

Christ in Prophecy
Pre-Tribulation 15: “The Significance of Bible Prophecy”
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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Why do most pastors ignore Bible prophecy? And why do some evangelist commit their lives to preaching it? And what is the message of Bible prophecy in these end times. For the opinions of 11 Bible prophecy teachers, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our blessed hope and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. During recent weeks we have been broadcasting a series of programs we video taped at a major Bible Prophecy Conference held in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. In the programs we've been interviewing 11 Bible prophecy experts about a variety of questions concerning End Time prophecy questions that experts disagree about. We have looked at such questions as: Will the Antichrist be a Jew? Could he possibly be a Muslim? Will he be killed and resurrected from the dead? Is he alive today? And where will his headquarters be located? The consensus among experts was that the Antichrist will be a Gentile, he will not be a Muslim. He will not be killed and resurrected from the dead, although there may be a deception to make people think so. He is very likely alive today and his headquarters is most likely to be the site of the ancient city of Babylon. Incidentally, if you did not see these programs about the Antichrist that we have already broadcast you can view them on our website at lamblion.com. In addition to discussing issues about the Antichrist with Bible prophecy experts I have also took advantage of the opportunity to ask them so questions about the significance of Bible prophecy. My first question in this regard was: Why do you teach Bible prophecy? Here are some of the answers I received.

Daymond Duck: Well God has laid it on me, He has laid about everything on me and I haven't always been willing to do all of these things. But He opens doors for me and that's the way I pray, "God if you got something you want me to do open the door, and if you don't want me to do it close the door. God opened the door for me write, God has

opened the door for me to be on television, God has opened the door for me to do all kinds of things that I never dreamed I would be able to do.

Ray Gano: In Jeremiah it talks about the fire burning in Jeremiah's bones. I am a watchman on the wall, I am a lay person. I am really nobody. But I just have a love for God's Word. And ever since sixth grade I read a book that changed my life. And it scared the tar out of me actually it was by Salem Kirban, it was called 666 and it startled me. After that I of course read Hal Lindsey, scared the tar out of me, and from that point on when I was in sixth grade I have been studying Bible prophecy ever since then. But it was weird when I came back to the Lord, you know everybody does their prodigal son time. But when I came back to the Lord, God hit me up with a two by four and said these things are going on, look at this, look at this, look at this. And it was like wow, where have I been? And that fire in my bone came up and ever since then I have not been able to be quiet. I have to proclaim the Good News, I have to proclaim the Gospel. I have to tell people about the blessed hope of our Lord's soon return. It is soon!

Don Perkins: Well first of all the Lord placed His burden in my heart to teach Bible prophecy. And with that burden He gave me a love for the End Time message. I love what this message produces for, for my heart, as a born-again teacher, it puts the urgency in my heart to want to reach the lost. This message out of all the messages in the Bible to me really again puts that urgency there. It keeps the fire of God, you know in my heart. I love the results of this message. As I teach it around the country I see men's lives changed as a result of them hearing Bible prophecy. So I teach it because I love it and God has burdened my heart to teach it and I love. It is a wonderful tool to bring in the harvest.

Nathan Jones: Because of the sign of the times, Jesus is coming soon. And so much of our faith in Christ is based on His promises, and He promised He is going to return again. And, we can trust Christ based on His promises always being fulfilled. And, I want the world to know that Jesus is coming soon. It's this urgent need, it's the gift of prophecy you could say, to get out that Jesus is coming soon. Get your life straight if you don't know Jesus. Accept Him now, or you know, it is going to be a miserable 7 years ahead of you and death. We want people to know Jesus as their Savior and get right with Christ.

Phillip Goodman: Because the Lord called me, He put it on my heart. And way back while I was still in the education system, He just laid it on my heart. And he sat me at His feet and He opened the Bible before me and He sent the Holy Spirit down and helped me learn the Scriptures. And I sat at his feet and learned. And then I brought in great teachers and you were one of them, one of your early books, I brought them in through their books, great teachers. But here was the book God was the teacher through His Holy Spirit, and He called me to do it in that fashion. And so I knew long before I retired that I would be going into the ministry.

