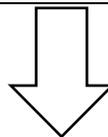


A brief overview of the signs of the End spoken of by Jesus

Jesus tells us to look for the Signs of the End. Paul says we should not be surprised by the Return of Jesus, even though it will be like a thief in the night – unexpected by unbelievers (and many believers) (1 Thess 5:4-8). The signs of the imminent End will **not** be obvious, but need to be prayerfully discerned (Mt 24:43-44; Lk 12:39-40; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 15:16). We should be anticipating it, watching for the signs. There is a parallel between the signs mentioned in the Gospels and the messages to the churches in Revelation 2-3 and the seal judgments in Revelation 6 (which are not judgments inflicted by God but problems he allows us to bring on ourselves or natural events). The 10 signs in the first table below have recurred over the centuries. But it is clear from the Book of Revelation that the signs become more serious as we get nearer to the End. So, the trumpet judgments (Rev 8-9) are more serious than the seal judgments, and the bowl judgments are even more serious. Jesus refers to some of the more serious (or, in the case of Israel, more advanced) signs. The second row of the table below indicates that most of the signs are more serious in modern society than in the past. This indicates that we are at a late stage in the End Times. It is also clear that some of the signs referred to by Jesus are later, and happen close to the End. They are not recurring. These are listed in the second table below. The table format enables us to see the bigger picture, which is important. See my detailed teaching on the End Times in the footnotes.ⁱ **Although the first 10 signs below are recurring it is noteworthy that some are now much more significant.** Persecution is worse than its ever been. World evangelism is far more advanced through modern communication. Because of nuclear weapons etc., war presently is far more serious. Then, of course, there is the non-recurring sign of the re-establishment of Israel.

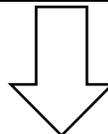
The beginning of the “Birth Pains of Messiah” (Matt 24:8) – recurring signs pointing towards the return of the Lord

False Messiahs (Mt 24:4-5)	War (Mt 24:6-7; Rev 6:1-4)	Famine (Mt 24:7) incl high inflation and shortages (Rev 6:5-6)	Earthquakes (Mt 24:7; Rev 6:12)	Persecution (Mt 24:9; Rev 2:10; 6:9-11)	Leaving the Faith (Mt 24:10)	Secularism & Compromise (Mt 24:12) esp. lukewarmness & sexual sin (Rev 2:4, 14-16, 20; 3:1, 15-17)	False Teachers (Mt 24:11; Rev 2:2)	World Evangelism (Mt 24:14)	Pestilence etc. (Lk 21:11; Rev 6:7-8)
I have found information on 102 false christs over the last 2000 years. 66 of whom lived in the 20th century	Chemical and nuclear war have the potential for greater devastation. Atomic experts say nuclear weapons are more likely to be used today than at any time since the 1950s. Terrorism is still a major threat. Cyber warfare is extensive and easily disrupts a country's political, democratic and welfare systems. There are AI missiles, drones, submarines, etc. ⁱⁱ	Famine had declined but began to increase because of poverty and war. The UN has said Covid 19 could cause wide-spread famines “of biblical proportions” because of its economic devastation. It estimates that those suffering from hunger could go from 135 million to over 250 million. Global warming will cause extreme weather, crop failures, under-nutrition, increase in refugees and so more tension and war. ⁱⁱⁱ	The British Geological Survey says that earthquakes are not increasing. But they remain a sign which Jesus referred to.	Persecution of Christians is worse than at any time in history. Some 215 million Christians face persecution About 250 are martyred each month. Christians face 80% of the religious discrimination in the world – in 144 countries (and growing). Secularism in western countries is causing moral change. False definitions of “extremism” are reducing the rights of Christians to freedom of speech and action especially in areas of sexuality and gender but also over other challenging aspects of the faith. ^{iv}	UK Church membership seriously declined from 10.6 million in 1930 to 5.4 Million in 2013, from about 30% to 10.3% of the population. There is also decline throughout Europe, Australia, Canada, and the USA. But there is growth in Asia, Africa and S America.	Humanists promote equality and tolerance but eventually seek to turn the tables, silencing biblical Christians about ‘hate speech’ on sexual morality and Jesus being the only Saviour (much of which is <u>not</u> hate speech). Many modern churches are ‘lukewarm’ and some compromise over sexual morality Many Christians neglect serious prayer and bible reading and are half-hearted ‘disciples.’^v	False teaching in the modern church includes denial that Jesus is the only Saviour, that Hell (which Jesus spoke extensively about) exists. There is also serious erroneous teaching over sexual morality , even amongst Evangelicals.	72% of the world has heard the Gospel. 90% of the world’s population has access to the New Testament. As increasing numbers of people have access to the internet through smart phones, there is the potential for the majority to read about the Gospel.	Pandemics are a real danger, especially in our global village, as Covid-19 shows. Global warming will cause heat-related illness and death. Terrorists could obtain chemical and biological weapons, with devastating results.



