

*Alêtheia Christian Fellowship*  
*January 24, 2021*  
*“Fig Trees & Readiness”*

*Normal schedule: Sunday school at 8:30, Service at 9:15, Service at 10:45 with King’s Kids.*

**NEWS**

**Today’s Schedule**, 8:30 Sunday school, 9:15 Annual Meeting, 10:45 Combined Service

*Sanctity of Human Life Sunday*

Wednesday Night Activities at 6:30 PM

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

Visit the website ~ [www.myaletheia.com](http://www.myaletheia.com)

New Podcast Host: [myaletheia.podbean.com](http://myaletheia.podbean.com) Or go to Spotify, and type in [myaletheia](http://myaletheia)

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### **Annual Meeting:**

State of the church:

Building Fund & plans:

Two Services & comfort:

Americanism here:

Mandate & other stuff:

Elders, Deacons & Staff:

Giving & Budget:

### **MATTHEW 24:32-35 ~**

“Now,” δέ (dě), connects this passage to what came before. Then Jesus commands us to “Learn” from His “Fig tree” example.

*Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.*

*God Bless You!*

The entire point of His example is \_\_\_\_\_!  
And within it, two nuances \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_.

Verse 33 is the key. Jesus explained His example, allowing us to define “All these things” (also Matthew 24:8, 34). His Second Coming that ends the Tribulation and results in the Gathering of the Elect are part of “Summer.”

Jesus said that “All these things,” from verse 4 through verse 28, would happen before “This generation” γενεά (gě-něä), ends.

His final word on the matter in verse 35 is profound (Matthew 5:18).

**MATTHEW 24:36 ~**

Verse 36 is huge. It is a transitional thesis statement (yes, wow!). It pivots us to what comes next, by giving us the main point of the next 61 verses...

The eternal, uncreated pure being, without any beginning or any end, called the Word of God emptied Himself and took on humanity.

Unlike Him, we don't, nor can we ever know before it comes upon us like a “Thief in the night” (I Thessalonians 5:2). It doesn't stop people... Why?

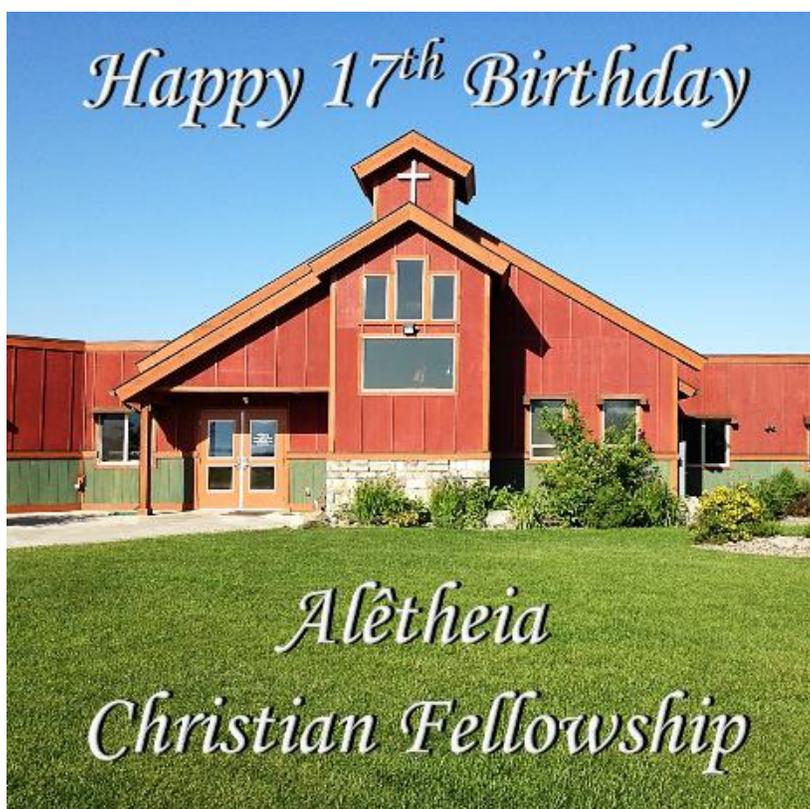
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Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon/Elder

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\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Alêtheia ~ Matthew 24-25a ~ 012421  
“Fig Trees & Readiness”

