



# the eND TIMES

## TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

- **LISTEN WITHOUT FIXING AND TEACHING.** People desperately need a safe place to share their thoughts and be real with others. Give people space to talk without trying to fix them, correct their thoughts or teach. Choose the relationship over the desire to cast judgement or prove your point over theirs, to be "right".

## Week 1: What are the End Times?

### ICEBREAKER

What was/is the hardest subject for you in school? Ex: Math, Geography, Speech, PE etc.

### INTRODUCTION

There is nothing in the bible quite as profound, complex and confusing as bible prophecy. The most important and talked about prophecy in the New Testament being the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Even the disciples had to approach Jesus at the Mount of Olives to ask "Tell us, when will all this happen? **What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?**" (Matthew 24:3 NLT). This week, we will look at what Jesus and the apostles tell us about the Last Days so we can better answer; What are the End Times?

## READ |

One of the best ways to answer the question posed in the title of this lesson is to say; the End Times are the steps the world will go through before the second coming of Jesus Christ and His final judgement of the world.

Here are **Five steps** of the End Times Jesus gives us in Matthew 24:

### **1) The Birth Pains, a time without discernment**

*For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and **will deceive many**. You will **hear of wars and rumors of wars**, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. **Nation will rise against nation**, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be **famines and earthquakes** in various places.*  
--Matthew 24:5-7 (NIV)

In this step, mankind is divided amongst themselves through fear, deception, rumor, aggression and disaster. This will be a time of little trust and much confusion, where the world will be crying out for a savior.

### **2) The Great Distress, a time without conviction**

*Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of **most** will grow cold, but the **one** who stands firm to the end **will be saved**. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*  
--Matthew 24:12-14 (NIV)

In this step, mankind is demoralized by the teaching of false prophets and divided from the church and Word of God. This will be a time of persecution, anger and bitterness, where the world needs the Word, but many will be deaf to its peace and promise.

### **3) The Plunge Into Darkness, a time without order and light**

"the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light;  
the stars will fall from the sky,  
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken."

--Matthew 24:29 (NIV)

In this step, mankind loses sight of the glory of God's creation and is divided from His light and its order. This will be a time of darkness, where chaos will thrive and the foundations of many will be shaken.

#### **4) The Sign and Coming, a time of repentance**

*“Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth **will mourn** when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.  
--Matthew 24:30 (NIV)*

In this step, Christ is revealed and mankind is divided into the faithful and the fallen. This will be a time of grief and regret, where many come to terms with the hour at hand.

#### **5) The Judgement, a time of reckoning**

*That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.  
--Matthew 24:40-41 (NIV)*

*In this step, mankind is judged by the living God and divided (set apart) from the evil of the world. This will be a time of justice and retribution, where many are suddenly taken.*

**Discuss the steps above. What stood out to you as an important point or new idea?**

### **READ**

According to Paul's writings the End Times are a time when people will turn away from God and his commandments to live in the sin and desire of the fallen world:

*"In the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will **love only themselves and their money**. They will be **boastful and proud**, scoffing at God, **disobedient** to their parents, and **ungrateful**. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and **have no self-control**. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, **be reckless, be puffed up with pride**, and **love pleasure rather than God**. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!  
--2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NLT)*

In this passage he describes the heart of man as it grows cold in the End Times. They will love only themselves, their money and not God. They will be boastful, proud, disobedient and ungrateful. They will be unloving, unforgiving and lack self control. They will love pleasure more than God. Some will even be religious but won't have a relationship with Jesus in their heart or live on the foundations of His grace and power.

**How can you better guard your heart from people and actions like those described in 2 Timothy 3? Which of the bolded phrases is hardest for you to guard against?**

## READ |

The bible even ends in this prophesy! In the Revelation of John he is given a vision of the End Times while worshiping in the Spirit (Revelation 1:9). John is shown how the End Times will unfold through the fall of Babylon, Jesus' mighty return, His judgement, reign, defeat of satan and the raising of a new Jerusalem or heaven on earth.

*"It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.*

*--Revelation 21:6-7 (NIV)*

John's vision of the End Times is a love story. Jesus returns to fight for His bride (church) and the people He loves against the forces of evil. With the weapon of truth / the Word of God (Sword coming from His mouth) he will defeat all enemies. Jesus is coming for his bride and that makes the End Times a time of hope and joy for believers.

**How does it make you feel knowing that God's truth and love for us will overcome all evil in the End Times? How has knowing God's Word helped you to fight off evil?**

## WHAT WILL YOU DO?

*This week, find comfort in your own understanding of the End Times. Guard your heart from the world by staying in God's Word and using it in prayer to call out any Evil that may be stealing peace from your life.*

## ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS (Optional):

- Each week, we encourage you to read additional scriptures and feed your mind, heart and soul with God's word. We have provided SCRIPTURES on the next page for you to do your daily devotions.

## CLOSE IN PRAYER:

Father, thank You for Your wisdom and warning of the End Times. We ask for Your mercy on all who do not know You or have turned away from You. Open their hearts and minds with the light of Your love and bring them out of darkness.

(PRAYER FOR SALVATION) Lord Jesus, I confess I'm a sinner and ask for Your forgiveness. I accept Your death as the penalty for my sin. Please come into my heart as my Lord and Savior. Take complete control of my life. By faith I receive You into my heart as the Son of God, my Savior and Lord of my life. From now on, help me live for You, with You in control. In Jesus' name.



## Make Time to be in God's WORD

Reading God's Word daily re-patterns the way you think & transforms your mind. Doing your daily devotions is an excellent way to record, process, & share what God is teaching you on a personal level. We do this using S.O.A.P.

- S - Scripture**
- O - Observation**
- A - Application**
- P - Prayer**

### Here's an example:

**S:** *Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "*

*--Matthew 4:4 (NIV)*

**O:** Jesus said that we can't live on food alone. Our life is sustained through His Word.

**A:** Just as food is important to me, God's Word is even more because it will sustain me and give me the strength to live out my life.

**P:** Jesus, thank You for reminding me that I need Your Word to give me the wisdom & strength to follow You. Help me to make time to spend with You daily. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

## SCRIPTURES FOR S.O.A.P.

### **Day 1:**

***In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.***

***--Jeremiah 33:15 (NASB)***

### **Day 2:**

***For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.***

***--1 Peter 1:20 (NLT)***

### **Day 3:**

***Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come.***

***Therefore we know that it is the last hour.***

***--1 John 2:18 (NIV)***

### **Day 4:**

***So that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.***

***--Ephesians 2:7 (ESV)***

### **Day 5:**

***God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things.***

***--Hebrews 1:1-2 (NIV)***