trusted him for your salvation. And then you can have that glad hope, that blessed hope, that happy, joyful hope that Christ is coming.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank you that our world is a time of testing. Right now we see these escalating signs.

[44:27] Yet, Lord, for us that believe, we know we can have that happy hope, that joyful hope. Lord, we pray each one might have that trust in their heart to know you as their Lord and saviour, to know your salvation.

Lord, thanks to your grace, Lord, that you make that possible for each one as that gift of salvation. You offer it to each one that we can have that trust. That heart trust today.

Lord, we pray that each one will have that comfort, that even when we see these things, that we won't be troubled. We'll have that comfort. We'll comfort one another with these words, that you are coming, Lord, that we can know that you're coming for your church, that you'll take us unto yourself. You'll watch over us. You'll enable us to get through what we have to get through and to know your sustaining power and also to know your deliverance, that you will take us unto yourself.

And Lord, we know Maranatha, our Lord cometh. In Jesus' name. Amen.