



Building Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus

Marks of the Last Days Church II **Joel 2:18-22**

Sermon Teacher: Steve Holt

Sermon Series: Joel: The Last Days Church

Topic: Prayer, Fasting, Answered Prayer, Intimacy

Description: In the last days, with the approaching Day of the Lord, there will be the rise of lawlessness across the world. God will be raising up a mighty church during this time. This church will be marked with the cultivation of intimacy with the Lord, prayer, fasting and supernatural answered prayer.



6-Marks of the Last Days Church II

Joel 2:18-22

Look at Revelation 1

Vs. 6 To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

- We will have to learn to be worshippers and warriors.
- Fear will grip you unless you know how to battle in the Word and Spirit.
- Prayer and fasting

Joel is prophesying: Devastation is coming

- Devouring locusts have destroyed Israel economically.
- But Joel is prophesying of spiritual devastation.
- The locusts symbolize sin in our nation and our lives, devouring us.

God is giving us harbingers or signs warning of impending judgment.

The theme of Joel is the coming of The Day of the Lord

- Joel is giving us these harbingers, warnings from the Lord of a coming day.
- God is saying you don't have to be caught off guard—you have an "Intelligence Briefing on the end of History."
- This part of Joel is hard to hear. It's terrible but beautiful. Terrible for the unrepentant, wonderful for the saints.

Day of the Lord—A Day of Reckoning and Accountability

In chapter 2, Joel says "Blow the trumpet in Zion."



- The First trumpet was a warning trumpet, warning us that an enemy is coming—repent, turn back to God.
- The Second trumpet is an alarm of impending danger. This is a call to repent and cry out to God.
- Return to the Lord!
- Only those who have an intimate wholehearted walk with Jesus and the Holy Spirit will be able to handle the fear, frustration, and shock of what is happening.
- Now Joel is making a turn and is giving us the hallmarks of the Last Days Church and the people of God.

Joel is prophesying of the End Times, the Last Days Church!

Chapter 2:18

***Then the Lord will be zealous for His land,
And pity His people.***

- God will refresh His land, His people.
- In the midst of devastation and turmoil, The Lord will pour out fresh blessing upon His people.
- The Day of the Lord will bring devastation to the world and blessing to the Church.
- But what kind of church? What kind of people will Jesus bless? Who will the Lord be zealous for?

In the latter days I believe we will have two kinds of churches around the world:

1. Apostate Church

- Jesus prophesied that in the last days, men's hearts will grow cold.

- **Matthew 24:9** *“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.*
- These are churches whose hermeneutic will be the culture and not the Scriptures.
- 2 Thessalonians Paul writes, *“Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ[a] had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first”*

2. Anointed Church

This is the Church Jesus speaks of in Matthew 24, who will preach the gospel to the whole world; the Church in Joel.

Joel gives us the Marks of the Last Days Church

Joel 2:12

*“Now, therefore,” says the Lord,
“Turn to Me with all your heart,
With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.”
13 So rend your heart, and not your garments;
Return to the Lord your God,
For He is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.*

**First Mark of a Last Days Church will be cultivating wholehearted intimacy!
Two weeks ago we talked about this:**

- Arguably, this is the definition of a disciple—wholehearted intimacy with Jesus.



- We will have to have intimacy with the Holy Spirit in the last days.
- Turning to the Lord with all of your heart! Rending your heart! These are the marks only of one who is seeking God with all of their heart.
- These days are going to be so fearful, so traumatic, so shocking. You will have to have an intimacy with the Lord.

First, the Last Days Church will have wholehearted intimacy with Christ.

Secondly, the Last Days Church will be cultivating wholehearted prayer and fasting church, a Watchmen Church.

