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Sermon Notes

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Birth Pangs of the End of Time

Matthew 24:1-14

Every generation is fascinated by doomsday scenarios concerning the end of the world... and popular American culture of the 21st century is no different. A sense of impending doom is not a new thing in American culture

In 1947, after the atomic blasts that vaporized Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists has maintained something they call the “Doomsday Clock”... a clock face with hour and minute hand showing their estimation of how close the world is to total destruction from nuclear blasts; the first time setting in 1947 was seven minutes till midnight; during the height of Cold War tensions, the clock was reset to as close as two minutes till midnight (1953 when both the US and USSR tested thermonuclear devices)

Strangely during the Cuba Missile Crisis, when the US and Soviet Union was it seemed within a hair’s breadth of full-scale war, the clock remained at 7 minutes till midnight

In 2007, the Doomsday Clock added environmental issues (like global warming) to the factors determining the time setting... it is presently at 6 minutes till midnight

Movemakers pitch in with movies depicting the earth after a major thermonuclear holocaust (Planet of the Apes, Dr. Strangelove, and others), a pandemic which wipes out the earth’s population (I Am Legend), global warming and/or solar flares (2012 and The Day After Tomorrow), or even alien invasions (The War of the Worlds) or conquest by Artificial Intelligence robots (The Matrix)...

So how exactly will the world end? How will we know when it is coming? Is there anything we can do about it? These are the questions that Jesus Christ answers in Matthew 24-25 as we began to see last week.

This morning, we begin to look at the details...

One of the key issues is, “What are the SIGNS by which we can see the impending end of the world as we know it?” Jesus begins amazingly by talking about signs that will happen in EVERY GENERATION before getting specific about other signs that will only happen in the final generation

I. The Shocking Prediction

A. The Significance of the Moment

1. The Desolation of Israel Begins

Matthew 23:37 - 24:1 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. ³⁸ Look, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

24:1 ¶ Jesus left the temple and was walking away

2. The Glory Leaves the Temple

- a. In the Old Covenant, the Glory-cloud symbolized God's dwelling with the Jews... His glory-cloud entered the tabernacle and filled it; then the glory-cloud entered the Temple and filled it
- b. BUT when the Jews forsook God and went after idols, the prophet Ezekiel beheld the glory of God LEAVE the temple when the Babylonians came to destroy it the first time
- c. NOW the true glory of God—Jesus Christ—leaves the temple and walks away because they rejected Him
- d. HUGELY SIGNIFICANT moment in Redemptive History

B. The Disciples' Wide-Eyed Wonder Misplaced

Matthew 24:1 Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings.

Mark 13:1 As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!"

1. Timing!!!

- a. The disciples could not understand the significance of Jesus' statement: ***Your house is left to you desolate***
- b. They still assumed Jesus was going to take up His throne and rule the Jewish nation and the world at that very moment

2. Country hicks from Galilee?

- a. Astonished at the magnificence of the Temple
- b. They verbalize their feelings
- c. Some have wondered if it was that they were country hicks from Galilee walking in wide-eyed wonder in the big city

3. The Impressiveness of Herod's Temple

- a. Some of the stones were truly massive: Josephus, the Jewish historian tells us that some of them were as large as 45 feet long, 12 feet high, and 18 feet in width!! INCREDIBLE... a single stone could weigh over 1.5 million pounds
- b. Furthermore, the building itself was incredibly beautiful; King Herod the Great, the tyrant ruling when Jesus was born, had poured his wealth into adorning the temple grandly: huge MARBLE stones, vast overlays of gold
- c. Rabbinic comment from the first century: "He who has not seen the Temple of Herod has never seen a beautiful building." (B.Bat. 4a)

4. The Human Marvel at Human Achievement

- a. From the Tower of Babel, through Nebuchadnezzar's boast over Babylon, we have been impressed with the achievements of our own hands
- b. God is not so impressed!!

Acts 7:49-50 "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be? ⁵⁰ Has not my hand made all these things?"

- c. God yearns for broken-hearted humility and faith in sinners like us

C. The Shocking Prediction

Matthew 24:2 "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."