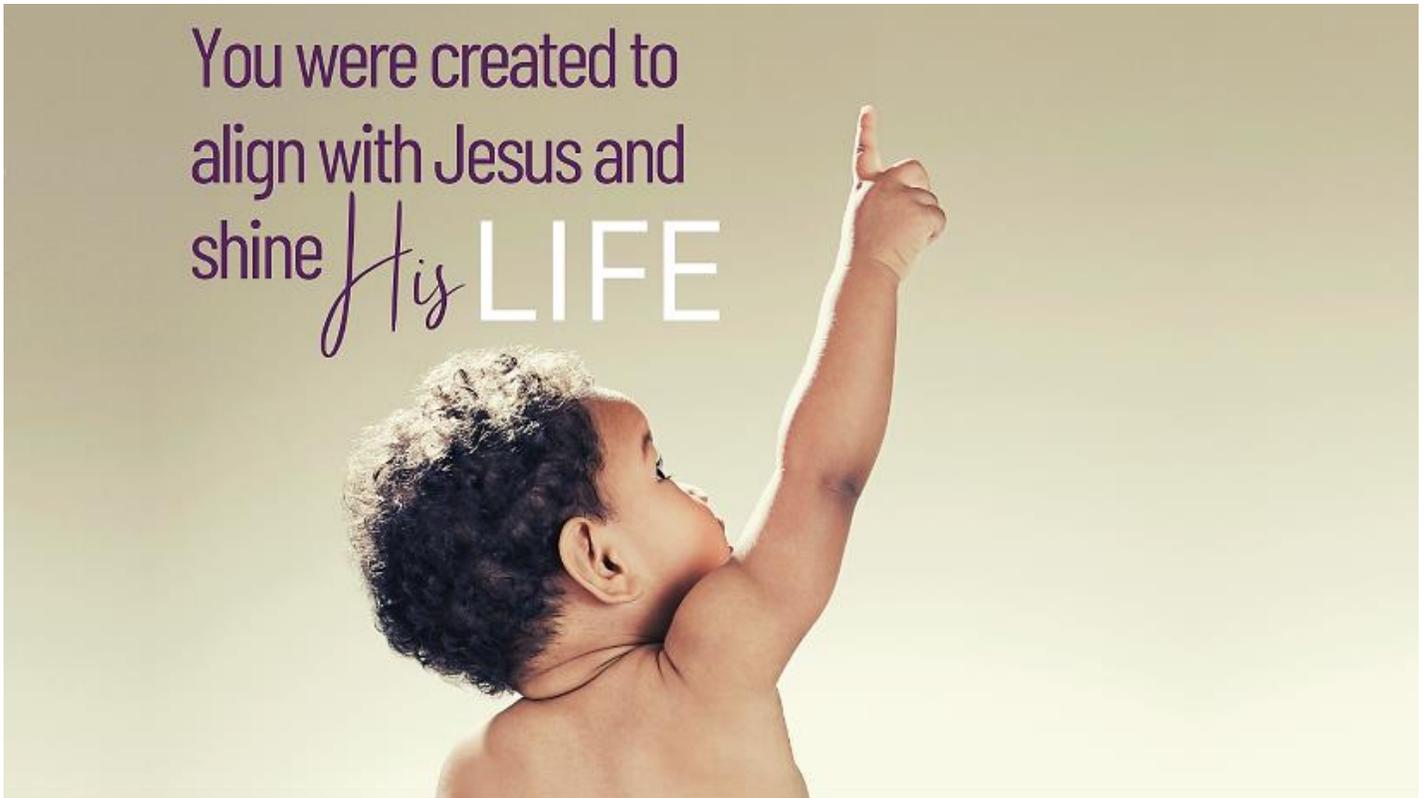


ALÊTHEIA  
FELLOWSHIP  
“TRUTH IN LOVE”



JANUARY 18,  
2004

Well, and they said it would never last. We just finished our 17th annual meeting. If you were there, thanks. If not, we sold the church and hired a new pastor.



Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. Enough said. Really, it is, because for the vast majority of you I'm just "Preaching to the choir." For the rest, what I say here, won't change your mind. Even so, I guess, it's not going to stop me from saying just a couple of things.

Just know that God is the author of life. When you dismiss God, you start thinking that life is just a material process that we humans have control over. No thoughtful Christian can think that. Jesus said, "I AM, I AM that which I AM, I exist as, the One and Only, vital, essential, life generating force."

