



BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

October 2020

Editor Janelle Daum

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PASTORAL MEDITATIONS



“As He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?’”

Matthew 24:3

As we look at events taking place all around us it would seem that they provide increasing signs of hope in the soon return of Christ in the Rapture. Jesus’ response to the disciples’ question is a laundry list of

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signs. Verses 4-5 talk about a proliferation of false messiahs that will lead many people astray. Verse 6 mentions growing numbers of wars and rumors of more wars. Verse 7 mentions famines and earthquakes in different places around the world. There will be increasing tribulation and believers will be hated and martyred. Lawlessness will increase. The love of many will grow cold. The Gospel will be proclaimed throughout the whole world.

From there Jesus goes on to describe the time of the Great Tribulation, the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation, 24:15-31. Jesus defines the Great Tribulation as the time that begins with the abomination of desolation mentioned in Daniel 9:27 and ends with the Second Coming of Christ, Matthew 24:30.

So what does all of this mean for us? We can look at the news and see all of these things taking place. How do we interpret these things? Verses 4-14 describe general characteristics of the days approaching the end of the age. We need to pay attention to Jesus' interpretation of these events. For example, in v.6 when He speaks of wars, He also says that we should not be alarmed because these things should be expected, they "must take place." He goes on to say that the correct interpretation of growing wars is that "the end is not yet." We see a similar message after the mention of famines and earthquakes. They are described as the "beginning of birth pangs, v.8." The tribulation and martyrdom and apostasy and lawlessness are all described as something to be endured, v.13.

What does all of this have to say about the time of the Rapture? Not as much as we would hope. In a general sense we can say that every day that goes by draws us closer to the time of Christ's return in the Rapture. We don't know when, we just know that it is closer. The increase in the frequency of the general characteristics of the end of the age in Matthew 24 inexorably draws us closer to the time of the Rapture, but they don't give us a date or time. We just know that it is

closer.

In Matthew 24:36-44 Jesus describes the Rapture for us and He begins with the statement that we don't know when it will take place:

“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.” v.36

He goes on to compare it to the days of Noah. Everything will seem normal. People will be going about their lives as usual. Then the unthinkable will happen. In Noah's day the flood came and everyone except Noah and his family drowned. In the Rapture everything will also seem normal. People will be going about their normal lives. Then the Rapture will take place and untold numbers of people will suddenly disappear as they rise to meet Jesus in the air and go with Him to heaven. When will that happen? Jesus repeats Himself in v.44, *“...the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*

The short answer is that we don't know when Jesus will return in the Rapture. The message of Matthew 24 is to spend the time we have preparing for His return. It's interesting to look at current events and to compare them to the signs of the end of the age. It gives us hope to see these things taking place all around us. Hope for the Rapture helps us to understand and endure current events. But we always need to see these things in their biblical context. Wars and famines and earthquakes and martyrdom and apostasy and lawlessness and even pandemics are the birth pangs. They signify the start of the end. When does Jesus say the Rapture will come? When everything is normal, and people aren't worried about all of these other things. The Rapture comes when people's lives are not disrupted. They are eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage. They are looking to the future and planning for the future. They aren't preparing for the end because the end is the furthest thing from their minds. All of the other signs will be there, but it won't matter because those things won't affect their lives.

Jesus' message for us is to endure and to prepare and to always be ready for that wonderful moment when He will appear in the clouds to take us home. Oh, and don't forget the importance of spreading the message of the Gospel so that others will also be prepared. The time is short. Who do you know that needs to know Jesus so they too can be prepared for the end of the age when it comes?

Blessings,
Pastor Randy

COMMITTEE REPORTS

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES

- We have completed replacing the defective Ballcocks in the toilets. The old Ballcocks were leaking a lot of water.
- We are working on replacing the church sign north of the parking lot. The brick will need to be fixed once we replace the sign on both sides of the sign frame.
- We have planted grass over by the receiving well to reduce erosion.
- We have been working to get live streaming up and going.
- We have begun placing fly strips in the windows to kill the 100s of flies that are gathering in the windows
- For next year we need to replace the external water Faucets
- Next year if we can raise the funds we would like to replace the windows in the church. The thought is to see if families would like to purchase a window. All windows would be the same.

SPIRITUAL VISION TEAM REPORT

09/08/2020 Spiritual Vision team Meeting 7:00 PM

Open with prayer. Pastor Randy

Devotion Scriptures: These are from recent devotions I have had. They point to what is most desirable before the Lord and

teaching our children. All vital for us today.

