

NLC 2022 Summit - Birth Pains

Matthew 24:3-14 (NLT2) ³ Later, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. His disciples came to him privately and said, “Tell us, when will all this happen? What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?” ⁴ Jesus told them, “Don’t let anyone mislead you, ⁵ for many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah.’ They will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don’t panic. (It is not a time to panic, or to fear, in times of crisis we must choose faith over fear)Yes, these things must take place, but the end won’t follow immediately. ⁷ Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. ⁸ But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.

I want to share 3 insights regarding the future of the church:

1. Chaos and crisis will give birth to OPPORTUNITIES.

Luke 21:10-15 (NLT2) Then he added, “Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and there will be famines and plagues in many lands, and there will be terrifying things and great miraculous signs from heaven. ¹² “But before all this occurs, there will be a time of great persecution. You will be dragged into synagogues and prisons, and you will stand trial before kings and governors because you are my followers. ¹³ But this will be your opportunity to tell them about me.

Ephesians 5:15-16 (NLT2) So be careful how you live. Don’t live like fools, but like those who are wise. ¹⁶ Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.

2. Ministry shall move from the church to the MARKETPLACE; From Sunday to EVERYDAY

Acts 2: 43-46 Everyone was filled with AWE, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had “NEED”. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.

3. We will see greater UNITY in the midst of hostility

John 17:21-23 (NLT2) I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. ²² “I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. ²³ I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.

Jesus gave us 3 things we should do in light of the times we are living in:

1. The need to be WATCHFUL.

Matthew 24:42(NIV) "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

Romans 13:11 (NIV) And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

2. The need to be READY.

Matthew 24:44(NIV) So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him..

Matthew 25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. ² And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish..

3. Lastly, The need to be FAITHFUL.

Matthew 24:45 "Who then is the FAITHFUL and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

Luke 16: 10(NKJV) He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. ¹¹ If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true [riches]? ¹² And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?