AI Gist: Well obviously the answer to that is because God called me to it. But you know God uses people to accomplish His work. We are the hands, and feet, and the voice of God in this world. And there was this one man after, shortly after I entered evangelism, I went to a Bible Prophecy Conference. Now I had been a Bible prophecy student for many years and it was a very interesting area of study for me. I was committed to it and I enjoyed it greatly. And even as a pastor I did the many series where I taught through Daniel and Revelation and did Bible prophecy teaching and preaching. But when I initially went into evangelism I just felt, you know, to teach evangelistically like I had always done. And God was good, He blessed it and we saw a lot of people saved and we saw many Christians rededicate their lives to Christ and it was going well. But I had only been in the evangelism, full-time evangelism for about 6 months when God opened a door. A friend called me and said, "You know this guy named Dave Reagan is having a Bible Prophecy Conference at Bethel Baptist Church in Jennings, Louisiana," and he said, "Have you ever heard of him?" And I said, "Well yeah I have heard him on the radio." He said, "You should come with me and let's go to that." So I said, "Okay." And we went. During that conference which was I think in the year 2000, you preached and I honestly can't say what you preached about other than of course Bible prophecy and the return of Christ. And you offered an invitation and I felt tremendously moved of God that something was just not right. And I thought I was right in the center of God's will, I was doing I thought what God had called me to do. I was a pastor, then He called me into full-time evangelism, Lord what else do you want? And not knowing I went down to the altar and I just began to question God and I said, "Lord what do you want me to do?" And there was an elderly gentleman in that church, his name is John Smith. And I didn't know him at the time, and I didn't even see him. But he, but he is in bad health and he

walked very slowly, my wife was telling me this later she saw it, and he came to the altar and as I was kneeling he came and put his hands on me. And he prayed I think probably one of the most beautiful prayers I have ever heard in a very strong Cajun accent. And with such simple power he in essence said God this man is searching for something that you want him to do. And it was almost like a light came on. And I don't know how to explain that voice of God that you hear. But what I heard of God that was at that time was that Jesus is coming, Jesus is coming and you need to tell people that Jesus is coming. And so in that particular Bible Prophecy Conference, Brother Dave that you were leading I surrendered to the idea that God wanted me to preach about the Return of Christ. And I begin gradually to move my ministry in that direction. And within a few months we were totally focused on that thing, to preach about the Return of Christ. And have been continued to do that for about 8 years now.

Ed Hindson: I was convinced very early in life as a teenager of the promises of the Second Coming of Christ in the Scripture. I was influenced very early on by a book by a man called Harry Rimmer who wrote a book called *The Shadow of Coming Events* and *The Coming War with Russia*. Harry Rimmer was a professor who taught at Wheaton College way back in the 1940's who literally predicted the outcome of WWII based on his understanding of the book of Ezekiel. He had a great influence on Bible prophecy teachers and speakers. When I was 16 years old I preached my very first sermon on the Second Coming of Christ. It's always been part of my heart and soul and passion. My pastor was very committed to Bible prophecy as part of his ministry, built a very successful church a very evangelistic church. I think prophecy reminds all of us, that if Jesus is really coming back we have to face Him one day either as a Savior and Lord or as our Judge. And prophecy compels us to proclaim the message of the Gospel to reach out to the world in our lifetime and to do all that we can because we believe Jesus could come at anytime.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: I don't know about you, but the testimony of these godly men really blessed my heart. The common thread that seemed to run through all those wonderful testimonies was the call of God on their lives to proclaim the prophetic Word. Regarding myself, I think Ray Gano best summed up why I gave up a 20 year in higher education

as a professor of International Law and Politics to become a full-time teacher and teacher of Bible prophecy. Ray referred to Jeremiah 20:9 where Jeremiah said that he had to proclaim God's prophetic Word because it had become like a fire within him that he had to release because he could not endure it. Well that is certainly how I felt. I became overwhelmingly convinced through my study of God's prophetic Word that we are living in the season of the Lord's return. And that I had been called, along with many others to proclaim that message to as many people as possible as quickly as possible. And because of that zeal my heart soon became burdened by the discovery that the average pastor today has no interest whatsoever in the preaching and teaching of God's prophetic Word. So my next question to our Bible prophecy experts was this: Many pastors today argue that Bible prophecy is irrelevant to here and now. How would you respond to this attitude? Here are their observations.