Proverbs 22:1 (NIV2011)

1 A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.

Proverbs 22:4 (NIV2011)

4 Humility is the fear of the LORD; its wages are riches and honor and life.

Proverbs 22:6 (NIV2011)

6 Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

2 Corinthians 8:13-15 (NIV2011)

13 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. 14 At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality, 15 as it is written: "The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little."

Business Items old

Youth ministry ideas. We had a good discussion regarding the importance of children being involved in Sunday School at 2, 3, 4, and 5 years old as well as middle and high school. We do not know exactly how to get restarted on all of this. We want to follow the Lord's leading on this.

One plan would be to have Youth groups after Awana with one meeting in the Fellowship hall and the other in the sanctuary and have games planned outside weather permitting.

Business Items new

Lynx to the Arts Advertisement. We decided to recommend to the Leadership team that the church continue to support the Arts in the school by purchasing a 1/8 page ad for \$65.00.

Jeff Hastings, possible to speak September 20th. We recommend

inviting Jeff Hastings, one of our missionaries to speak September 20th, when he is available and plans to be in this area.

Other: Continue to pray for many dealing with cancer and other illnesses and that we follow Christ as we start more of our ministries and witness in our community. Gene closed with prayer.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR OCTOBER AND BEYOND

EVENTS CALENDAR 2020:

Sunday's

9:30 a.m., Worship Service

Re-Start Date TBD - Fellowship

10:45 a.m., Sunday School for the Whole Family

Wednesday's

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., AWANA Clubs (Meet in Person)

7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., 6th-8th Grade Youth Group

7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., 9th-12th Grade Youth Group

Thursday's

2 p.m., Prayer & Women's Bible Study at BVBC

Women's Evening Bible Study held at various homes

Saturday's

October 3, 8 a.m., Men's Bible Study on ZOOM

October 17, 8 a.m., Men's Bible Study on ZOOM

REMINDER:

Newsletter Articles are Due Sunday, October 18th

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

TIM & TONYA VENNELL



Since 1998, Tim and Tonya Vennell have served as missionaries with MAF in many locations. As a pilot/mechanic family, the Vennells ministered in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Kingdom of Lesotho in Southern Africa until August 2008. They found their time in Lesotho very rewarding, as they saw firsthand a fast-growing program, saving lives through the medical work that MAF flights supported. Another highlight for Tim was seeing the VSAT technology installed at the clinics MAF serves. Tim worked closely with the Lesotho government for over two years, to see that goal realized.

The Vennells relocated to Nairobi, Kenya, so Tim could fulfill the role of Operations Director for MAF International beginning in 2010. He was pleased to be able to use his newly-completed master's degree in strategic leadership in a very practical way. During that time, Tim became familiar with many of the challenges our programs faced around the world. His vast experience in this arena prepared

him for what God had planned next.

As Tim and Tonya ended their time of service in Kenya and South Sudan, there were many places around the world that sounded inviting. Africa had been a huge part of their lives for more than 12 years, but the work of MAF was vital to so many livelihoods, and there was even potential for new fields of service. Little did they know that the Lord had been preparing them for a great work at MAF headquarters in Nampa, Idaho, in support of worldwide operations. While this need came as a surprise to them, it has become clear that Tonya's life verse, Proverbs 3:5, 6, has become a reality... "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

Tim has been asked by MAF leadership to assume the lead in the process of MAF changing to a part 135 aviation operation. He is currently the only one with the background and qualifications to fill this vital role. With increased government regulation around the world, it is becoming more and more difficult to bring the Gospel to the isolated peoples of the world. Adapting to ever-changing country operation regulations is essential to keep MAF's mission moving forward.

A NOTE FROM TIM:

"It appears that I may be moving more into a consulting position not only with MAF but with the greater mission aviation community because of the regulatory nature of the aviation industry. Many of the smaller missions are having to consider closing their mission because they do not have the capacity to handle the many requirements that are being placed on them. MAF has had to work through many of these challenges and I have had the privilege to help lead them through some of these difficult transitions. Through partnerships with other missions we are seeing the value to help each other work through these times and know that partnership in the Kingdom is much like

our relationship with Brandon Valley. We are better together as we seek to make a difference and to reach the isolated people of this earth.”

Psalm 118:24 spurs the Vennells on in their faithful service to the Lord. “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

MISSIONARY UPDATES

AMANDA BENSON - PHILIPPINES



September 2, 2020

A DAY IN MY (CURRENT) LIFE...