1. An Object Lesson: Do You See All These Things?
 - a. Perhaps more than just the Temple
 - b. Perhaps Jesus' hand gesture swept over the WHOLE CITY of Jerusalem
 - c. Look carefully at this magnificent Temple, and at the whole city
2. The Prediction was Specific... and Shocking
 - a. Every single stone placed on top of another would be thrown down
 - b. Humanity in pride builds UPWARD... God casts human pride DOWNWARD

- c. This is nothing less than a prediction of the total destruction of the city of Jerusalem

D. The Prediction Fulfilled

1. Josephus tells the story

The Siege of Jerusalem in the year 70 AD was a decisive event in the First Jewish-Roman War. It was followed by the fall of Masada in 73 AD. The Roman army, led by the future Emperor Titus, besieged and conquered the city of Jerusalem, which had been occupied by its Jewish defenders in 66 AD. The city and its famous Temple were destroyed in 70 AD

The account of Josephus described Titus as moderate in his approach and, after conferring with others, ordering that the Temple be spared. According to Josephus, the Roman soldiers grew furious with Jewish attacks and tactics and, against Titus' orders, set fire to an apartment adjacent to the Temple, which soon spread all throughout.

Josephus had acted as a mediator for the Romans and, when negotiations failed, witnessed the siege and aftermath. He wrote:

Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done), [Titus] gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and Temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as they were of the greatest eminence ... and so much of the wall enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison [in the Upper City], as were the towers [the three forts] also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall [surrounding Jerusalem], it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it [Jerusalem] had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind.¹⁴ And truly, the very view itself was a melancholy thing; for those places which were adorned with trees and pleasant gardens, were now become desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down. Nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judaea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change. For the war had laid all signs of beauty quite waste. Nor had anyone who had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again. But though he [a foreigner] were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it

E. The Significance

1. The rejection of God by Israel; the rejection of Israel by God

- a. God's consistent pattern: using Gentile military power to discipline Israel

Deuteronomy 32:21 They made me jealous by what is no god and angered me with their worthless idols. I will make them envious by those who are not a people; I will make them angry by a nation that has no understanding.

Deuteronomy 32:29-30 If only they were wise and would understand this and discern what their end will be! ³⁰ How could one man chase a thousand, or two put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, unless the LORD had given them up?

- b. But this is far more severe... a significant moment in Redemptive History

2. The clear declaration: this is the "Times of the Gentiles"

Luke 21:24 Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

- a. The "Times of the Gentiles" means a shift in God's focus in the world
- b. First, God would give the Jewish nation up to Gentile enemies to be trampled... specifically to the Romans
- c. Then He would pour out His grace and mercy on the elect among the Gentiles to save them from darkness
- d. Up until this moment, God concentrated His focus on the Jews, and allowed the pagan nations to wander in darkness

Acts 14:16 In the past, he let all nations go their own way.

- e. Now, He turns to the Gentiles... to the nations

Acts 18:6 when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

3. The end of the sacrificial system

- a. Also, the destruction of the Temple clearly means an end of the sacrificial system... the Old Covenant has clearly come to an end
- b. Jesus' death on the cross FULFILLED the sacrificial system, and that system has now become obsolete

Hebrews 8:13 By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

- c. God demonstrated the END of that system when Jesus died by tearing the veil in the temple
- d. He now makes it much plainer by destroying the temple
- e. Now the Jews CANNOT obey the Laws of Moses concerning animal sacrifice... God has BLOCKED the animal sacrifices by destroying the temple

II. The Stunned Questions

Matthew 24:3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

A. Asked in Private... on the Mount of Olives

1. The disciples were certainly troubled by Jesus' statement
2. They still fully expected Jesus would fit into their mental image of the coming Kingdom
3. They could picture Jesus in a beautiful palace of cedar, surrounded by His twelve apostles, ruling the world
4. The total destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem makes no sense to them
5. They still did not understand that Jesus had to die for their sins
6. Privately was the BEST way for these revolutionary teachings to be revealed; the crowds could never have handled these ideas
7. So they approach Jesus privately while He was sitting on the Mount of Olives... undoubtedly they could look down over Jerusalem as He was discussing this... this is therefore called the "Olivet Discourse" or the "Little Apocalypse"