Daymond Duck: What would I say to the pastors? Well I would say that the Scriptures are our authority. It's not the heads over denominations and things like that. I would say you probably weren't taught these things in seminary because people have looked for this to happen for so long they got tired of teaching it and so on. But just because it has been a long time is no reason to ignore this subject. I would tell you we could spend all day concerning the Rapture. Paul begins, "I would not have you ignorant brethren." God doesn't want ignorance in the Church on this subject. He goes on to say, "This is the Word of the Lord this is what Jesus says about the Rapture." He goes on to say, "Comfort one another with these words." He is saying tell people about these things. In Peter we have a more sure Word of prophecy, "Where unto you do well." You would be wise to pay attention to this. The Rapture of the Church, that's a salvation issue, you need to be saved before the Rapture. It's an act of grace. Nobody is worthy to go in the Rapture so we have something that we would be wise to study. Jesus tells us to tell others, He says he doesn't want ignorance in the Church. Salvation, all this kind of stuff and that's what we need to go by, we need to go by the Scriptures, not by what other people are doing. We are seeing apostasy in the Church, we are seeing false doctrines in the Church. All of this is the fulfillment of prophecy, but God gave this message to the Church. It isn't for Nostradamus it's not for Jean Dixon it's for the Church to tell people what's going on and pastors have taken the responsibility. Forty-percent of the Bible is prophecy, you can't ignore 40% of the Bible and have the understanding you need to have.

Nathan Jones: I have been to churches who have totally left Bible prophecy out and they are limping along. Their people have no direction or focus about what their lives are after they die, where they are going to spend for eternity, and that God keeps His promises. They think most of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, is fulfilled and out-of-date. Their faith continues to wane and wane. So, I would say to all pastors, put Bible prophecy back into your teaching. I mean, one-third of the Old Testament is Bible prophecy; one out of every twenty-five verses in the New Testament is Bible prophecy. It means something to God. Bible prophecy means something to God. Don't leave it out of your church or you will be missing something big.

Don McGee: Those who say that Bible prophecy is irrelevant or among those who say that, have to say that almost 1/3 of the entire Bible is irrelevant. God did not give us irrelevant Scripture, that's number one. Number two nothing will purify the human heart like the belief that Jesus could come back at any moment. That is what John said. And if we ignore the prophetic Word we are taking from the Holy Spirit's arsenal one of most important tools He has. Not only bringing conviction upon the unbeliever but maintaining purity in the life of the one who is a Christian.

Ed Hindson: Well those pastors who say that, first of all probably have an irrelevant ministry themselves. They don't know Bible prophecy and there not willing to do the hard work to study it. So they want an easy out so they just say, "Well hey one day we'll all go to Heaven. I don't know the details I'm a Panmillennialist it will all pan out in the end." In reality they may have a genuine concern to evangelize people some do, some don't. But I think at the same time they are missing the boat on one of the most important parts of Scripture. If 28% of the Bible is prophetic in nature, if Jesus Himself said at the end of the book of Revelation, "Proclaim these things in the churches." Jesus meant for the book of Revelation to be preached and taught in the church. If there not preaching it and teaching it in your church there is something wrong with that church. You need to be in a church that proclaims the Gospel. The message of salvation alone through Jesus Christ, the Virgin Birth, the deity of Christ, His literal atonement on the Cross, His literal Resurrection and His literal Second Coming. That's all part of the message of the fundamentals of the basis of genuine Christianity.