Here is what every day looks like for me:

Ok. Well, it doesn't look exactly like that, but it sure feels like that right now! Online teaching has me hanging on, a bit overwhelmed with all the details, things to think through, and the distance. Here's what a day in my life looks like:

I wake up around 12:30 pm. Yes. In the afternoon. I eat breakfast, spend time with God, then workout.

Starting around 4:00, I spend a couple hours working here in my “office,” which is in my parents’ basement guest room.

My parents and I eat supper (though it’s really my lunch) somewhere around 6:00, and if I can, I try to take a short amount of time after supper to play piano or play a game with my parents.

Usually by 7:30 I’m back on my computer for Staff Devotions, and from then on out, I’m working! So what does that look like? I answer LOTS of emails. I try to plan for the upcoming days, which means studying the lesson, figuring out how to change it for online learning, creating documents (and making them all accessible to students), scheduling assignments in Google Classroom, and making videos). Much time is spent in meetings, planning with other teachers. I also spend time checking work and giving feedback to my students.

Somewhere around midnight, I’ll make my supper. So far, I’ve been having “working suppers,” so I just bring my food downstairs and eat while I continue working, though I’m hoping that can change soon and supper can be a short break time.

Finally, around 3:30 or 4:00 am, I decide I need to quit and go to bed. I shut everything down and go to bed, usually shutting my light off between 4:00 and 4:30. I fall asleep almost as soon as my head hits the pillow, and then I wake up and do it all over again the next day!

If it sounds crazy to you, that’s because it is! Teaching is always busy, but there are so many new things about teaching this year that have made it different and more time-consuming. Plus, being in a different time zone than a majority of the students and staff and kind of living in that time zone causes my brain to not be clear as to what day it is!

But, after a week and a half of school, it seems like I’m starting to

get into a bit more of a routine. I'm not feeling quite so overwhelmed. I started this week slightly ahead of where I was last week. I'm starting to get to know the kids a bit (though it really is so much harder online than in person). And, I'm growing.

This year's school theme is "Minds Made New," focusing on Romans 12:2. In our All Staff Retreat, we were challenged to think of one area where we wanted God to transform our lives and what it would look like if He did. I chose "self-reliance" and know that if He transforms my mind, it would mean I will have "dependence." I have this on a post-it note on my wall, reminding me every day to ask God to help me to not rely on myself, but to depend on Him for everything. He has been reminding me that He is my anchor and my rock in the midst of the chaos. I keep thinking of when Peter walked on water. When his eyes were fixed on Jesus, the storm was still there, but he could overcome. As soon as he took his eyes off of Jesus and started fixating on the storm, he began to sink. My life is the same right now. I need to constantly, moment-by-moment, choose to fix my eyes on Jesus, or the situation around me can become overwhelming. He will carry me through. He may or may not calm the storm, but He will be with me every step of the way.

This isn't the journey I expected to be on right now, but it is definitely the one God had planned out for me before the creation of the world. I am looking forward to seeing how He will use this time to glorify His Name and make me more like Him. Thank you for your continued prayers, support, and encouragement during this time.

Amanda

Praises

- Praise that I am able to teach at Faith Academy, even from a distance! So far the technology has been working pretty well, and I'm enjoying getting to know the students and new staff.
- Praise that I have survived the first two weeks of school and am

starting to get into a routine.

- Praise that I have continued peace about being here, even though there are moments when I wish I could be back and we could have face-to-face school.

Prayer Requests

- Pray that the Philippine government would open up the borders soon so we can get back to the country, and that we would be able to have face-to-face school next semester.

- I was asked a few months ago to write an article for a women's journal. I've been doing research for a while, but with getting ready for school, I haven't had much time lately to work on it. I need to have it done by the end of the month. Please pray that I would have a good amount of quality time to spend on it, and that I would write the words that God wants me to say.

- Pray that I would continuously rely on the Lord's strength as I navigate online learning in another country. Pray I would find times to rest from work as well.

PowerUp! Prayer Update: 9/23/20

Praises

- This week has been a much better week as far as managing school! I'm hoping to get to enjoy some family time this weekend!

- We are almost done with the first quarter of school! That's crazy to me!

Prayer Requests

- The car I have been borrowing is not safe to drive anymore. Pray that God would provide a different vehicle for me to use until I leave for the Philippines.

- Pray for a strong finish to this quarter, both for staff and students.

The quarter ends October 9.

- Pray for wisdom in dealing with students who are struggling, as I

am doing more work with student welfare this year.

