

Find Faith on the Earth? Luke 18:1-8

Question: When He returns, will Jesus Christ find faith on the earth?

If the answer is NO, then

What about the existence of the church?

What about the believing remnant of Israel?

If the answer is YES, then

Why the preceding parable?

What do the warning passages mean?

If the answer is MAYBE, then

How can you prepare for Christ's return?

How can you be justified before God?

Find Faith on the Earth? Luke 18:1-8

I want to talk today about the future of the earth... NOT - Climate, like Al Gore; College Football, like the Associated Press; Economy, like Chairman Bernacke; Politics, like Karl Rove who makes predictions. I want to talk about the future of the earth especially as it relates to the existence of faith...

Question: When He returns, will Jesus Christ find faith on the earth?

If the answer is NO, then

What about the existence of the church? The church is one generation away from dying? The church is on life support? But Mt 16... The church is not on life support will not die. GLADWELL.

What about the believing remnant of Israel? Describe the end times. Could there be complete unbelief during the tribulation? But Rom 9:27 and 11:5. HARD REALITIES; SHEPHARD.

If the answer is YES, then

Why then does he give the preceding parable? The big idea of the parable is to pray and not lose heart. How much more will God... We need this kind of faith! The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective... How critical prayer is. A means God uses to give what He wants. LOSE HEART

What do all the warning passages of the NT mean? Genuine warnings, Col. 1; Heb 6. Take stock of their position. Help keep the true believer in the path of righteousness. Do not presume upon his security. The person who thinks, "I'm secure and I can do what I please" is probably not a genuine believer. URGENCY here!

If the answer is MAYBE, then

He exhorts believers to prepare for his return. Context: the Lord is preparing His disciples for a delay in His return. Don't be discouraged by the delay but persist in faith and prayer, knowing that He will certainly return to institute justice speedily. Wider context: Keep alert and be ready. Lk 17:24; Lk 12:42-44. So this is an open question, the answer depends on the faithful obedience of those who wait to render an account of their stewardship when he calls for it.

He places emphasis on personal application. Maybe you have been wronged. Faith in long deferred vengeance is difficult for impatient people, will the Lord find that faith on earth, faith in His speedy vengeance on their enemies?

Not about "techniques or methods or being trendy." WELLS. "Lord, I know what it's like to come to a place of discouragement so deep that it's hard to pray any longer, hard to hold out hope. Some of my brothers and sisters are there right now and you are speaking to their hearts. Lift them, today, I pray. Turn their eyes to you afresh. Strengthen their faith, freshen their hope, enliven their prayers -- until you come. Come soon, Lord Jesus! Amen."

Walter Shephard, “Nothing is more reassuring and better calculated to arouse the supremest effort for the advancement of the Kingdom than a profound belief in a Sovereign ruler, who sits on no precarious throne, and sends his servants on no uncertain mission.” Walter Shephard, *Sent by the Sovereign*, 36.

David Wells: “Today, the church... thinks that new strategies are called for, when all too often these strategies entail new evasions that make it look increasingly likely that the gates of hell will, indeed, prevail. And what it has forgotten is the greatness of God’s power to liberate people from blindness and to remake life. Today’s church trendiness is really yesterday’s unbelief.” David F. Wells, *Losing Our Virtue*, 208.

Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell. A “tipping point” is a magical moment when an idea or product or behavior catches on and begins to spread like wildfire. Examples of tipping points include the popularity of Hush Puppies, reduced crime in New York City, and even religious movements. Gladwell believes there are three factors that contribute to tipping points: contagious behavior (a handful of exceptional and influential people), a sticky message (the way an idea is packaged and presented), and a skillful use of group power (context, circumstances, and conditions). How this begs the question???

Acknowledge the hard realities, but don't become discouraged. 10/40 Window, some 4.4 billion people are essentially unevangelized (90% unevangelized); Islamic Terrorism; Religious persecution. Challenges in Evergreen/Conifer. It is a comparatively self-sufficient community; it is made up of people who want to disconnect from community, they want to be “unto themselves.” Challenges for CBC: generations that don't understand each other very well, financial challenges, inconsistent small groups, consumer mindset, finding staff that is a right fit, evangelism.

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The problem of losing heart. Parents; Spouse; Student; Church Member; A young Christian man or woman who decides to “settle” for less than God's best in a mate. An athlete who is playing on a losing team and decides to give less than his best? A student who can't keep up? Our search process...

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