B. Three Questions, Answered in a Complex Swirl

1. "When will this happen?" = When will the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem occur?
2. "What will be the sign of your coming?" = coming in Greek is PAROUSIA, and clearly Jesus has used this term at other times not recorded in the Bible to teach them of His Second Coming, though they don't understand it

3. “And of the end of the age” = the end of the world
4. These three separate issues Jesus answers for the rest of the chapter
5. The complexity of Matthew 24 comes in unraveling whether Jesus is discussing the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 or the Second Coming and the End of the Age

C. Interpretive Key: As It Was, So It Will Be

Matthew 24:37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

1. History repeats itself... and so will redemptive history as well
2. The events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 prefigure the events leading to the Second Coming of Christ... so there will be similar themes both times

III. The Warning Against Spiritual Deception

Matthew 24:4-5 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

A. Great Danger in Every Era: False Teachers

B. Specifically in Eschatology: False Christs

1. One great hallmark of cult leaders is their stirring up of end of the world fears to attract a following
2. In the past
 - During the Reformation, a group of called the “Zwickau Prophets” went around preaching Millenarianism, led by Thomas Muntzer; they proclaimed that the return of Christ was imminent and that the Day of God's Wrath and Judgment was very near at hand. They believed that they were the ones chosen to announce the arrival of the Kingdom of God and that the true saints would inherit the earth. They, themselves, were to impose the Kingdom, using the power of the sword if necessary. They were eventually defeated militarily and Muntzer was executed.
 - 1533: Jan Matthys of Leiden came to the German town of Munster and set up a polygamous theocracy based on the Old Testament; Matthys declared that Munster was the New Jerusalem and that he was the King of Zion; the town became so bizarre that it was besieged by both Catholic and Protestant soldiers; Matthys, believing he was the successor of King David went out from the city walls with just 30 soldiers to take on the besiegers and was captured immediately

- Hong Xiuquan: in 1837, after hearing some Christian missionaries, had some visions in which he claimed that his elder brother Jesus Christ called on him to purify China of demon worship; Hong declared the foundation of the "Heavenly Kingdom of Transcendent Peace" on 11 January 1851 and led the Taiping Rebellion; he was eventually defeated and committed suicide

3. In our era

- Sun Myung Moon: Korean, claims to be the new Christ, come to complete Christ's unfinished work; March 23, 2004, crowned himself Messiah at the Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington D.C. with congressmen and senators present.
- David Koresh, Branch Davidians; claimed to be the final prophet; lead a small group of followers on a ranch in Waco Texas until the FBI and ATF besieged it in 1993 and Koresh and his followers were killed
- Jose Luis de Jesus Miranda: from Puerto Rico, claims to be both the Christ and the Antichrist at the same time; has "666" tattooed on his forearm; preaches to followers in some 35 nations, mostly in Latin America, and has 287 radio programs and a 24-hour Spanish-language TV network

C. Forewarned is Sufficient for God's Elect

Matthew 24:23-25 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect-- if that were possible. ²⁵ See, I have told you ahead of time.

The culmination of this will be the Antichrist:

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie

IV. The Spasms of a Dying and Hateful World

Matthew 24:6-8 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of birth pains.

A. The Wickedness of Humanity

1. Wars and Rumors of Wars

2. Empires Rising and Falling

- a. This has been the history of the world and it will continue right to the end of time
- b. The Roman army, in destroying Jerusalem, were just managing their vast empire in the way that seemed best to them
- c. The Zealots, in fighting the Romans, were seeking to establish a Jewish kingdom by the sword... the very thing Jesus repudiated
- d. Current events will continue to swirl in every generation... these are no certain signs of the end of the world, but simply evidence of the wickedness of the human heart... the very reason Christ will return to judge the earth

B. Physical Spasms of the Earth

1. Famines and Earthquakes

- a. Human sin has subjected the earth to futility... and earthquakes and famines are just evidence of the curse on the earth

Romans 8:20-22 the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

- b. In every generation, these two afflictions and others (like hurricanes, local floods, tsunamis, mud slides, plagues, etc.) have shown the fact that the natural order is cursed

