



## Ready or Not?

Jesus said, *"You also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect"* -  
-Matt. 24:44

The entire city of New Orleans is still being evacuated and it just bugs me that I still can't reach my friends, the Gaspards, who used to live on the bayou down there. I sure hope they are ok. Now I hear they will even condemn and tear down the Super Dome after the flood subsides. People are pouring into Texas daily. The city of Baton Rouge doubled in population over night. What in the world is going on?

Hurricanes, (they used to come one per summer, now it's like three per summer), huge tsunamis, killer earthquakes, and global terrorism – my goodness! What's a Christian to do?

We can practically and prayerfully reach out with the love of Christ.

*The Christ I love is coming soon, it may be morning, night, or noon;  
My lamps are lit, I'll watch and pray; it may be today, it may be today. —Bixler*

This outbreak of natural disasters in the past several years can't help but cause me to wonder. Certainly, there have always been serious tragedies and cataclysmic events on the earth following the fall of Adam ... but these days it seems that a new crisis explodes onto the scene just as another major one barely abates from the headlines. Even here in Dallas we are seeing the rippling effects of Katrina, which may end up claiming thousands of lives down there in America's own backyard.

Many of the people I've talked with in the last five days, who tell me they are refugees, even though I just call them brave Americans -- who have escaped Hurricane Katrina will reside here in Dallas for the next three to six months. And some are determined to stay here permanently now, as they start looking for work and begin to rebuild their lives. God is bringing ministry opportunities right to us daily and we must not feel put-out or inconvenienced by them. Could you imagine if your life was washed away in a day?

I've wondered; *could it be that all these crazy things happening around our globe are actually signs of the times—signs to get our attention that the return of Jesus Christ is near?* You might say *GIVE ME A B-R-E-A-K, Kurt!* This is no time to religiously freak out on us.

Well, think about it. We know that centuries of man's sinning has surely affected God's creation all around us. The evil seems to compound exponentially. We've seen the pollution, the escalation of crime and perversion etc... And our merciful God still waits patiently for us to board the clue bus ..and turn to Him through Christ, so he can forgive us and help us.

When Jesus was asked what the signs of His return would look like, Christ said, ***"And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven"*** (Lk. 21:11 NKJV). Jesus made it clear that natural disasters will begin to increase in frequency and greater intensity ...as if in concert with each other shortly before His second advent. Christ is returning for a spotless bride and I want to be ready ...and help others get ready. Please join in.

The Church is God's institution in the earth – a living organism. The Church is Jesus Christ's fiancée—His betrothed. He is in-Love to the hilt – He loves you so very much ...with a sacrificial, unending, giving Love. He suffered and died to redeem you. And the day is quickly nearing when Christ will come back to the earth to take His bride unto Himself. The radically joyous marriage supper of the Lamb will follow (Rev. 19:7-9). Yes, as part of the Church, we are the bride of Christ. He loves us. He perfects us and He has eyes only for us. Do we have eyes only for Him – in 100% commitment? He promised, ***"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also"*** (Jn. 14:3).

***From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.  
Soon Christ will come to forever be along side.*** –kind of sounds like a rap song, huh?

I'm convinced (along with many others) that what we've been seeing on the evening news are merely "birth pains" that are to remind Christians to compassionately reach out to the needy while we still can, because our time is very limited and deliverance is drawing near. What a privilege we have in this!

***Marvelous Message we bring, glorious carol we sing,  
Wonderful word of the King: Jesus is coming again!*** —Peterson  
(© 1957 Singspiration, Inc.)

Jesus goes on to say in verses 25-28: ***"And there will be signs ...on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."***

Perplexity; that means big trouble and confusion resulting from intricate complexity -- severe problems the nations can't find viable solutions for.

The Apostle Paul spoke of God's creation and how it, ***“was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now”*** (Rom. 8:20-22).

He warned, ***“You know quite well that the day of the Lord will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. When people are saying, ‘All is well; everything is peaceful and secure,’ then disaster will fall upon them as suddenly as a woman's birth pains begin when her child is about to be born”*** (1 Thess. 5:2-3 NLT).

We can't know exactly when Jesus will return, but we can know Him! Christ said, ***“at a time they did not expect”*** (Matt. 24:44). That means that people today who set dates for Christ's second coming are foolishly wasting their time. Jesus never told His followers how to calculate the day of His return. Rather, He emphasized that our main priority is to make sure we're ready for Him, and that we are occupied in His holy service when He comes (vv.45-46). He told us to turn from our sins and be born again spiritually. Today is the day!

Maybe you've suffered loss recently. Jesus cares! You matter to Him. Call out to Him.

*When sorrows assail us or terrors draw nigh,  
His love will not fail us, He'll guide with  
His eye; and when we are fainting and ready to fail,  
He'll give what is lacking and make us prevail. —Anonymous*

Return to Him, before He returns. Get home before dark.

Have Kurt's fishing devos blessed you? Click on the "Contact" button and let him know!

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