**Developing a Mind-set for the End Times Session 7**

**Your life will depend on the Word of God**

*1a) “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4, 4).*

For us in a comfortable western country, it’s hard to grasp the full meaning of that verse. If you are living in a warzone, and you are facing death, starvation and disaster every day, the crucial importance of God’s word comes into focus.

1b) At the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, The Bible society were handing out bread and bibles in a park in Kiev. One man, in his 70s, stood there with his bread in one hand and the Bible in his other hand and said: “I think the Bible is more important than daily bread, for me personally now. I never prayed before. I have never been to church, never read the Bible. But now it’s time to come closer to God.”

**2) The Special atmosphere of the end times**

2 a) The Bible talks about a time of world-wide warfare alongside world-wide famine and plague in the end times, with ¼ of the world’s population dying in a short period of time.

2b) If you were living in a situation like that would you be shrinking back in fear or burning with passion and power, full of the Holy Spirit and faith?

2c) In the days to come, your health, your provision, your protection and even your very LIFE may depend on knowing and believing and standing on the word of God. Knowing the Bible won’t be a luxury that you can afford to live without.

2d) The prophet Jeremiah gives a vivid comparison of two people who live in different ways in the same place in the same time. One puts their trust in what the Bible calls “Flesh” – the systems of the world, governments, banks, savings, insurance, health care etc. The other trusts in God alone.

‘‘Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh

and whose heart turns away from the Lord. He will be like a bush in the wastelands; He will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives” (Jeremiah 17, 5-6)

In the end times most of the things that people count upon to give them peace, security, health and happiness will fall apart. When the storm comes, those who build their lives on these things will experience their house collapsing.

2e) However, at the same time, in the same circumstances, for those who trust in God – their life will stand strong, like a house built upon a rock.

“But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.

He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green.

It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.’

(Jeremiah 17, 7-8)

**3) God’s promises are true for all time and apply in every circumstance**

3a) Many believers felt that Psalm 91 didn’t apply in a pandemic.

“*You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.” (Psalm 91, 5-7)*

3b) If it doesn’t apply in a pandemic, when does it apply?

3c) Some say it is just religious poetry, not to be taken literally. To those who believe it is the very word of God, His promise in that situation.

3d) Some argue that it can’t be true because many Christians became ill with Covid. It is important not to build doctrine on people’s experience, but on the word of God. Whilst not judging them, we can believe for ourselves the word that says; “A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near me.”

3e) God’s word informs us of what God wants to give us and what He wants our life to be like. God’s promises are an invitation to partake in that kind of life.

3f) Many scholars believe that Psalm 91 was written by Moses during the desert wonderings. At points they were attacked by hostile tribes. At other points there were plagues going through the camp that killed thousands of the people. This psalm applies to a warzone and a pandemic.

3g) David wrote many of his Psalms whilst running for his life. God’s promises to him were not empty words. They were his daily experience. “For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe … He will hide me under the shadow of His wings” (Psalm 27, 5; 17, 8)

3h) Knowing, Believing and Standing on the word of God will become increasingly crucial for the state of your mind, for the health of your body, the protection and provision of your family.

“As in the days when you came out of Egypt, I will show them my wonders.”

(Micah 7, 15)

**4) KNOWING THE WORD TO AVOID DECEPTION AND COMPROMISE**

4a) Regarding the end times, Jesus didn’t warn his followers about the importance of storing away food or about how to avoid martyrdom. Instead he repeatedly warned against the danger of being deceived.

“(v 4-5) Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, “I am the Messiah,” and will deceive many. ….(v 11) many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. (v 24) For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.” (Matt. 24, 4-5; 24).

4b) There will be two kinds of false “Christs” - Political leaders and Religious leaders. They will be convincing and clever. They will seem good and genuine, and the religious ones will seem to be anointed by God. However they will lead you away from the uniqueness of Christ and obedience to the teachings of the Bible

**5) Religious leaders**

5a) The Bible tells us that in the end times there will be many false prophets and workers of supernatural miracles who will lead people away from Biblical belief. The book of revelation tells us that the devil puts a unique anointing on a religious leader called the “False Prophet” who will lead people away from worship of Jesus and probably worship of Islam and Buddhism as well. He will demonstrate the validity of his message by performing extraordinary signs and wonders, even calling down fire from heaven in full view of people.

The Bible tells us that he will deceive the inhabitants of the earth.

5b) Just because people perform the most extraordinary miracles does not mean that they come from God.

God never moves outside of his word, his spirit and his people.

**6) Political leaders**

6a) In difficult times, political leaders can seem to offer a way forward that everyone needs to follow. They spin a narrative around it in the media painting the difficulties and the proposed solutions in a certain way, so that they can make people believe what they are saying and follow them.

6b) When you are inside the narrative, it’s very hard to move in a different direction.

6c) In Russia, with the invasion of Ukraine, very few priests have spoken out against it, though at least one priest was arrested for preaching against the war.

6d) What would you do if you were in that situation? Would you keep quiet or speak out and face 15 years in prison, losing your job, damaging your health and family for a protest that very few people would hear? We will all face these choices in the future.

6e) The Anti-christ will be the most popular global leader in history who appears to be tackling all the problems in society. There will be a strong “International Unity Narrative” with all the things that divide people like religion, intolerance, political activism criminalized. There will be strong narrative against Israel, the Jews and religious extremism.

**7) Don’t just blindly follow the media narrative**

7a) We have grown up in a country where we have believed that our media was free and fair.

7b) The organization News Watch, that monitors media organizations within the uk by taking random samples of their news programmes and analyzing their content.

For example on Brexit reported that the BBC gave over twice as much coverage to the pro Europe side of the debate to the anti Europe side and on the Covid issue, almost 90% of airtime was given to the government narrative and almost no air time to the thousands of doctors, university professors taking the other side.

7c) In the future, it will be critical that you don’t just blindly follow the government narrative because the governments of the world will be controlled by the anti-christ.

7d) Ask yourself these 4 question;

1) Who is behind this narrative – God or the Devil?

2) Is the narrative true, balanced and impartial?

3) Is it designed to stir up loyalty, prejudice, fear or hatred?

4) Does it undermine faith in God’s promises?

7e) The devil is behind much of the world’s narrative. “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see…” (2 Cor. 4.4)

7f) It is more healthy to read the news rather than watch it. If you watch the news, you surrender your train of thought to the producer, and the graphic images play on your fears and emotions. Whereas if you read an article, you are in much more in control of your time, your intake and emotions.

7g) Read a broad range of publications to get a balanced picture.

**8) It is crucial to be more influenced by God’s word than the media.**

8a) “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matt. 6, 22-23).

8b) You should fill your mind and thoughts and your emotions with God’s word with his promises, with worship and prayer, otherwise you will give way to fear and you will end up being a part of an ungodly agenda.

8c) Jesus is a far better teacher than Satan is a deceiver.

If you stay in the Bible, if you stay committed to obedience, remain as connected as you can to the Holy Spirit through worship and prayer and speaking in tongues, God will protect you from being deceived.