

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – November 5, 2023

Theme: The Urgency of the Last Days Topic: Understanding the Times and Seasons

Main Text: Luke 17:20-37, Romans 13:11-14

Key verse: Romans 13:12: *“The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light”. (NKJV)*

INTRODUCTION: The happenings of today call for circumspection in the order of the sons of Issachar who understood the times. They were divinely endowed with unusual gift to discern the times (1 Chronicles 12:32). Our text for today’s study centers on a conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees. The Pharisees had asked Him when the kingdom of God would come. Their question was understandable because, based on Old Testament prophecies, a Messiah was to come who would deliver the Jews from Roman oppression and give them the needed freedom (e.g. Isaiah 42:1,4) These prophecies pointed to Jesus as the expected Messiah (Saviour) but the Jesus they were seeing didn’t appear to match the Messiah they were expecting. So, the Pharisees needed to know the exact time of the coming Kingdom.

1. (a) In answering the question asked by the Pharisees, Jesus said, “...the Kingdom of God is within you”? Luke 17:21. What did He mean by that? How did this differ from what they were expecting? (b) Read John 3:3,5. What did Jesus state as the conditions for “seeing” and “entering into” the Kingdom of God? (c) What is the implication of this ‘spiritual rebirth’ for the unbeliever? And for the believer?

Jesus explained that a time would come when men will long for His return. During this time, Satan will take advantage of this longing to raise false messiahs all in a bid to deceive many. Jesus warned that when that happens, we should not follow them. In contemporary times, we have had self-acclaimed prophets, masters, messiahs, etc, who have amassed a large followership which they have misled (and continue to mislead). With an understanding of the times, we can withstand such evil and false teachings, and rather focus on the Kingdom of God in us producing fruits (Matthew 21:43).

2. (a) On false prophets and self-acclaimed messiahs, Jesus warned believers not to “go out and follow them” (Luke 17:23). What can we do to ensure we are not lured into erroneous teaching? (b) Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. What are the characteristics of those that will not inherit the Kingdom of God? (c) How can the Kingdom of God in us produce fruit? (See John 15:5; Galatians 5:22-23).

Jesus warned that His second coming would be sudden and will take people by surprise. He said people will be engaged in normal routines of life, and it would be a day like any other. When He comes, there would be no time to gather things. No time to call anyone. This graphic description of how rapture will take place shows that Christianity is an individual race rather than collective. Apostle Paul therefore advises believers to, i.) wake up, ii.) cast off the works of darkness, and iii.) put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:12-14).

3. (a) Participants should discuss the implications of “eating & drinking, and buying & selling” for the Church today (see Luke 17:27-30 & Romans 14:17). (b) In Mark 10:23 Jesus said it’s hard for a rich man to “enter” the Kingdom of God. Why did He say that? (c) Read 2 Peter 3:11-14. How can believers remain heaven-focused?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, thank You for reminding me of Your soon coming. Please help me to understand the times we are in and to be drawn closer to You. Amen.*