There is no life at all, apart from His personal enablement of it. God Himself has declared that human life is sacred. That it is the pinnacle of His creative efforts. Every human life is a person, lovingly formed, in the Image of the Living God.

Only a complete moron, or a person with an evil and repugnant agenda, would ever try to claim that a fetus in a human womb is not alive, and, or, not human.

Now, because we are in the section of Matthew that we are in... Let me ask, after America has brutally ripped apart more than 60 million babies in the last 48 years, why would we think that God's Judgment won't fall on our nation? Why would we think that America deserves to be great? Why would we think that we'll all be Raptured out before anything bad happens? Just questions. Things to ponder.

On another note, we don't have an abortion problem, we have a rebellion problem. Nearly 100% of abortions are due to the fact that we refuse to control our sexual deviancy.

When typical men and women get together intimately there is a chance that another fully dependent human

being may result. Such a union should therefore only be undertaken by people fully committed to each other and parenting any child produced. Sexual relations outside of that are deviant. Abortion exists because we can't control our base nature and the reason, we can't do that is we refuse to submit to God's perfect plan.

On still another note, concerning abortion, we can choose to be a help and a blessing like Jesus would, or we can choose to be a hindrance and a curse like the Pharisees would. Please, choose to love people by being merciful to them, by extending real assistance to them in their need, and by presenting to them the Grace, the forgiveness, the restoration, found only in Jesus.

*Welcome Friends*

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
**MATTHEW**

A CLASH OF KINGDOMS

*Alêtheia Christian Fellowship*

Matthew 24:32-35 ~ <sup>32</sup>“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; <sup>33</sup>so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. <sup>34</sup>“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. <sup>35</sup>“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

Matthew 24:32-35 ~ <sup>32</sup>“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender

and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; 33so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. 34“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 35“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

“Now,” is that same connecting word δέ (dě), that we talked about last week. Remember at the beginning of verse 29, where it was translated as “But”? As there, here, Jesus has also connected these words to what He said before. This is an expansion, a clarification, an explanation, and an exhortation regarding what He has said thus far.

The next word in English is “Learn.” It is a command. Jesus commands His listeners, His disciples, us, to “Learn.” Jesus is telling you and me today to carefully consider what He’s saying through His example of the “Fig tree.”



Please recognize that it is merely an example to get us to focus on one point. We do a great disservice to Him, the Bible, and to ourselves, when we make it more than that. This is not about Israel, or the “Branch grafted in.” The entire point of His example is that anyone can easily know for sure that summer is just around the corner when they see the “Fig tree” growing again. For me, it would be the larch. I know as soon as I see tender little needles growing on the larch trees that winter’s grip is over and summer is imminent and inevitable.

That is the only point, but within it, the two important nuances I just mentioned. Based upon the new growth

on the “Fig tree,” summer is approaching quickly, and so, it is a certainty that it will arrive...

That example is of course related to His Return, the Second Coming, the Parousia of Jesus. Carefully examine what’s happening here. To summarize verse 32, we are to connect it to what came before, we are commanded to focus and think, we are given an example that indicates an imminent certainty.

The question is what specifically will definitely happen and soon? What was Jesus talking about before? The last bit was the end of the Tribulation, His Second Coming and the gathering of all Christians to Himself in the sky. Does it refer to all of that, or only some? Could it refer further back to the destruction of the Temple and the Great Tribulation? I’ve mentioned before that connecting words like “Therefore,” “And,” or “Now” and others connect the new content with what happened previously, but it isn’t always obvious just what bit - how far back.

Matthew 24:32-35 ~ <sup>32</sup>“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; <sup>33</sup>so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. <sup>34</sup>“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. <sup>35</sup>“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

Here we are in luck, or we could say that here, Jesus wants us to know specifically. Verse 33 is the key, because in that verse, Jesus explains His “Fig tree” example, which assures us about the context. What is it that will come with both speed and certainty?

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For that we need to define “All these things” in verse 33 as well as it’s duplicate in verse 34. Where have we heard it before? Ah, verse 8, “But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.” The Second Coming of Jesus and therefore the end of the “Tribulation” and the subsequent gathering of all Christians to Himself in the sky, cannot be a part of “All these things.” That event... His Second Coming that ends the Tribulation and results in the Rapture are part of “Summer.”