Phillip Goodman: I would ask the pastor, “What part of the Bible is he teaching? If you’re going to teach the Bible you have to teach the whole Bible, and a 1/3 of it is Bible prophecy. So I would ask this pastor, “If you are going to teach the book of Matthew are you going to skip over chapter 7? Are you going to jump over chapter 13? What are you going to do when you get to chapter 24 and 25?” It’s, you know strongly, I have a strong conviction if you teach the Bible you have to teach Bible prophecy but conversely. Let’s don’t peg ourselves into the hole that we are Bible prophecy teachers. We are Bible teachers, because if you are teaching Bible prophecy you have to teach the whole Bible, or you are teaching it illegitimately.

Al Gist: I think sometimes the reasons pastors want to ignore Bible prophecy is because they are so confused about it. And in fact people who, like myself, who claim to teach and preach in this particular area, they feel some what intimidated by people like us. They get a guy like me in and he preaches about Bible prophecy and then I am gone and now he’s got to answer questions, everybody got questions and he don’t know how to answer them. And I think some of them feel a little bit afraid of that. But, the really serious issue centers on the idea that we have forgotten that we serve a living Savior. We talk of Jesus as a baby in a manger we talk of Jesus as on the Cross. But for some reason, which I don’t fully understand we don’t want to talk about Jesus as our living Savior. Who is soon to step down from His throne in Heaven and return to this Earth, to gather out His church and then later to return and govern this world. I, we don’t see the future, and that future that we have in Christ is our blessed hope. And unfortunately, when pastors fail to emphasize this part of the Gospel there robbing their people of that blessed hope of a future. I preached a message one time about being excited in Christ. And I learned in my study that you can not be excited about past events. We can appreciate past events. I appreciate certainly, and will be forever grateful for what Jesus did for me on that Cross. I can appreciate it and I glorify His name for it. But I am excited, and can only be excited about what’s in the future. You know when a man and woman are planning their wedding day its exciting because it is still in the future. But after that wedding day passes the years pass you can look at that wedding day and you know the picture album and it’s enjoyable you get a good feeling from it, but you can’t get the excitement of it because it’s a past event. Excitement is produced from the future that’s right around the corner, things that are coming. And people are not excited about their walk with Christ because they don’t talk about Him as though He’s here now and

He's coming and what we are going to be doing with Him. And pastors that omit that from their teaching and preaching are robbing their church of that excitement, and that's so sad, that's so sad.

Don Perkins: Well I totally disagree with that. I mean many pastors don't teach it. And as the result of that it really affects their church. I think that this is one message that really needs to be taught. If a church allowed this message to be taught or if a pastor teaches it, I believe they will have a healthy church. The apostle Paul said this, he said, "I have not shunned to give you the whole counsel of God." You know how can you give me you know three-quarters of the Bible and not the end of the story? You know it is so vital that we understand the end of the story. Bible prophecy message is the only message that gives us the conclusion of the matter. It actually sums up what God is doing. And if we don't teach it, people will never know what the end is going to be. So I think that it's a vital message today that needs to be taught. I challenge pastors, I beg pastors, either teach Bible prophecy either bring in prophecy teachers to teach it, because it will bring a healthy diet of God's Word. You know to me it is like a vitamin, a spiritual vitamin for the body of Christ. And it will keep the church healthy when they know the end of the story.

Mark Hitchcock: Well there's a couple of things that are important. One is 28% of the Bible was prophecy at the time it was written. And I remember Dr. Walvoord one time, someone asking him why he liked prophecy so much. And he said, "Really my love for prophecy just comes out of my love for the Bible." If you love the Bible then if 28% of it is prophecy then you love prophecy. So really I see that my love for prophecy is just a love for the Bible, and to understand the Bible. And I don't think you can understand the Bible if you don't understand 28% of it. So as a pastor I think you need to understand prophecy to be able to declare the full counsel of God to people in the church. But every statement, the other thing is every statement in the Bible about prophecy always has practical application with it, it always does. John 14:1-3, "Don't let your heart be troubled. You believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places, I am going to come and receive you to myself. Where I am there you may be also." In First Corinthians 15 after the passage on the Rapture at the end he says, "Therefore be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain." In First Thessalonians 4 after the section there in 4:13-17

