

Remnant Life Church
September 11, 2016
The Parables of Jesus:
Are You Waiting or Watching for Jesus?
Part 2
Matthew 24:3-44

- Generations are usually defined by a single historical event and 15 years ago today another generation was defined
 - For our grandparents that defining moment was December 7, 1941 when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor early one Sunday morning bringing the United States into WWII
 - For many of our parent's generation it was Friday afternoon, November 22, 1963 with the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas, Texas
 - For my generation it was Tuesday morning, September 11, 2001 with the terrorist attacks in NY, DC, and western PA
 - The significance of each of these events is that everyone old enough remembers where they were when they heard the news
 - My story... (thought it was like the B-25 crash into the Empire State Building on July 28, 1945)
- Beginning at 7:59 on the morning of September 11 4 flights took off – 2 from Boston's Logan airport; 1 from Dulles in DC, and the other from Newark, NJ
 - Three of the flights were headed to LA the other to SF meaning all were at full fuel capacity
 - The first plane – AA Flight 11 – at 8:46 crashed into One World Trade Center (north tower with the antennae)
 - The second plane – UA Flight 175 – 17 minutes later – into Two World Trade Center (south tower)
 - The third plane – AA Flight 77 - 35 minutes later – said to have crashed into the Pentagon
 - Finally, UA Flight 93 - 28 minutes later – went down in southwestern PA outside of Shanksville
 - In 2 hours and 7 minutes all four planes had crashed, in another 2 ½ hours both towers would be down, between 2800 and 3000 people will have lost their lives, and life in the United States will be changed forever
- 15 Saudis; 2 United Arab Emirates; 1 Egyptian, and 1 Lebanese carried out the attack funded by the fanatical 44 year old son of a Saudi billionaire who was educated, lived a life of privilege and opulence, and was banished from his home land forced eventually to live in Afghanistan and eventually Pakistan
- Why do we talk about these things in a Sunday morning service?
 1. We need to remember what took place to honor those who lost their lives
 2. Because acts like this are going to become more and more common as we draw closer to the time of Jesus return
 - We read in **Matthew 24** last week that there will be war and rumors of war (24:6)

- More false messiahs will appear (24:5)
- An increase in wickedness and because of that the love of most will grow cold (24:12)
- All of these things and much more are the signs of the times pointing to the eminent return of Jesus
- But this is not to promote fear in fact the Christian who is watching for Jesus to return should be filled not with fear but with anticipation
- And so again I ask - is it possible that Jesus will return in our lifetime?
 - Not only possible but probable
- **READ Matthew 24:32-44**
- Last week we talked about a few prophecies that are not as often read and discussed but nevertheless are being fulfilled in our time
 - **Dan 12:4** - *But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.*”
 - Some scholars have interpreted “go here and there” as referring to physical transportation – others to the frenetic way men will be rushing around searching for answers due to the events that are taking place
 - Cataclysmic events that will occur in the years leading up to and culminating in the time of distress. Also note that this same time period immediately preceding Christ's Second Coming is described in much greater detail in **Revelation 6 through 19**.
- Look at what the prophet Zechariah wrote
 - **Zech 14:12** – the immediate death of many
 - **Rev 16:19; 18:10** – the collapse of cities
- The restoration of the nation of Israel in 1948
- Birth Pangs (**Matt 24:8**) - one world globalization; earthquakes; removal more and more of the things of God in common life –
- The message of the coming of Jesus in this time is “**be ready**”
- *My question for us this morning is are we watching for Jesus' return or simply waiting?*
- What is the difference?
 - (Illustration) The men of a fishing trawler, who would often be at sea for months at a time, were returning to homeport. The captain announced as they drew within sight of the docks, “Men, your wives are gathered on the dock! There’s Bob’s Mary and Tom’s Betty...” and on he went calling each man’s wife’s name. One man became very disappointed as he realized that his wife was not there among the others. He walked to his house and found his wife sitting at the kitchen table. When she saw him she smiled and embraced him warmly and said, “Hello! I’m so glad you’re home, I’ve been waiting for you!” He thought to himself, “Yes, but the other guy’s wives were watching for them!”

- The Bible does not tell us to wait for Jesus but to watch for His return because we do not know the day! (24:42)
- But the world and, I believe sadly many in the church, will be caught off guard
 - Two men will be walking in a field and suddenly one will be gone (24:40)
 - Two women working together and suddenly one of them will be gone (24:41)
- Will it be that quick? The Bible says in the “twinkling of an eye” (I Cor 15:52)

- Waiting means that you are aware of what is going to happen but it does not impact what you do
- Watching is active and encompasses every part of you.
 - The shepherds on the hills were “keeping watch over their flocks” (Luke 2:8)
 - In the garden Jesus told his disciple to “keep watch” (Matt 26:41)

- The wives that were watching for their husbands stopped what they were doing and went to the docks
- The man whose wife was waiting sat at home

- Are you waiting for Jesus to return or are you watching?
 - If I am watching it means I am doing the business of the Kingdom
 - What does that mean?
 1. I am sharing the love of God everywhere I go – His love provided feely to all
 2. More importantly I am demonstrating His love as a living witness

- September 11, 2001 life changed for the people of this country, the entire world, and for the families of the nearly 3000 people who lost their lives that day
- We are promised nothing but we have been given everything
 - Don’t let one more day go by without getting your life right
 - First with God
 - Then with the people that God has put in your life
 - Like unforgiveness the only one that will pay the cost will be you