That’s what the “Fig tree” teaches us, that we are in the throes of winter, but soon and very soon; certainly, and very certainly, “Summer.” Specifically, it is His Second

Coming and all that it entails. It is the end of suffering, the end of evil, the beginning of fully experiencing His victory over “Sin, death and hades.”

Matthew 24:32-35 ~ <sup>32</sup>“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; <sup>33</sup>so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. <sup>34</sup>“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. <sup>35</sup>“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. IT

You might say, well, Scott that was obvious because verse 33 plainly says that “He is near, right at the door.” Yes, unless you read the note in the margin, or are using a King James, or NIV Bible, among others.

Then you’ll see that it is possible for the verse to read, “That IT is near, right at the door” (emphasis mine). Either translation is legitimate. Once we’ve done our careful investigation about the scope of the phrase “All these things,” then we can rest assured that “He” is

better for a translation. It helps people connect it to the Return, but technically, the truest translation would actually be “It,” not in the sense that it is everything Jesus spoke about, but in the sense that it is more than Jesus’ Return - “It,” is all that His Return implies for His friends.

“It” is all the trouble, pain, suffering... All of the “Great Tribulation” His friends have endured will be over, and the flipside of perfect love and community with Him forever will begin... That’s the “It.” If we translate that way though, people will assume that “It,” refers to the whole sweep of everything as many mistakenly do as it is... See, the translators are trying to help.

Just as a sidenote, there are more reasons that I know this is the best way to take these verses. There are the parallel accounts in Mark and Luke and the word “Door,” which is actually plural and so most naturally refers to a city gate. That meaning then plays into the word παρουσία (pä-řü-sē-ä), for His Return. It gets technical, so either just trust me, or come to Sunday school and ask me to explain.

As a further sidenote, I keep saying that all Christians are gathered together with Jesus in the sky when He

Returns AFTER the Great Tribulation. That implies all Christians dead and alive, past, and present, caught up to Him then. I say “All,” because that’s what “From the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other,” back in verse 31 means.

Now, if you’re wiggled out by that as a good Dispensational Premillennialist Pretribber, it is theoretically possible that those Raptured before are re-raptured again, with everyone else. If you must hold onto your opinion, I’m not saying that it’s impossible - I’m just pointing out that it is not the natural way to take Jesus’ words on the matter.

Bottom line, what do verses 32&33 mean for us? Be ready because this life of difficult testing will be over in a flash... Be ready... That outcome is near, and “It,” is certain, because He is near... Jesus is just outside the gates... He will throw them wide open at any moment and when He does... By implication and by all that we will see in the next several passages... Once He does it will be too late to change your allegiance... At that point, your status is final... The only thing to come after that is a joining to Him for all those who were ready and Judgment with its inevitable eternal condemnation upon those who were unready.

Matthew 24:32-35 ~ <sup>32</sup>“Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; <sup>33</sup>so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. <sup>34</sup>“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. <sup>35</sup>“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

Now, with that established we can avoid the problem most people have with verse 34. So many make a tragic mistake when they take Jesus' words, "All these things," and relate them to the totality of what He had been talking about, which is the whole kettle of fish from "See to it that no one misleads you," to "They will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other." When understood that way, then either Jesus was wrong, or we have to get creative with what "This generation" means to protect Jesus from error. Because clearly, the Tribulation didn't end, He didn't Return and the Rapture didn't happen before those people, 2,000 years ago, died.

We don't have that problem because we have already correctly defined the phrase "All these things," to mean everything short of the end of the "Tribulation" at His Return and our joining Him.

So then, Jesus said that "All these things," from verse 4 through verse 28, would happen before "This generation" ends. What is a generation? Well, the Greek word directly gives us our English word. It is γενεά (gě-něä), it comes from the verb, γίνομαι (gĩ-nõ-mī), meaning to become, as in, begin to be, to come into existence, basically, to be born.

The noun used here, means a lifespan, as in, a generation, which basically means a span of time. So, it is really a measure of time. An additional meaning developed that had to do with the sameness of the generation born, as in a particular race, creed, color, geographical location, or geopolitical affinity.

Misunderstanding these verses, has led many to opt for the much less likely definition of the Jewish race, or even the race of mankind, in order, as I said, to protect Jesus from error.

