

Think It Over: This section is about turning what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your own next step. If you are leading a group through this guide, don't feel like you have to answer every question. Pick out those questions that will stir up conversation and action among your group.

- Which of these statements best describes your attitude related to prophecy, end times, and the second coming of Christ?
 - I don't know much about any of it but would like to learn more.
 - I'm very interested in it and have studied it a lot.
 - I'm not very interested in it.
 - I find it confusing.
 - I find it too theoretical and not practical enough.
 - What I know about it came from reading the *Left Behind* book series.
 - Other: _____
- If you could know certain things about your future (like when you're going to die, who you will marry, major illnesses you'll have, etc.) would you want to know that information? What would be some benefits and drawbacks from knowing that information?
- There are a number of future events that are clearly spelled out in Scripture even if we don't understand all the details about them. Read the following passages and identify the events yet to happen in each one: *Revelation 21:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Corinthians 5:10.*
- Does reading these passages bring you a sense of hope, a sense of fear, a desire to change, or something else? What do you look forward to the most from these passages?
- Over the last 2000 years, various people have unsuccessfully predicted that Christ's return would happen in their lifetime. How does 2 Peter 3:3-9 address the question of why it's taking so long for Christ to return? How could 2 Timothy 2:24-26 relate to the delay in Christ's return?
- What kind of lifestyle does 2 Peter 3:10-14 encourage us to live in light of Christ's return? Are there any motivations you see in this passage for living out this lifestyle? What could be some of the benefits to yourself and others for living this kind of life?

Next Steps: Is there any change you sense God is asking you to make in light of Christ's return? How does this week's Bottom Line speak personally to you?

Changing Your Mind: Choose one of the verses listed in the Message Guide and commit it to heart.



The Purpose of the Book of Revelation

¹This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must happen soon. And Christ sent his angel to show it to his servant John, ²who has told everything he saw. It is the truth that Jesus Christ told him; it is the message from God. ³Great blessings belong to the person who reads the words of this message from God and to those who hear this message and do what is written in it. There is not much time left. ⁴From John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is coming...

⁹I am John, your fellow believer. We are together in Jesus, and we share these things suffering, the kingdom, and patient endurance. I was on the island of Patmos because I was faithful to God's message and to the truth of Jesus. ¹⁰On the Lord's Day, the Spirit took control of me. I heard a loud voice behind me that sounded like a trumpet. ¹¹It said, "Write down in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea." *Revelation 1:1-5; 9-11 ERV*

➤ Hope for all Christ followers during the darkest of times

¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words. *1 Thessalonians 4:18 NIV (see also verses 13-17)*

➤ Help for Christ followers during the return of Jesus

¹⁹"I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am. *John 13:19 NIV*

²When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" ⁴Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

Matthew 11:2-5 NIV (see also Isaiah 35:5-6; 61:1)



If you missed a message, visit www.scc.website or request a CD at Guest Services.

Transformation instead of Information

(Not to satisfy our curiosity)

¹⁷so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name. ¹⁸This calls for wisdom. Let the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. That number is 666. Revelation 13:17–18 NIV (see also verses 11-16)

¹⁶Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. ¹⁷Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 MSG

Prophecy Takeaways

³⁹You are busy analyzing the Scriptures, frantically poring over them in hopes of gaining eternal life. Everything you read points to me, ⁴⁰yet you still refuse to come to me so I can give you the life you’re looking for—eternal life! John 5:39–40 TPT

➔ No one got it right the first time.

³¹...He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.” ³²But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it. Mark 9:31-32 NIV

➤ The last days began 2,000 years ago.

¹⁷In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Acts 2:17 NIV

¹⁸Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. 1 John 2:18 NIV

➤ God’s calendar doesn’t match ours and never has.

⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief... 2 Peter 3:8–10 NIV

Genesis 13:14-15 compared with Genesis 15:13-16

➤ Jesus actually meant “No one knows the day or hour.”

³⁶But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Matthew 24:36 NIV (see also verses 24:37-25:13)

➔ Avoid leaning on speculation.

²⁹GOD, our God, will take care of the hidden things but the revealed things are our business. It’s up to us and our children to attend to all the terms in this Revelation. Deuteronomy 29:29 MSG

➤ It can make Christ followers look irrational.

⁴...Those digressions only breed controversies and debates. They are devoid of power that builds up and strengthens the church in the faith of God. 1 Timothy 1:3–4 TPT

➤ It often produces more arrogance than godliness.

¹³...you will discover that your pompous pride and perverse speech are the very ways of wickedness that I hate! Proverbs 8:13 TPT

Bottom Line:

We tend to miss the obvious
when we focus on the obscure.

Resources for this message include material from Mecklenburg Community Church, & Saddleback Church.

To help you turn what God is saying to you into action steps, consider using the Think It Over section on the back.