



Why Bother Since No One Knows?

So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. — 2 Peter 1:19

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. — Matthew 24:36

There are phrases which are inarguably found in Scripture which have become universally recognized even though most Christians in the present climate can only hope to guess which book of the Bible they originate, much less specify the verse in which they are found. But even more problematic is that the scriptural context in which they are presented is lost even sooner so that these extracted pieces of God’s Word are uttered for meanings never originally intended. Certainly a top five finalist would be, “Do not judge”, egregiously recast to mean that there is never any justification to judge anyone for anything in any situation (read the **whole** of Mt. 7:1-5), but very near the top of that list is also found, “No one knows”. Whether employed deceitfully or in well-intentioned ignorance, the common denominator shared by its misusers is to dismiss all portions of God’s prophetic Word as being some sort of mystery which no one can or will know for sure, or to narrowly justify some kind of variable which everyone is allowed to guess with their own roll of the dice alternative.

This is not surprising given the fact that those who so frequently engage in this kind of “cut-and-paste” quotation of Scripture are obviously not actually readers, much less students, of God’s Word. In the first place they are oblivious to having lifted a snippet of Scripture out of its context so that in actual use it becomes a pretext, and secondly also equally ignorant of the other portions of God’s Word they are contradicting. Yes, “*no one knows*” the same specific thing documented by Christ in the Olivet Discourse, “*that day or hour*” when the *Harpazo*—the removal of the faithful, will take place. But it is so often employed to mean so much more that it is not uncommon to find it uttered as some kind of blanket dismissal of anything connected to God’s prophetic Word.

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In just Matthew's account of the Olivet Discourse, Jesus stipulates as warnings in a proactive yet negative context...

- "...See to it that no one misleads you." (Mt. 24:4)
- "...See that you are not frightened..." (Mt. 24:6)
- "...do not believe him." (Mt. 24:23)
- "...do not believe them." (Mt. 24:26)
- "...be on the alert..." (Mt. 24:41)
- "...you also must be ready..." (Mt. 24:44)
- "Be on the alert..." (Mt. 25:13)

But in a positive, parallel context Christ also categorically states...

- "But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved." (Mt. 24:14)
- "...when you see..." (Mt. 24:15)
- "...for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short." (Mt. 24:22)
- "Behold, I have told you in advance." (Mt. 24:25)
- "...when you see all these things, recognize He is near, right at the door." (Mt. 24:33)

Such are equally prolific in the parallel accounts of both Mark and Luke, and yet nearly everything Jesus taught both here, in His Revelation and the parallel commentaries of the New Testament Epistles, not to mention the Old Testament entirely, is gathered and cast into the wastebasket of "No one knows". And, of course, this is compounded by the fact that because there is such dramatic disagreement when it comes to the interpretation of God's prophetic Word, far too many of the sheep nod their head in agreement and follow those who are, at the least, misinformed, if not purposely misleading. Peter must be some kind of world-class liar for stating...

*So we have the prophetic word **made more sure**, to which you do well to pay attention as to **a lamp shining in a dark place**, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. — 2 Peter 1:19*

It is only the biblically illiterate and the patently false who are the source of confusion, on one extreme dismissing God's Word entirely, and on the other hyper-focusing on just a few details to give them such a priority over the rest of God's Word that they not only dismantle the in situ meaning, but cause a cascading effect of redefining other portions

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of God's Word as well. It is too often used as a blanket dismissal of prophecy or to so isolate a single aspect that the whole is diluted or rendered ineffective.

I recently listened to a well-meaning youth pastor invited to fill in for a pastor's mid-week service who provided a teaching on what is and is not biblical grounds for separation of fellowship. Having discussed some of the things documented in Scripture which mostly have to do with the allowance of unaddressed sin, he moved on to those things over which there can "never" be division, of which most of that part of the sermon was devoted to eschatology. His chief reason, stated several times, "No one can know 100%, for sure, what it all means", followed with another gem I've often heard, "No one knew in the First Coming, so no one will know in the Second Coming". I heard many variations of "no one knows" in the latter part of that sermon.

The real deception of this argument is the assertion that since we cannot know 100%, that it is therefore impossible to know **anything**. Yes, we certainly do not know the day or hour of the Rapture, but how does that translate into the impossibility of not knowing **any** of it? Is that why Jesus warned so many times to be on the alert, to not be deceived, to not listen or follow End Times deceivers? Is that why He not only repeatedly states, "*When you see*", but categorically warns, "*Behold, I have told you in advance*"? Is that what Peter meant in stating, "*we have the prophetic word made more sure...a lamp shining...*"? The "no one knows" assertions in all their variations are the substance of the teachings of those very personalities which the first half of his sermon documented a departure is explicitly demanded. But we should continue with them in joint fellowship anyway?