In context the word most assuredly means “Generation,” as in that generation and so an amount of time. How much? Not an exact amount technically, but it was generally figured at 40 years. The people Jesus was originally spoke these words to were between 20 and 50 years old... That’s the generation. Older than 50 and you were really of the preceding generation and younger than 20 you were part of the next generation. How long would the current generation last? Roughly 40 years. Some would die sooner and some later, but on average that generation would last about 40 more years. Jesus spoke the words in about 30 A.D. and 40 years later the city, the Temple the Jewish nation and Biblical Judaism was finished.

What happens from 70 A.D. until Jesus Returns is a space of time that is not specifically addressed here, unless we take it as a constantly repeating Truth. It all happened to the generation then, it has happened to every generation since, and will continue right up until Jesus suddenly Returns.

There is no way that Jesus has mentioned either a Pretribulation Rapture, or a physical Millennial Reign on earth so far, so far.

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His final word on the matter is more profound than you may realize. “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” This phrasing might seem familiar to you. You might remember back in Matthew 5:18, Jesus said “For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.” What he was saying in our passage today is just as certain as God’s Holy Word is True, so is My personal Word.

Think about that claim.

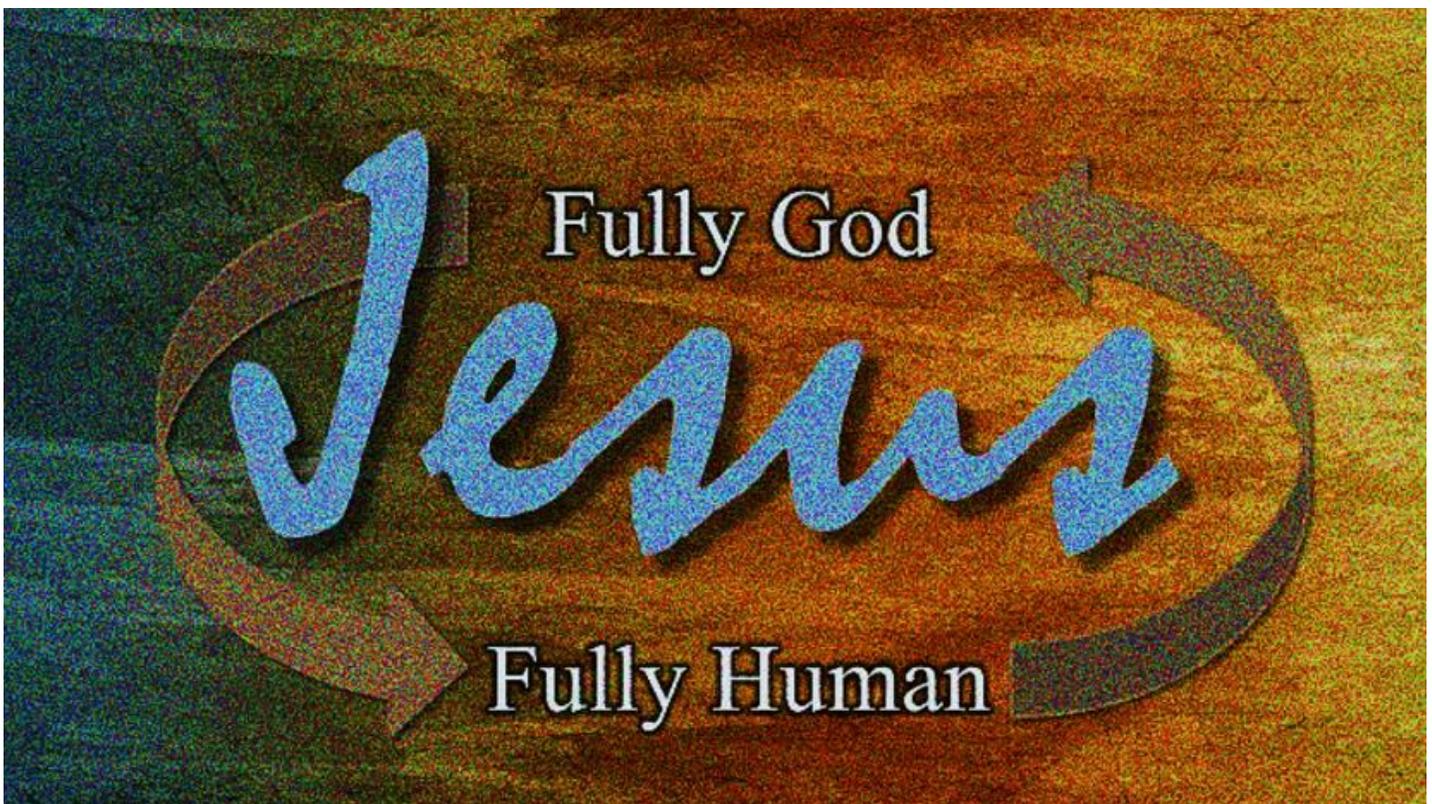


Matthew 24:36 ~ 36“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

Verse 36 is huge. It is a transitional thesis statement. It again connects with the word  $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$  (dě), again translated as “But.” It then pivots us to what comes next by giving us the main point that Jesus wants us to get out of the next 61 verses... The remainder of this chapter and the entire 25th chapter. If you get the point you can skip to chapter 26... Except for the fact that God wants to beat it into our heads over and over... It must be important.

Whatever we discuss through to the end of chapter 25, keep coming back to Jesus' point in all of it... "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

That "Day and hour" is again His Return that ends the "Great Tribulation" and gathers all His people. Adding the hour adds to the imminence, or suddenness of His Return, not just any day, but any hour.



Historically, Christians have had an incredibly difficult time reconciling the fact that Jesus Himself said that He didn't know. It is a fundamental failure to recognize the nature of Jesus.

He was both the Son of God and the Son of Man. Technically, He was fully God and fully human... Both, at the same time.

The eternal, uncreated pure being, without any beginning or any end, called the Word of God emptied Himself and took on humanity. It wasn't like putting on an earth suit that merely covered Who He is, it was a true condescension, technically speaking. He left His Holy estate and became a fetus in a human womb. Incidentally, at that moment He was both alive and human.