Ongoing Prayer Requests

- That God would give me wisdom as I teach school online.
- That God will allow me to return to the Philippines at just the right time, and I will be patient as I wait.
- That God will continue to draw me closer to Him and use me to further His kingdom.

DARWIN & KAREN STOESZ - JAPAN



September 5, 2020

Stoesz Ministry Update

On a hot day Darwin biked to visit the 4th floor apartment of his Japanese teacher, Tsuneizumi-san. He had recently gotten an air conditioner and he wanted Darwin to see it as he went a long time without one. Darwin purchased ice cream on the way there to give him something as it is customary to bring a present. They had a nice

conversation about many things and he also said how he is trying to get to church when he can. It now takes him over an hour to walk to church. He has shared that a barrier to believing in Jesus is that he feels that God cannot forgive all that he has done.

Pray: That Tsuneizumi San would realize that God can forgive him, and that God's grace is enough.

The business department of SEND International Japan continues to stay busy. Naito-san is the bookkeeper and he is doing a good job at keeping the bills paid and on time. There are always reimbursements that need to be paid and reports that need to be made. Darwin spends a lot of time responding to emails. Darwin recently organized a very much neglected shop area that had not been cleaned in years.

Pray: One missionary family that is making an application for a place to live. They would like to move this month.

Praise: An apartment was closed and cleaned out as the missionary prepares to go back to Canada for home service.

Praise: Two vehicles have been purchased by missionaries recently. One of the cars required a parking space to be rented prior to having permission to purchase the car.

Praise: A church that SEND has been involved with for many years got their own status with the government and no longer needs to be under the name of SEND International. Several missionaries just returned from home service and a single lady is preparing to go home for home service.

Pray: Missionaries who desire to arrive in the country would get permission from the Japanese government to do so.

Pray: Japan government leaders need wisdom to know when to open their borders as Japan relies heavily on tourism to help their economy.

Pray: Elections will take place for a new Japanese Prime Minister. The current Prime Minister Abe announced that he is stepping down

due to poor health.

Pray: A powerful typhoon is heading towards Southern Japan this weekend. Pray for those who will be affected by this storm. The typhoon should not be close to where we live.

Family Update

The girls are back to school at Christian Academy in Japan. Anna is in her senior year and Clara is in the 7th grade. The first two weeks they only went half days. Starting on Monday they will go to school all day.

Pray: Protection for the students and staff at CAJ in this new socially distant environment.

Pray: Wisdom for Anna as she prayerfully makes plans for returning to the USA next summer to continue her education.

Prayer / Schedule Update

Our tentative schedule so far is as follows. Of course, all dates are subject to change. Please pray for us especially for these events:

Sep 7 Karen facilitates a CAJ 7th grade parents prayer time

Sep 9 Leadership meeting for Darwin in the office

Sep 10 Darwin hosting an online lunch meeting

Sep 14 Karen has a CAJ board meeting

Sep 15 Darwin has an online meeting with SEND treasurers

Sep 15 Karen has an online meeting as her role as Area Women's

Representative (AWR)

Sep 16 Leadership meeting for Darwin in the office

Sep 17 Karen attends a Personnel Member Care meeting

Sept 23 Leadership meeting for Darwin in the office

Sep 25 Darwin will give a business report to SEND Japan leadership

Oct 9-13 Family trip to Karuizawa to celebrate Karen's birthday

Oct 23 Darwin will give a business report to SEND Japan leadership

Please pray:

Pray for Japan as the numbers in Tokyo continue to rise with

COVID-19

Pray that Darwin's teachers Mr. Tsuneizumi and Mr. Kazama would put their faith in Christ.

Pray for wisdom for decisions that need to be made in the SEND Japan office and at Christian Academy in Japan.

Pray for Anna and Clara that they would have continued growing relationships with Jesus.

Thank you for your continued partnership in our ministry.

Thank you so much for your prayers, financial support, and encouragement so that we can stay here in Japan.

Sincerely,

Darwin & Karen & Anna (17) & Clara (13) Stoesz

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How To Give to North American Baptist Missionaries:

Step 1: Go to the NAB's new missions webpage **nabonmission.org**.

Step 2: Click on the “**missionaries**” label.

Step 3: Click on the national missionary to whom you would like to designate your support.

Step 4: Click on the “**give to..**” button on the national workers page.

Step 5: Fill out the form. All gifts given through the NAB are tax deductible.

BRANDON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

PRESENTING A CHANGELESS CHRIST FOR A CHANGING WORLD