Look back at chapter 1:14:

***Consecrate a fast,
Call a sacred assembly;
Gather the elders
And all the inhabitants of the land
Into the house of the Lord your God,
And cry out to the Lord. Alas for the day!
For the day of the Lord is at hand;***

- This will be a church that has wholehearted intimacy through prayer.
- Wholehearted in fasting!
- This will be a church wholeheartedly crying out to God.
- God will place His zeal for holiness and righteousness over this church.
- The contrast between this kind of church and other more prominent churches will be obvious.
- But the true church, the church of the last days will be characterized for wholehearted fasting and prayer!
- This will be a people who knows that unless they fast and pray, God will not be able to answer because the level of evil will increase exponentially.
- With the escalation of evil and demonic power, there will be an exponential outpouring of the Spirit.

- The Last Days Church will be wholehearted in evangelism, works of service, loving the community.
- Jesus had just been transfigured on the mountain and he comes back to find his disciples trying to heal a demonized boy. Pick it up in Mark 9:19.

Mark 9:19

He answered him and said, “O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.” Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

21 So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?”

And he said, “From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”

Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”

Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”

When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: “Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!”

26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.”

- There are problems, situations, dilemmas, addictions that will not leave without fasting and prayer!



- God is raising up a Fasting and Prayer People who will fight and battle in the spirit for victory!
- I would also call it a Watchmen Church! A church that is studying God's Word, believing God's Word, trusting in the promises of God and sounding the trumpet!!
- A Trumpet Church! Israel was to be a trumpet nation, sounding the alarm to the nations of judgment
- The Last Days Church will be a Trumpet Church, a Watchmen Church.

Thirdly, the Last Days Church will be marked by overcoming answered prayer! Power to rule over circumstances! Power to rule over life!

- The Last Days Church will have an intimacy with the Lord that results in being a watchmen church, a prayer and fasting church, but it will be a church that sees the zeal of the Lord answering prayer.
- God is purifying His Church through fire! It will be hard but amazing.
- God will be answering the prayers of such body of believers—miracles and signs and wonders will mark this kind of church.

Joel 2:18

**Then the Lord will be zealous for His land,
And pity His people.**

**19 The Lord will answer and say to His people,
“Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil,
And you will be satisfied by them;
I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.**

**20 “But I will remove far from you the northern army,
And will drive him away into a barren and desolate land,
With his face toward the eastern sea
And his back toward the western sea;
His stench will come up,
And his foul odor will rise,
Because he has done monstrous things.”**

**Fear not, O land;
Be glad and rejoice.
For the Lord has done marvelous things!**

***22 Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field;
For the open pastures are springing up,
And the tree bears its fruit;
The fig tree and the vine yield their strength.***

- See it? “Don’t be afraid.” The choice will be fear or faith—intimacy that leads to prayer, worship, fasting, seeking God.
- Intimacy with the Lord, with His Word will build up your warrior heart. Your worshipping heart will build up your warrior heart.

1 Thess 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

- God will is working to build a people who are bold in their passion to be wholeheartedly sanctified in spirit, soul and body.
- The world will be in amazement at what God is doing in these churches.
- In these last days, non-believers, politicians, even the military will be asking Jesus-people to come and pray at their rallies, at their meetings, because God’s power will be rising.
- You see, and don’t forget this, that even as demons are released upon the earth, preparing for the Day of the Lord, God will also be releasing greater Holy Spirit power upon the Church.
- The wholehearted church will be crying out to God, fasting and praying, seeking God, and God will pour out major blessings upon the Church.

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus—Bartimaeus Anointing!

Mark 10:46

Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son



of David, have mercy on me!”

So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. (Jesus stood still for Bartimaeus! Jesus, who had his face like flint toward Jerusalem stopped for this man!)

Then they called the blind man, saying to him, “Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.”

And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”

52 Then Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

- Answered prayer!! We will see God anointing intercessors like never before—men and women who cry out to God for things to happen.
- Amazing signs and wonders through answered prayer.
- In the midst of the terrible will be terrific blessings! God will be bringing us the inheritance of the nations.
- Whole nations will turn to the Lord! Whole nations will hate Jesus and the Church, but then the whole nation will come to Christ!

Marks of The Last Days Church:

#1 Cultivating Intimacy with Jesus and the Spirit of God

#2 Cultivating Prayer and Fasting and Watching for the coming of the Lord, prepared to do His will

#3 Cultivating Prayer that brings forth Victorious, Answered Prayers!