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## Proclaiming Truth to a Dying World



*Let us encourage one another—  
and all the more as you see  
the Day approaching.*  
HEBREWS 10:25, NIV

I had just given one of my Christian writers' seminars in our nation's capital. Many of the people who attended made commitments to write God's answer. Fervently, I prayed for them and myself that we would be faithful to God's call.

That evening, my hostess took me on a tour of the city. I had been to D.C. several times during the day but never at night. In the moonlight, the buildings were even more magnificent. But I was not an awestruck tourist taking in the sights. Rather, I began to grieve. It was as if God were showing me the heartbeat of my nation, and the heartbeat was weak.

As we left the city an hour later, we drove past the Lincoln Memorial. "Child, not one stone will be left standing on another," I felt the Lord speak to my heart. Never have I been so aware of his presence, so sure of his voice. I wept for the city and my nation.

"Are you sure it was the Lord?" people have asked me. "I wish I thought it wasn't him," I've replied. Only time will tell. What I do know is that Jesus is coming—perhaps soon, perhaps in my lifetime and yours. And I know there is an eternal truth in what he said before his crucifixion. "As long as it is day, we must do the work of

him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work” (John 9:4, NIV).

As I write this chapter, millennium fever has even non-Christians believing that history is moving to a climax. So many pieces of the end-times puzzle are falling into place. World peace hangs by a slender thread, especially in the Holy Land where ailing Middle East leaders who have kept a tenuous peace may soon be forced to step down. Only God knows the changes new leadership will bring.

Technology now exists for the mark of the beast. The anticipated computer crisis surrounding the year 2000 could certainly set the stage for the Antichrist to step forward as the apparent savior. Or maybe you’re reading this after 2000 (I hope you are), but now another seemingly unsolvable crisis looms on the horizon.

I am not about to set a date for the Lord’s return or pretend to be an eschatologist. Most of Revelation and Daniel remain a mystery to me. I’ve read a couple of end-times novels and really don’t care to read more. The scenario of what may be right around the corner could make for sleepless nights, especially since I don’t know whether the Rapture will be pretribulation, midtribulation, or post tribulation. My gut-level feeling is that God isn’t going to zap us out of the dark days that are coming when the light of Christ’s love will be most desperately needed. But I may be wrong. So may the pre-trib crowd. Again, only God knows.

Even Jesus said, “No one knows the date and hour when the end will be—not even the angels. No, nor even God’s Son. Only the Father knows” (Matt. 24:36).

So what *do* we know in these days of uncertainty? Where *do* we find security as the financial crisis in other nations creates havoc on the New York Stock Exchange and threatens whatever nest egg we may have been able to accumulate? How do we let our lights shine in the encroaching darkness?

***“Be prepared, for you don’t know what day your Lord is coming”*** (Matt. 24:42). Just as no one expected (at least I certainly didn’t) that the USSR would collapse or the Berlin Wall crumble, the Lord’s coming will be just as unexpected. “The world will be at ease—banquets and parties and weddings—just as it was in

Noah's time before the sudden coming of the flood; people wouldn't believe what was going to happen until the flood actually arrived and took them all away. So shall my coming be," Jesus said (Matt. 24:37-39). We need to live in a state of expectancy rather than allow ourselves to be lulled into a business-as-usual, laid-back approach to the work of ministry.

**"Stay true to the Lord,"** the apostle Paul wrote from a Roman prison (Phil. 4:1). If we are to proclaim truth to our dying world, it is critically important that we understand what truth is. More than ever before, we need to be grounded in his Word, so if it were to be taken from us, it would, indeed, be buried deep in our hearts. Not only do we need to know the truth, we have to be committed to the truth, regardless of the price tag. Now is *not* the time to compromise, not the time to bow the knee to any other god than the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter how harmless it may seem to "bend just a little" so as not to offend, not to be seen as a fanatic, we must never forget that Jesus said, "I am the Way—yes, and the Truth and the Life. No one can get to the Father except by means of me" (John 14:6).

**"Let not your heart be troubled,"** Jesus said. "You are trusting God, now trust in me" (John 14:1). Even though the world as we have known it may seem to be spinning out of control, we need to remember that none of what is happening is taking God by surprise. He is still in control! He is "the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End" (Rev. 21:6, NIV). And despite the turmoil around us, he promises the gift of peace of mind and heart (John 14:27). We do not need to fear nor be consumed by worry. He has promised not to abandon us or leave us as "orphans in the storm" (John 14:18).

Yes, the future seems frightening. The unknown strikes fear in many people. But as Christians, we do not need to get caught up in dire doomsday predictions. We know how it all ends! "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God" (Rev. 19:1, NIV). We can and must "hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful" (Heb. 10:23, NIV). In his strength and through his power, we can lay aside all our self-doubts and feelings of inadequacy and boldly write his answer.



## RESPONDING TO GOD'S CALL TO WRITE

Read the letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3, asking the Lord to speak to you and strengthen you for the work he is calling you to do. Record what he says to you in the space below.

## RE-CREATION

And God will say,  
"Let there be light.  
Let the darkness of evil  
no longer reign.  
Let there no longer be  
thorns and thistles,  
sin, death, and decay.  
Let there be a new heaven and earth.  
Let the home of God  
be among his people.  
Let all tears be wiped away.  
Let the thirsty drink  
from the spring  
of the Water of Life.  
Let all creation rejoice  
in the salvation of the Lord."

(Based on Genesis 2:3; Romans 8:20-21; Revelation 21:1-6.)