Later signs nearer to the return of Lord

Re-establishment of Israel (Lk 21:24)	Cosmic Disturbance (Mt 24:29; Rev 6:12-14)	False Prophets and False Christs (Mt 24:24-26)	The Great Distress (Mt 24:21)	Antichrist (Mt 24:15-19; 2 Thess 2:1-12)
<p>Jesus predicts the Jewish people regaining control of Jerusalem and the land of Israel in the context of the End Times. It is a most remarkable fact that Israel was re-established with UN support in 1948 after almost 2000 years of Jewish exile. Paul makes it clear in Rom 11 that God still has a purpose for the Jewish people and Israel. He predicts a great turning to Jesus, which we await. Israel has faults but, despite peace moves with certain Arab countries, it is the target of antagonism from others. It is subject to unjust criticisms in the UN.</p> <p>Antisemitism, which often takes the form of anti-Israelism, only makes sense as demonically-inspired opposition to Israel's future divine calling.</p>	<p>'Sentry' is a highly automated NASA collision monitoring system which continually scans for Near Earth Asteroids which could impact with Earth. Stephen Hawking believed asteroid collision to be the biggest threat to the planet.</p>	<p>There have been false teachers throughout the ages but Jesus indicates they will be more prominent near the End and they will <i>"perform great signs and wonders to deceive"</i> people. (See comments in first table above).</p>	<p>It is not difficult to imagine worldwide suffering and disasters on a greater scale than ever: "great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equalled again" (Mt 24:21). Jesus' prophecy is in the context of the "abomination that causes desolation" – a ruler who effectively sets himself up as a god (Mt 24:15). We note in this paper the growth of populism – charismatic, dominant leaders who undermine democracy and tend towards dictatorship. We live in a global village with continuing strong moves towards world government, which may at first do good but eventually will be manifested as evil (Rev 13 etc).</p>	<p>John says the 'spirit of antichrist is already in the world' (1 Jn 4:3). In fact, many antichrists are in the world but the major, ultimate Antichrist is still to come (1 Jn 2:18). The Antichrist will be a powerful dictator (Rev 13:11-18). "The price of freedom is eternal vigilance" and we need to be alert to trends towards dictatorship, oppression and antichrist trends. We live in an era of growth of nationalism and populism, with charismatic and angry leaders who tend towards political oppression in various parts of the world. They can be selfish, immoral, dishonest and reckless. But when they make popular promises, they can be strongly supported, even by Christians, which is disturbing.</p> <p>On the other hand, global cooperation brings peace, stability, trade and reduces poverty. Experts warn that catastrophic climate change, ecological collapse, pandemics etc., require deeper global co-operation. One ex-government minister said "We will need to build new forms of global governance, more urgently and more creatively than ever envisioned." But "<i>Power tends to corrupt</i> and absolute <i>power corrupts</i> absolutely." World government is likely to bring dictatorship and oppression. Current populism/nationalism is likely eventually to produce a reaction leading to inevitable globalism.</p> <p>One disturbing modern fact is the rapid development of surveillance. There is potential for and actual use of computer surveillance, cameras, facial recognition, etc., to be used for political control/ oppression. China is piloting extreme surveillance. The UK has the largest network of surveillance cameras c 1.85 million: one for every 14 people.</p> <p>Genetic engineering can have helpful effects but it also has potential for selective breeding of humans which could easily lead to political and social oppression. Human-animal hybrids have been created</p> <p>A false christ is being proclaimed around the world.: Whilst we must love our Muslim neighbour, we should not forget that Islam proclaims a Jesus ("Isa") who is not divine, did not die and so did not rise from the dead, but he will return to earth in power one day. From a biblical Christian point of view this is a false christ, amongst others, but there will be one greater manifestation^{vi}</p>



Our response to the Signs of the End

God has called us to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Lk 1:17). So the right response is to be radically biblical in the power of the Spirit

INDIVIDUALLY			CORPORATELY			
Taking Prayer seriously	Taking the Bible seriously	Being filled with the Spirit	Corporate prayer	Biblical exposition	Radical discipleship	Praying for Revival
Jesus says “ <i>Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to ... stand before the Son of Man</i> ” (Lk 21:36). Persisting in praying for a reasonable length of time daily and allowing the Lord to take us deeper into prayer.	Peter says “ <i>You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming</i> ” (2 Peter 3:11-12). Firmly believing that “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17) Reading the Bible daily together with explanations about its meaning and seeking to obey its teaching, avoiding compromise with the world.	Paul says “ <i>May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ</i> ” (1 Thess 5:23). Seriously seeking a powerful experience of the Holy Spirit, manifested in the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. Jesus tells the disciples to be open to the Spirit in the End Times (Mk 13:11 Encouraging Christians to be filled with the Spirit and praying for them accordingly.	After the angels had foretold the return of Jesus, the disciples “ <i>all joined together constantly in prayer</i> ” which led to Pentecost (Acts 1:10-14). Holding a regular (weekly or fortnightly) prayer meeting, distinct from Sunday services. Praying for wider issues: national and international subjects and the great need of revival; local issues; individual issues Seeking God’s will, provision and protection. Allowing the Holy Spirit freedom in corporate worship and prayer. “ <i>Do not quench the Spirit</i> ” (1 Thess 5:19).	Speaking of the End Times, Jesus says “ <i>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away</i> ” (Matt 24:35). We must take his words seriously. Sermons and bible studies which carefully explain the text and its implications. “ <i>We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, ‘I know him,’ but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them</i> ” (1 Jn 2:3-5).	Jesus warns the disciples not to let their love “grow cold” in the End Times (Matt 24:12). They are to stand firm (Lk 21:19). Putting the Lord before, family, friends, leisure pursuits etc; taking sin and repentance seriously and seeking holiness; sharing regularly in fellowship, showing love and humility to others; practising every member ministry including in outreach and evangelism; accepting godly correction. “ <i>Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it</i> ” (Mt 10:37-39).	Peter quotes Joel’s prophecy that God will pour out his Spirit in the context of eschatological signs “ <i>in the Last Days ...before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord</i> ” (Acts 2:17-21). Pentecost was the first fulfilment of this. Prayer for revival hastens the return of Jesus.