2. Various Places: again, Jesus speaks in vague generalities... just reminding His followers of the convulsions

C. Beginning of Birth Pangs

1. Both Matthew 24 and Romans 8 speak of groaning and pains like childbirth
2. The image is one of immediate pain for eternal pleasure... the net result is one of joy forever
3. Jesus spoke the same way in John 16

John 16:21-22 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a

child is born into the world. ²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

4. The “birth pains” imply the future world, the perfect world, will only come as a result of a vast convulsion of agony

V. The Costly Growth of a Living Kingdom

Matthew 24:9-13 *"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. ¹⁰ At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, ¹¹ and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ¹² Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, ¹³ but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.*

A. The Suffering of the Church

1. Jesus warned us again and again, as the world hated Him, it would hate Christians as well
2. That hatred will actually INCREASE at the end of the world
3. Persecution will be both informal and formal
 - a. Informally, family members and friends will turn against Christians
 - b. Thus they will BETRAY the closeness of the relationship
4. Then persecution will be formal... by the government... official rejection of Christians by the government has been characteristic of the church's suffering from its beginning... it will reach its pinnacle in the reign of Antichrist

B. The Trial of Faith

1. The increase of persecution will be a severe test of NOMINAL CHRISTIANS... gospel hypocrites will be weeded out

Vs. 10 *At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other*

2. The increase of wickedness will cause people's hearts to grow cold... natural affection will be replaced by animal-like instincts... survival of the fittest

Matthew 24:12 *Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold*

3. True Christians can never fall away from Christ... but in the parable of the seed and the soils, it is clear that “stony ground hearers” are those who fall away when trouble or persecution comes because of the word

4. The clearest evidence of true Christianity: perseverance in the face of trials and difficulties

Matthew 24:13 he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

C. The Worldwide Testimony of the Gospel

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

1. Through all this, the greatest evidence of the truth of Christ is the constant, irresistible advance of the Gospel to the ends of the earth
2. The progress of the gospel over twenty centuries is amazing... and tremendous evidence of the power of Christ to predict the future
 - a. Christ sat on that hillside on the Mount of Olives and predicted the advance of the gospel to the ends of the earth
 - b. At that time, Christ's true followers numbered less than 200... and only 120 gathered in the upper room to wait for the Holy Spirit
 - c. Now, there is not a single nation on earth which does not have a Christian church... and the number of unreached people groups has dwindled steadily
3. This prediction is a CERTAINTY... and it can only be achieved by the sovereign power of God
4. Note: this "Gospel of the KINGDOM"... that is, of the reign of God over the earth... the GOOD NEWS that God reigns on earth
5. And THEN AT LAST the end will come
 - a. The end is waiting for the completion of the great commission... this gospel preaching work
 - b. By our faithful involvement we can

2 Peter 3:12 look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

VI. Applications

A. Come to Christ—for Salvation and for Wisdom

1. Come to Christ for salvation
 - a. Christ is the center of history... therefore He should be the focus of your life

- b. All the sufferings and tribulations of these two chapters are caused by one thing: human sin
- c. Christ is the only answer for sin
- d. Glory in the cross of Christ

In the cross of Christ I glory
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time

- e. The cross of Christ is the only truth that can make any sense of the wrecks of time
 - f. Come to Christ for salvation... He alone can rescue you from the wrath to come
2. Come to Christ for wisdom
- a. It was Christ that predicted the destruction of Jerusalem... He initiated this discussion
 - b. Christ does not merely PREDICT the future... He CAUSES it
 - c. When bewildered, the disciples came to Christ privately for wisdom...
 GOOD PATTERN
 - d. Matthew 13: The disciples came to Christ privately to understand the parables
 - e. So here, the disciples come to Christ privately to understand the end of the world
 - f. EXCELLENT PATTERN for us to follow!!!

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Colossians 2:3 in [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God

- 3. Be confident that God wants to tell you so much more than you know

Matthew 13:11 "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.

