

Spirit of the Age

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 24.

B. The disciples question Jesus about the time of the Temple destruction and the sign of Jesus' coming and the end of the age.

II. The value of prophesy is that we might measure what is happening in our own day in light of what is coming.

III. Jesus told them the important things that the disciples needed to know.

A. Deceit would be characteristic of the time before His coming.

B. We live in this age, and there is a continual need for testing with regard to what we hear.

C. Jesus spoke to the disciples as representatives.

D. Jesus reminds us that the signs will happen in between His comings, but the end has not happened yet.

IV. Perils to faith.

A. The peril of the counterfeit.

1. This covers all the cults of history.

2. This covers anyone who claims to be Christ or offers the way aside from Jesus.

3. This covers those who leave out the atonement of Jesus and the basic problem of evil.

B. The peril of wars and rumors of wars.

1. This will be characteristic of the age.

2. These pressures should not drive men from faith in Christ.

C. The perils of famines, pestilences and earthquakes.

1. These have always been around.

2. These will simply challenge faith.

D. The peril of coercion and persecution.

E. The peril of conformity.

F. The peril of cynicism. This is a threat because of the spread of moral relativism.

G. The peril of callousness.

V. The believer must stand until the end.

A. The secret is dependence upon God through the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 25)

B. Those who stand will also speak—they will spread the gospel.

Application questions:

1. In what way does an awareness of the future have an impact on the present?

2. Which peril do you think is the greatest threat to faith today? Explain.

3. What is the key to standing in the midst of these perils? How can one increase his dependence upon this power?