If you know anything about God, you know that He is Omnipresent, meaning everywhere at the same time. He is Omnipotent, meaning that He has all the power. He is Omniscient, meaning that He knows everything.

The Word gave up His omnipresence and He gave up His omnipotence to be one of us. We generally have no problem at all recognizing that Jesus, between His conception and His death was not present everywhere at the same time, and likewise was not all powerful... Why would we think that He was all knowing? He put aside His full divinity.

To finish that thought... He earned it back by living a completely sinless human life as only God made man could. Then, instead of claiming what was His, He further condescended to allow the Father to place all the sin of the world upon Him. "He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21). On One Who had not sinned, my sin, and your sin, became His sin - just as though He had done it all instead of you and me and He paid the ultimate sacrifice as a result. He was brutally separated from right relationship with Himself in a sense. Estranged from the perfect union He had enjoyed for all eternity, because of Love for us. Not to mention the physical insult, the vicious and horrific treatment of His human person. It was an attempt to make full restitution for human sin... But did it work? The most important date on the calendar of the Early Church was Easter, because they knew what many modern-day Christians seem to have forgotten. The bodily resurrection of Jesus to live and never taste death again is the proof that it worked. That as Jesus Himself said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). As God said through the Apostle Peter, we are "Born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter

1:3b). How to be “Born again”? It is only by putting all of your eggs in the Jesus basket. Allow His completed work to be sufficient for you... Trust in Him fully - it is the only way.

So, no human, no angel, certainly no other creature including the Devil knows when, because that information wasn't even shared with Jesus during His sojourn on this planet. Please recognize that His sojourn is over... The Word of God knows everything... Which includes everything the Father knows. It isn't like Jesus is sitting at the Right Hand now wondering when... He knows.

Unlike Him, we don't, nor can we ever know before it comes upon us like a “Thief in the night” (I Thessalonians 5:2). It doesn't stop people... They twist the Scripture, they reinterpret, they quibble...

Jesus didn't say that no one knows, but you'll get extra brownie points if you're the one who can figure it out... It's really an insult to Jesus and the Bible to try. I'm not saying that it's blasphemy to wonder about it a bit, but to say, this is the event or that is the person, is pure human arrogant folly.

At the end of the day, the reason God wants to pound into our heads that we cannot know the day or hour, the year or the month, is because we need to always be ready and that means always trusting in Him and His timing. It's about resting in Him no matter what things look like.