Yes, I get that there can be friendly disagreements, and of course just a difference of opinion cannot in itself be grounds for this kind of separation. But that is not what was being taught that night, and frankly, having heard it my entire life I'm at the end of tolerating it. That which is really being put forth from pulpits employing this device is not a friendly, "Hey, can't we all just get along" vibe, but an undermining of God's Word. It conveys to the sheep that instead of teaching you what God's Word has to say, we're just going to ignore it completely. All those pulpit fillers need to revisit what Jesus explicitly stated as the consequences for those so entrusted upon His return. (Mt. 24:45-51)

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And as to the notion, “No one knows 100%”, what I can say with absolute abandon as well as confidence is that every Holy Spirit-filled believer **CAN** know 100% of what God’s Word tells them! Yes, in the largest scheme of things, God did not reveal 100% of everything which is going to take place, but of that which He **did** reveal, be absolutely assured that not only **CAN** we know 100% of them, but that we are **REQUIRED** to know. We can know 100% of what is provided through Daniel as a prerequisite for understanding 100% of what Christ gave in the Olivet Discourse on our way to 100% of the Revelation Christ gave “*to His bond-servants*”—that is, you and I. (Rev. 1:1) Christ gave Revelation to His followers, but “no one knows”? Christ gave the Olivet Discourse, but “no one knows”? The whole of God’s prophetic Word has been given in both the Old and New Testaments so that it covers at least a third of all His written Word and yet “no one knows?” Again, we may not be able to know everything spanning the whole of time and the universe, but we certainly can know 100% of what He has given.

Can we know 100% where God’s word teaches concerning salvation? Justification? Sanctification? Why is it we can know 100% of what God reveals concerning any aspect of theology **except** eschatology? The problems we have internally in the Church when it comes to eschatology are no different than for any other doctrine or theology, it’s just that for some reason we have arrived at the collective notion to suspend the rules for this one area. We give this one area of doctrine a free pass we withhold from all others.

On the one extreme there are those who say no one has to confess their sins to be a Christian, that just believing is enough, and on the other end such equally erroneous notions that you have to speak in tongues or become an Old Testament Jew before becoming a New Testament Christian. For the topic of salvation there is no tolerance of such deviations from God’s written Word.

On the one extreme we have those who say God is through with Israel and all references to same should now be assigned to the Church in her place, all the way to those who say that Christ will not return until the Church wins everyone in the world to Christ. We have all manner of variations wrongly reinterpreting God’s Word where both Israel and the Church are concerned which we expose as deviations from God’s written Word.

On the one extreme we have those who insist that at least some of the gifts of the Spirit permanently ceased with the death of the foundational Apostles, and on the other

those who are calling a Satanic counterfeit the real deal. Both extremes and their nearly endless offshoots are refuted by the adherents of God's written Word.

These are but three of an alarmingly very long list of issues doctrinal issues which attempt to polarize one extreme against the other, each being completely in error where God's written Word is concerned, and yet there is only one where this practice is generally accepted: eschatology. We won't give up, and even regularly defend, the plain truth of God's Word when it comes to salvation, the Holy Spirit, etc., but all of the sudden when it comes to this particular portion of God's Word, "No one knows". More than a third of the Bible is dedicated to something no one can possibly know?

In just the Olivet Discourse, while the day and hour of the *Harpazo* is unpredictable, Christ says all the signs leading up to it are not. Even if our powers of observation fail to recognize any of the many birth pangs of earthly and cosmic events preceding it, including the worst time of Christian persecution in the history or history, He identifies the public revelation of the Antichrist through the unmistakable milestone of the Abomination of Desolation, first affirmed through Daniel as taking place at the exact half-way point of the final week of years. If no one knows, why are there so many clear and unmistakable milestones like this given to us in Scripture?

But as to the notion, "No one knew in the First Coming so no one knows in the Second", I would agree that the causes of deception and ignorance present in the First Coming are multiplied in the Second, but let's not overlook some very important details: believers today are now filled with the Holy Spirit! Believers today are now equipped with **TWO** Testaments in the Bible! Believers today have been personally instructed by Christ! While some aspects of that notion may be true, it cannot be universally applied.

But what I can assuredly assert is that as long as we are not immersed in His Word, as long as we accept the words and opinions of men in place of the Word of God, as long as we agree to let everyone off the hook where Scripture is concerned, we definitely will not know...until it is far too late.

"Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?"

"So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a

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bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits.

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’ — Matthew 7:15–23

It's far better knowing now, so we will be found to know then.

In Him,

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