on the Rapture, it's "Therefore comfort one another with these words." I mean what pastor doesn't use that passage of Scripture when their comforting folks at a funeral service? And then finally in First John he says, "Beloved now we are children of God. It's not yet appeared what we shall be, but we know when He appears we will be like Him because we will see Him just as He is. Everyone who fixes his hope on Him purifies himself, because He Himself is pure." So becoming of Christ is a purifying hope. If we want people in our churches to be pure, to be separated until the Lord, then one of the greatest things that we can do is teach Bible prophecy. It has a purifying effect on people's hearts. So saying that Bible prophecy isn't relevant to everyday life is simply a statement that's reflected in the Scriptures.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Let me share with you what I tell pastors when they say to me that they can not see the relevance of Bible prophecy to the here and now. I tell them if they are ever able to convince their people of two things regarding Bible prophecy, they will change their lives. The two things are, first, that Jesus really is returning. Now most Christian believe that here, but not here. And I want to tell you something folks, you don't really believe something until you believe it with your heart. Second they must convince there people that Jesus is returning any moment, that there isn't one prophecy that must be fulfilled for Him to come and Rapture the Church out of this world. If any pastor will convince his congregation of those two things: Jesus is coming back, and He is returning any moment. His people will be motivated to evangelism and holiness. And I ask you, "How much more relevant could a message be then that?" There was one more question I asked the Bible prophecy experts. I asked them to summarize the End Time message of Bible prophecy. And I wish I had the time to share all their answers with you, but I don't. So here are two.

Nathan Jones: The message to a believer is you can trust God's promises. He promised to save you. He promised to take you to Heaven and avoid the terrible wrath, He is going to put on the Earth. And, He has promised to give you a future that you can't imagine for eternity. That's God's promises - that's Bible prophecy.

For the unbeliever, God has given us every sign possible. He has given us Israel back in the land, He has given us the Bible, the prophets the missionaries - everything to tell us, "Hey Jesus is coming back soon. Get right with Jesus. Ask Him to be your Savior, repent of your sins and accept Christ as your Savior." It's not worth holding onto the sin in this world, when you can only imagine what's going to be in the future that the Lord's got for us.

Ed Hindson: The message of Bible prophecy is really a two sided message. The book of Revelation tells us of a scroll in the hand of God the Father that's taken by Jesus Christ. He opens the seals on that scroll, reads the message, pronounces the judgments and brings ultimately the Kingdom of Heaven to Earth. That message on the outside of the scroll is the message to the world at large and the message to unbelievers is bad news, you lose. The message on the inside of the scroll is the message to the Church, and the message to the Church is good news we win. Now that's as simple as you can make Bible prophecy. Ultimately it's a message of hope for the believer, it's a message of judgment for the unbeliever. But I would remind you. Prophecy is not written to scare us, prophecy is written to prepare us, it's not written to frighten to us, it is written to invite us to come to Christ while there is hope and while there is time. God shows you enough in Scripture about the future as He allows us to look down through the tunnel of time. Down through the corridor of the fulfillment of prophecy, so that we would understand if God knows the future, God certainly knows my future. He knows all about me and He wants me to ready ultimately to meet Him in that future. So the message of warning to the unbeliever is really written in love. It's written in the blood of Christ who went to the cross to die for your sins so that you might know the joy of Heaven and of everlasting life. So that you might know that when the Archangel shouts and the trumpets sounds, and the Lord descends that you're ready to go when Jesus comes. Because you know, that you know, that you know Him as your personal Lord and Savior.

Dr. Reagan: Well that is program for this week I hope it has been a blessing to you. Until next week, Lord willing this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb and Lion Ministries saying, "Look up, be watchful, for your redemption is drawing near."

End of Program