For further reading on Signs of the End - Papers by Tony Higton

i GENERAL

For my 19 articles on the whole range of **Biblical teaching about the End Times** (Full Version and Summary) see [Eschatology – Christian Teaching Resources](#)

For our **BOOKS** on the whole range of biblical teaching on the End Times see

- “**Life after life**” by Patricia Higton see [Life after life - final version](#) [Patricia is a theological graduate and lay minister. We met at theological college.]
- “**Living in the light of the End (which is a new beginning)**” by Tony Higton full version see [Eschatological Book - FULL](#)
- “**Living in the light of the End (which is a new beginning)**” by Tony Higton summary version see [Eschatological Book- SUMMARY](#)

See also

[Church leaders agree statement on the Return of Christ](#) (pdf)

[Jesus’ teaching on the signs of his coming](#) (pdf)

[Jesus’ teaching about the future – some scholarly opinions](#)

[Why the church fails to teach about eschatology](#)

[Can We Ignore What the New Testament Says About Signs of Jesus’ Return?](#) (pdf)

[Should we be thinking frequently about the Return of Christ?](#)

[Dual fulfilment of prophecy](#)

[Eschatology: the now and the not yet](#)

[Serious trends in the present situation](#)

[Update on secular eschatology](#) (Aug 2015) incl. asteroid strikes, global warming, nuclear accidents, volcanoes

ii **WAR**

[Update on war and the threat of war](#) (Aug 2015)

[Further update on terrorism and war](#) (Dec 2015)

[Update on war and terrorism](#) (Aug 2016)

[Update on the Signs of the End 02 – Nuclear Terrorism & War](#) (Nov 2014)

iii **FAMINE etc**

[Update on Global Warming](#) (Dec 2016)

[Update on “Birth-pains of the Messiah”: Global warming](#) (Mar 2015)

iv **PERSECUTION**

[Update on Persecution](#) (Dec 2016)

[Update on Signs of the End 03 – Persecution & Oppression](#) (Dec 2014)

[Oppression of Christians in the West](#) (Nov 2018)

[Discrimination against British Christians](#) pdf (Oct 2013)

[Discrimination against British Christians: Update 2015](#)

[Update on Oppression of Christians](#) (Jan 2016)

[Update on Oppression of Christians July 2017](#)

[Discrimination Against British Christians – Update](#) (Aug 2019)

v **SECULARISM AND CHURCH COMPROMISE**

[The church desperately needs Revival](#) and

[Update on the church May 2020](#) (Summary)

[Secularism and Populism undermine the foundation of society](#) and lead towards authoritarianism (May 20)

[Update on Church Decline](#) (Nov 2016)

[Update on decline of Christian belief](#) (Jun 2016)

[Update on Secularisation – January 2017](#)

[Update on Secularism](#) (Feb 2016)

[Update on the Church of England](#) (Nov 2015)

[Secularisation and Non-Religious Spirituality](#) (Sep 2015)

[Church growth and decline](#) including reasons for decline (Jul 2015)

[Update on Signs of the End “Turning away from the Faith”](#) (Mar 2015)

vi **TRENDS TOWARDS ANTICHRIST**

Paper on the Antichrist: Full version go to my [Eschatological Book](#) entitled “Living in the light of the End (which is a new beginning)” FULL VERSION and search for “The ‘Great Tribulation’ and the Antichrist”

Paper on the Antichrist: Summary Version go to my [Eschatological Book](#) entitled “Living in the light of the End (which is a new beginning)” SUMMARY and search for “The ‘Great Tribulation’ and the Antichrist”

[Christians and others under antichrist rule](#)

[Update on the Signs of the End 04 – Preparation for the End: Movements towards World Government](#) (Dec 2014)

[Update on World Government and Oppression](#) (Dec 16)

[Update on World Government and Political Oppression – July 2017](#)