Ephesians 1:9-10 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the

times will have reached their fulfillment-- to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

So, come to Christ with questions about the end of the world... and allow Him to give you answers from Matthew 24-25, and the Book of Revelation

B. Understand the Direction of History

1. History has a direction... it has a beginning, middle, and end... and it has an ultimate goal

Revelation 21:6-7 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

2. The ultimate end of history is JESUS Christ ministering salvation to thirsty sinners who come to Him for the water of life
3. Never think for a minute that history is spiraling out of control! It's not
 - a. When the so-called "Eternal City"—Rome—fell to the Vandals, many thought the end of the world was imminent... it wasn't
 - b. When the Muslims swept across North Africa, destroying the churches in that spiritually rich area, when they swept across the Straits of Gibraltar, when they conquered Spain, when they moved into France, it seemed the Christian church was about to become obsolete... it wasn't
 - c. When the Vikings destroyed one monastery after another, one church after another, one village after another, one city after another, when they burned every Bible they could find and slaughtered Christians by the thousands, it seemed the church was powerless and about to be wiped from the face of the earth... it wasn't
 - d. When the Mongol warriors extended the largest empire in the history of the world to the rivers of central Europe, when their swarthy horsemen seemed absolutely invincible, when Christian knights were slaughtered by them and fell in one ignominious defeat after another, many felt the end of the world was imminent... it wasn't
 - e. When the Black Death swept across Europe in the 14th century and no one knew what caused it or how to stop it, when superstitious rituals failed, and 1/3rd of the population of the continent died a hideous death, it seemed like the four horsemen of the Apocalypse were riding across the earth and the world was about to end... it wasn't

- f. When the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire—Constantinople—which had held the Muslims at bay for eight centuries and had protected the back door of Europe from the Islamic tidal wave sweeping across the continent, when in the 15th century that citadel finally fell to the pounding of their terrifying new invention—gunpowder, when the Muslim crescent banner unfurled over the eastern capital of Christianity, many feared the end of the Christian church was at hand... it wasn't
- g. When the 20th century dawned with the War to End All Wars, resulting in the senseless slaughter of millions, when European poets said "I see the lights of humanity extinguished all over Europe, and we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime"... when 20 years later, a far worse war followed, resulting in the most terrifying force for evil ever seen—Nazism—spreading its dark cloud over one powerless nation after another, many thought the end of the world was imminent... it wasn't
- h. When Communism spread its seemingly irresistible wave of atheism across Europe, Asia, and Latin America, some feared the total eradication of the church of Jesus Christ was at hand... it wasn't

Again and again, history has shuddered under seemingly fatal blows, shaken to its pillars with the events of humanity

Again and again, experts and fear-mongers have cried the cries of the hopeless... "History is spinning out of control! We shall all be lost!! We are all doomed!!"

The Bible teaches us to rest securely in the sovereign power of God to navigate history

C. Rejoice in the End of the Sacrificial System

1. Christ's death on the cross has ended forever the sacrificial system
2. God's sovereign control over human history insured that the Temple would be completely destroyed, making it clear that He wanted an end to the animal sacrifices that were essential to the Law of Moses
3. We have a BETTER COVENANT in the blood of Christ which can actually atone for our sins

D. Do Not Trust In Human Achievements—Spiritual or Secular

1. The disciples were stunned at Jesus' prediction of the destruction of the temple
2. They thought that Herod's lavish edifice, with its astonishing stones, would last forever
3. Herod's temple represents the element of human pride in religion... and the great danger is to TRUST in human achievement

- a. Spiritual achievement: the temple was built supposedly to worship God; God destroyed any trust in the temple of the Lord by throwing every single stone down to the ground... the only spiritual achievement that matters is that of Christ
- b. Secular achievement: the “wars and rumors of wars” represent all the convulsive spasms of human pride and arrogant empire building;

Psalm 146:3-6 Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. ⁴ When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing. ⁵ Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God, ⁶ the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them

- E. Be On Your Guard Against Deceivers
- F. Do Not Be Alarmed at Disasters... But Be Compassionate
- G. Be Ready for Persecution
- H. Stand Firm to the End
- I. Be Confident in the Advance of the Gospel
- J. Be Active in the Advance of the Gospel