

Chapter 16

Do You Know You Are to be a Witness?

“You are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me.” Isaiah 43:10

Hi, again. Come join me. I see you’ve brought your Bible. Good for you. I’ve got a cup of something warm to drink. You can have one, too, if you like. It’s over there on the counter. Then come, sit next to me.

I’ve been thinking about our last conversation. I asked you the question: “Do you know what a disciple actually does?” And I’ve been thinking about disciples, especially disciples in the Time of the End, because that’s where we are in our series of conversations. We’re now talking about what the Remnant—specifically the visible Remnant, the Seventh-day Adventist Church—does in the Time of the End.

Turn to Matthew 24:1, 2. “Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple build-

ings to Him. But He said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.’”

Here we see the disciples in their own Time of the End. They are thinking in terms of the popular beliefs of the day about the Messiah and the Temple and how the Messiah will drive out the Romans and re-establish His kingdom. Jesus is leading them up to one of His favorite study places on the Mount of Olives. As they see the magnificent buildings on the Temple Mount off to their left, they express their thoughts aloud about the Time of the End.

At Jesus’ response His disciples are shocked into silence. Jesus has just told them that the temple would be destroyed. How could such a thing

happen? When will it happen? What kind of cataclysmic event will it take to destroy the temple? An earthquake? A war and a siege? An internal political and religious betrayal? They are silent as they climb slowly up the mountainside, occasionally glancing furtively at the Temple and then at each other.

When they arrive at their favorite study spot where they can see out over the city, they sit quietly on the ground around Him, still a little abashed by their ignorance and false assumptions. But their curiosity overcomes their embarrassment, and they ask Him, “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (verse 3).

As you can see, Jesus has their attention focused, not on their presuppositions, but on what He has to tell them. I’m going to let you read what He says to them on your own. It’s there in Matthew 24:4–14. Go ahead, read it to yourself. And I’ll read it silently, too.

How much of what you’ve just read has already taken place? Jesus told them that all of these things would take place before He comes. From your perspective, from where you stand in the stream of time, how many of them have already happened?

One day as I turned into the driveway from retrieving my grandson Braeden from school, he and I saw little orange flags marching across our lawn. A surveyor’s tripod stood guard at one end of the line of little orange flags and at the other end was a large hole in the yard. I took Braeden to the tripod.

“Look down the line of flags, Braeden. How many of them do you see?”

“Five flags, Papa.”

“Let’s walk down the row of flags and see what we can find.”

We started walking. “Keep looking at the flags.” We continued following the flags. “Whoa, what is this? What did we find?”

“The water meter box, Papa.”

We had indeed come to the meter box in the ground, but the flags went on. We followed the line of flags until we came to the hole.

“What do you think is in the ground, Braeden? Look at the flags, how they march in a line right over the water meter box. What do you think is in the hole?”

He looked in the hole. “A pipe, Papa.”

“What do you think is in the pipe?”

“Water.”

*According to Matthew 24:14,
there is only one more
flag to go.*

Like Braeden and the orange flags, throughout our discussions you and I have been following our own set of flags. We know where we stand. Just as Jesus explained to the disciples, we can see the events behind us and we can see the events still to come. We know what’s in the pipe. We know where we are.

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, this overview of events behind us and before us, the events that you’ve just read in the Gospel of Matthew, collectively we call them the Great Controversy. We can see—by looking at all the flags that we have passed and the very few flags yet to come—that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is an end-time church. In fact, according to Matthew 24:14, there is only one more flag to go. All of the other events that Jesus described have already happened. Only verse 14 is yet to be fulfilled. I could show you the same thing in Revelation 12.