

CHURCH OF THE
E T E R N A L

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.” – Matthew 24:14

June 2, 2014

Dear Brethren and Friends,

In our weekly Update No. 639 dated 16th May 2014 we included a report from The Examiner which wrote on 2nd May the following: “A spokesperson for the Vatican officially announced that the coming of the Lord may not happen. They stated from the looks of it, Yashua, the only begotten Son of God will not return per John 14:1-3. Cardinal Giorgio Salvatore told WWN [Waterford Whispers News] reporters that Jesus may have been drinking (perhaps from the last Supper with his disciples) when he uttered the statements of his return. He rationalized that people make promises they can’t keep when they’re drunk...”

Both Mr Link in his *StandingWatch* programme, “Does the Vatican Question the Return of Christ?” and our Update point out that “there is much discussion as to whether the above-quoted comments were actually made, due to the fact that apparently no mainstream paper or news agency reported them. However, so far, there does not appear to be any repudiation of this report by the Vatican.”

But should we be surprised?

We read in 2 Peter 3:3-4: “...knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.’” Likewise, Jude 17-18 has this to say: “But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.”

Further similar sentiments about the end time are expressed in 1 Timothy 4:1: “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons...”

Those who know their Bible will not be surprised about mockers and scoffers at the end of this age and clearly many have, in recent years, abandoned the faith.

However, whilst it is interesting and necessary to be able to discern the sign of the times, too many in the past have been far too ready to set dates for Christ’s return, ignoring that Jesus Himself said: “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matthew 24:36). Many feel that that may have applied 2,000 years ago but not now and, therefore, specifying a date that usually has been “revealed” just to them is legitimate. The fact that every one of these prognostications has been incorrect should tell all of us that the date is still not known to man. Failed predictions only serve to make those who fall into the trap of date-setting look ridiculous, but they also do not serve the Christian faith well. Christianity too often, and wrongly, is judged by the actions of its promoters and adherents rather than by what the Bible teaches about how we should live our lives.

If those who have formulated charts and intricate detailed prophecies to prove their point about Christ’s return at any given moment had spent their time preparing for such an event through their spiritual lives of prayer, study and meditation, their time would have been much better

spent. We should not set dates, but there are those who still do.

I recall that a minister in the Church of God told me over 40 years ago that we had to be sold on the Way of Life, and how true that still is today. We must remember that there will come a time when certain prophecies will “fail” (1 Corinthians 13:8)—they will have come to pass and been fulfilled—and much more important is the character that we now must be building. At the Judgment Seat, we will not be judged by how much intricate and detailed prophecy we knew and understood, but by how well we had kept God’s Commandments.

The rich young ruler asked Jesus: “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” (Matthew 19:16). Jesus immediately answered him: “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments” (verse 17). Jesus then went on to list some of the Ten Commandments (verses 18-19), and He also said to him: “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me” (verse 21). “But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” (verse 22). Physical things meant more to him than spiritual things.

The “Way” is spoken of a number of times in the book of Acts (9:2; 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22) and is a Way of Life following Christ and His perfect Way. He said: “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). And so Jesus Christ is THE Way.

We have to have a love of the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Many have failed that test over the years, but we must not.

We must ignore the mockers and scoffers. The Bible has warned us that they would be around at the time of the end with comments like: “Where is the promise of His coming?” (2 Peter 3:4), and it appears that some in the early New Testament Church were beginning to wonder why Jesus Christ had not yet returned to set up the Kingdom of God on earth. It wasn’t time then nor has it been any time since, but many Scriptures talk about the Second Coming and it will happen in God’s own time frame.

The Holy Spirit was given to the early Church on the day of Pentecost that we will be celebrating and keeping on Sunday 8th June this year. With the help of that Holy Spirit, baptised Church members will have all the help needed to keep “the Way” and to realise that detractors will be around to mock and to scoff, but we can and must ignore their words and actions.

In the end, we win, and those who now mock and scoff, without fully realising what they are doing, will have their opportunity for salvation when it is God’s time to call them and offer the same opportunity that we now enjoy. We should rejoice in that knowledge.

With absolute certainty we can say that Jesus will return at a time that the Father chooses, as it will be necessary to do so in order to stop mankind from blowing himself off the face of the earth. Without His coming, “no flesh would be saved” (Matthew 24:22); that is, nobody would physically survive. Let us look forward to the time of Christ’s return with great anticipation—a time that will surprise many. But it will happen, whatever the doubters may think!

With Christian love,



Brian Gale