
CORE BELIEFS SERIES: PT 7 THE FUTURE

Core belief number 7, the final in our series on core beliefs of Christianity is about the future. And a quick study of history will tell you that trying to predict the future is a very fraught exercise. Ie

Cars are just a fad and our brains we will not keep up.

We will be able to live to 150 by 2030

Smart phones will not take off.

TV's will not be a big thing compared to the movies.

Things are going to go very wrong on 1 Jan 2000

Predicating the future is very dangerous. Here are five predictions about the future that you can guarantee.

Core Belief 7. We believe in the future

1. **We will all die** Hebrews 9; 27-28

You might think this one is an absolute certainty but actually it is not quite. That is because of the second thing we believe about the future. If Christ returns then you will not die.

2. **Christ will return** Matthew 24

This is a complex Scripture because inter woven with describing Jesus return are predictions of the fall of Jerusalem that had an immediate outworking. But Jesus return will be obvious, decisive and sudden. This is the exact opposite of the first time. He came as a baby, it was not obvious that he was God and he did ministry for 3 years in one small obscure part of the Roman Empire before dying on the cross. And it was not sudden; for 30 years he just lived normally.

His return will come in such a way the whole world will know and it will absolutely change everything. He is coming as Lord, and every knee will bow. In addition, it is going to be sudden and unexpected. Which is why people who are busy saying they can predict when he returns are always wrong. Jesus did say there would be a time of deception,

persecution, worldwide witness, wars, and natural disasters.

3. **We will get new bodies.** 1 Cor 15:51-53

4. **We will be judged** Romans 2:16 . 1 Cor 3:13-15

5. **There is a better world to come** Rev 21:1-4 This new world is social, physical, purposeful and wonderful.

These five things are guaranteed. (except maybe the first if, Jesus comes first) Once you try to get into more detail, everything else is debated. When we Christ come again? People have been arguing that for years and all kinds of theories have come and gone. How will He come again? What about the millennium? And the anti-Christ? Where does Israel fit into the picture? What will our new bodies will be like? What is the world to come be like? What happens between when we die and Christ returns? What about people who have never heard about Jesus? Is hell a literal place?

I don't have easy answers for any of these questions. I have some thoughts but the Bible is not clear on these questions, which is why there is so much argument and division over these things. We should never divide over these kinds of issues, where there is so much speculation and debate.

I never ceased to be amazed at the lack of humility many Christians have when it comes to some of these things. A short study of church history will show you that great men and women of God have had vastly different views on these issues throughout the centuries.

However, there is absolute certainty on these five things concerning the future. In addition, this is where our hope as Christians comes from. While we know that although God is with us and we know his peace and the Holy Spirit lives in us, we know that



life can be tough. We know that life can be unfair. We know that death stinks. We know that there is a whole heap of injustice in the world.

In addition, we know our hearts long for more. The Bible says eternity lives in our hearts. We know that life is meaningless unless at some point there is justice. The writer of the book of Ecclesiastes points this out. He tries everything and cannot find satisfaction. He gets involved in great projects. He has great parties. He has hundreds of wives. He studies endlessly. Then as he gets older, he says. "What is the point of it all? These great projects I will have to hand over to someone else. The parties do not last forever. The hundreds of wives have worn me out." (I might have read between the lines on that one.) In addition, his study is never ending. Then bad people do well and good people die young. It all seems pointless. However, he says there is eternity in the human heart. There is a deep longing for more.

In addition, this is where we by faith believe the Bible when it says that God is going to come and sort everything out. There is hope because at some point in history God is going to intervene. He will bring to a close this era of history. For those who have believed in him, there will be an incredible future.

There is much talk of the younger generations have a lack of hope for the future. We do not need to fear death. We do not need to fear global warning WE do not need to fear earthquakes and disasters. God is with us, will never leave us, and he has a future for this world and us. His call to us is to be faithful

Download or listen to this message at:
www.icbc.org.nz

REFLECTION + DISCUSSION

What do you predict life will be like in 30 years time?

Have you thought about your own mortality? Does the thought of your death scare you?

Brainstorm together on practical ways you could take



CENTRAL BAPTIST

LOVE GOD : LOVE OTHERS