

Trends

"People who are skeptics of the Bible do not have a very high view of Scripture, believing it to be just another book of teachings written by men that contain stories and advice. More than three-quarters of skeptics (78%) are hostile toward the Bible and believe it 'was written to control or manipulate other people.'"

—via Barna Research

John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

John 8:32: "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

Sentence Sermons

"A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education."

—Theodore Roosevelt

Psalms 119:105: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Please consider donating funds to Zach & Taya Martin. Zach is a medical student and he and his wife Taya are planning to assist Ron Halbrook on one of his preaching trips to the Philippines. The Martins are worthy of our support. You can contact Zach at: zcmartin30@gmail.com.

Please pray for one another! "comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing." 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Please pray for the Duque family in the Philippines. Bro. & Sis. Duque were tragically killed in a highway crash (2/5/2018) on the way home from a gospel meeting.

Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets such a good example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).

Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

Words of Life is published by the Westside Church of Christ meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

Times of Service: Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

Editor: Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); craigthomas82000@gmail.com

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

Feb. 18,
2018

Vol. 10,
No. 7

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Could You Survive a Tsunami?

Craig Thomas

Do you remember the south Asia tsunami disaster of 2004? The loss of life was of staggering and monumental proportions. According to some estimates, the death toll was around 280,000 souls; some go as high as 350,000. Entire towns were literally washed from the face of the Earth. There was billions upon billions of dollars in property damage. Our hearts and prayers go out to those who lost loved ones and friends in this disaster unparalleled in modern times. However, this disaster provides us with an opportunity to reflect and prepare for what will be for most people the ultimate and final disaster: Judgment Day.

1) **The Time Is Unexpected.** When the tsunami hit most were not expecting it. In fact, everyone was engaged in ordinary daily activities. The same will be true of God's final judgment. Jesus tells us that Day will come as unexpectedly as the flood came in Noah's time when people were busying themselves with the routines of daily life (Matt. 24:36-44). Many religious teachers constantly engage in elaborate predictions of when that Day will come. But, their 'predictions' are false. For God's word says that "of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matt. 24:36). Make no mistake about it, "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night" (2 Pet. 3:10).

2) **The Devastation Will Be Total.** The destruction wrought December 26, 2004 was absolutely stunning, but it will pale in comparison to the devastation God will reek on Judgment Day. On that Day "the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10). It is difficult to comprehend, but on that Day even the very atoms (i.e., 'elements') composing the material universe will be "dissolved" (2 Pet. 3:11). In the blink of an eye the entire material universe will come to a cataclysmic end.

3) **Every Person Will Be Affected.** The tsunami disaster's effect was far ranging causing deaths in 11 countries. But on the day of judgment Jesus says, "All the nations will be gathered before Him" (Matt. 25:32). It is nearly impossible to imagine, but on that Day every person alive now and every person that ever

lived, will “*appear before the judgment seat of Christ*” (2 Cor. 5:10). Make no mistake about it, on that Day “*we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ*” (Rom 14:10). No one can hide (Rev. 20:11) and no one can miss or cancel this appointment! (Heb. 9:27) In view of this, are you carefully considering the type of life you’re leading?

4) **Only the Prepared Will Survive.** Precious few were prepared for the devastating tsunami and able to flee to higher ground. Contrary to popular denominational teaching, very few will escape eternal damnation. For Jesus said, “*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*” (Matt. 7:13-14) Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. No

“...the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up”

2 Peter 3:10

“...we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ...”

2 Corinthians 5:10

one will make it there by mistake or by chance. Have you learned anything from the tsunami disaster? Many scoff that Judgment Day will come (2 Pet. 3:1-7), but

that Day will most certainly come! There’s only one reason why it hasn’t come yet; God is “*longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*” (2 Pet. 3:9) Could you survive a tsunami?

Chariots of Fire

Craig Thomas

Read 2 Kings 6:8-18. In this passage Israel is in jeopardy of being vanquished by her powerful neighbor, Syria. Ben-hadad was the king of this wicked and potent foe of God’s people. But, all of Ben-hadad’s strategies failed because the Holy Spirit revealed the king’s top-secret plans to the prophet Elisha. So Ben-hadad sent a large force to kill the prophet. Facing an inescapable plight, Elisha’s servant cried out, “*Alas, my master! What shall we do?*” Elisha answered, “*Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.*” Who was Elisha talking about? “*Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*” All the protection needed was there though beyond the reach and capabilities of the five human senses! Let’s consider three points.

1) **We’re Surrounded By The Enemy.** We live in sin-sick world filled with evil, problems, difficulties and death. “*Alas...what shall we do?*” There’s only one answer...Christ! Salvation is only in Him! (Acts 4:12)

We must do all God requires to “*put on Christ*” (Gal. 3:26-27), to “*take up*” our “*cross daily*” and follow Him (Lk. 9:23), to ever “*abide in*” Him (Jn. 15:1-8). We must “*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*” (Eph. 6:11-18). We must be ever obedient to Christ for He is “*the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him*” (Heb. 5:9). We must show our love to Him by keeping His commandments (Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 2:3-5) and laying “*aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us*” (Heb. 12:1-2).

2) **God Is Greater Than The Enemy.** Elisha’s servant was dismayed at the odds, because he didn’t include God! Even though the odds appear insurmountable we can overcome if we are in Christ, for “*He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*” (1 Jn. 4:4) Also, there is more to the material universe than what we see, touch, smell, or hear. Paul said Christians should, “*not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal*” (2 Cor. 4:18). We can’t always see God’s providential care with our physical senses, but we have His assurance it’s provided if we “*seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*” (Matt. 6:25-34). God will help us handle every situation if we walk by faith (Phil. 4:13). This doesn’t mean the absence of pain, suffering, or even death. But, if we keep the faith He assures us “*that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*” (2 Cor. 5:1; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,”

Hebrews 12:1

3) **God Will Deliver Us.** God delivered Elisha as he followed three steps we must imitate: A) **Prayer** (2 Kgs. 6:17). God hears our prayers only

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,”

Ephesians 3:20

if we do His will (1 Pet. 3:12). Remember, God “*is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think*” (Eph. 3:20). B) **Faith.** We can’t please God without

it! (Heb. 11:6) Our faith is an objective faith based on His revealed word (Rom. 10:17). By faith, like Stephen, we can envision God’s throne and appreciate the heavenly city where we’ll join the Lord one day, if through faithfulness, our name is “*written in the Lamb’s Book of Life*” (Acts 7:56; Rev. 21). C) **Obedience.** It is only by faithful obedience (Jas. 2:18-26) that we build our spiritual house on the rock (Matt. 7:24-27). For Jesus has become “*the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him*” (Heb. 5:9).