

**Sermon Outline**  
*Last Things First*  
**Matthew 24:36-44**  
*First Sunday in Advent*

It may seem strange to begin the Christian year with Scriptures about the end, but in fact what we believe about where things are headed will shape our life and actions at the outset. Starting with the end in mind, knowing that *we have to keep last things first*, is crucial to Christian maturity and mission. Jesus lived and ministered in the first “terminal generation,” in the time the Bible called “the last days.” What he said about the end of that era tells us a great deal about how we live now for the ultimate and coming Day of the Lord. We long and live for the return of Christ because we celebrate the promise fulfilled in his first appearing.

- **Millennial Views and their Consequences**
    - “If you are not flying to Chicago this morning...”
    - “*No use polishing brass on a sinking ship.*” – J. Vernon McGee
  - **Burying Bibles or Building Churches**
    - Teenage Rapture Fever
    - “*We cannot hold that these differing doctrines of eschatology are a matter of indifference. They make a great difference in how we view the world and work and future in it...In the one, people are preparing to leave...in another they are preparing to conquer...asserting the crown rights of Christ the King.*” – R.J. Rushdoony
- I. *The End is Foundational – Matthew 24:44***
- A. Christ is our “eschatology.” – Revelation 22:13
  - B. Christ, not an abstract view of time, is where our eschatology begins.
- II. *The End is Creational – Matthew 24:36***
- A. God has “ends” in mind for what he makes and guides all things to these ends.  
Revelation 22:13
  - B. The story of redemption – Gardens and the Garden City Glorified.
- III. *The End is Unavoidable – Matthew 24:37-41***
- A. No Stopping the Flood
    - The “what then” question all face
  - B. The Taken and the Left
    - Inheriting the Earth
- IV. *The End is Motivational – Matthew 24:42-44***
- A. Ready or Not, Here He Comes!
  - B. Changing Course
    1. Personally
    2. Ecclesiastically
    3. Culturally

- I am told that I must forget about the Church being anything other than a remnant; that my hope should be in a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem; but the Scriptures say that a “greater one than the Temple is here.”
- I am told that I should abandon any hope of the conversion of all nations and the gathering in of the Jews, that the idea of the Kings and Queens of the earth coming to the Son of David is false; but the Scriptures say that “a greater one than Solomon is here.”
- I am told that the Church cannot expect to see whole cities repent and come to faith, that our best hope is for the conversion of a few; but the Scriptures say that “a greater one than Jonah is here.”

- *Who is the Greater One? It is Christ Jesus the Savior and Lord, the One who will come again to judge the living and the dead, whose Kingdom shall have no end.*
- *YIK and the Cathedrals: 1 Corinthians 15:58 – the end of Biblical Eschatology*