



Magnolia Bible Church Men's Group (5-week Series)

Perspectives of God | Educating our Minds | Warnings for Life

Lesson #1: Biblical overview and understanding the Prophetical Timeline

Series taught by Chris Alexander | February 8, 2024

Series Overview

Life today is changing at a breakneck pace. Never before have we seen so many different technologies and the impact they're having on how we think, act, and make decisions. In our hands and pockets, we have devices that literally allow us to track family members, see and talk to anyone in the world at any time, and obtain information in seconds on every subject imaginable. Even though we have access to practically unlimited information and knowledge, never has Biblical illiteracy been so high. The average American can't recount Bible stories like Creation, The Fall, Noah, and the Tower of Babel that were practically known to every school child in the 1950s. We all realize this is part of Satan's overall plan to move the hearts of men away from the mind of God. Satan has distracted Believers, especially men, to stop being the leaders God we've been called to be at home, in our neighborhoods, the office, and church.

The 5-week **Life in the Pew** series is sure to change your perspectives on the world around us and challenge us to study with greater intensity Biblical prophecy and truths, using the lens of Scripture to view current events and technologies in a new way. The goal of this series is to help us better understand God's plan for our lives and the urgency for sharing the Gospel of Jesus with a nation and world that desperately needs Him.

Series Schedule

Provided below is the schedule for the 5-week **Life in the Pew** series.

- **Lesson #1 on February 8: Biblical overview and understanding the Prophetical Timeline**
- Lesson #2 on February 15: Satanic activity and his impact on directing the nations
- Lesson #3 on February 22: Exploring world history considering the Biblical ancient empires
- Lesson #4 on February 29: Technology advancement in preparation for the rise of the Antichrist
- Lesson #5 on March 7: Living with new perspectives built on the power of God

Lesson #1 Overview

One of the most important aspects about God is His creation of time. Although He created it, unlike us, God is not bound by time. Ironically, the concept of time and God's Creation of time is very rarely discussed in the church today. I've never heard a sermon preached on God's creation of time or read a book on it, yet I would argue it is one of the most important subjects that faces mankind, especially those of us called to do God's work (Ephesians 2:10).

The reason the concept of God's timeline is important for us in this series can be addressed by developing answers to the following five questions.

- Question #1: Why did God create time?
- Question #2: What does the Bible say about God's timeline?
- Question #3: Why is God's timeline important for understanding His work in human history?
- Question #4: What is God's timeline?
- Question #5: Where are we currently in God's timeline?

Probably the most profound question in the above list is, "**Why did God create time?**" We don't have time to discuss this topic to the degree we should in this series, but we'll leave this as an *exercise for the student*. I would encourage you to think deeply on this subject, study God's Word, and pray about what insights God would have you develop. In this series we're going to discuss each of the above questions, but the most important question for us to address in this series is **Question #5: Where are we living today in God's timeline?**



Provided below are some initial thoughts on each question we'll discuss during the lecture and Small Group time.

- **Question #1: Why did God create time?** The simple answer is God created time as part of Creation. In Genesis 1 we see recorded that on the first day God created day and night (Genesis 1:3-5), which is effectively time. On the same day that He created light, although it preceded the creation of the sun, moon, and stars on Day 4 (Genesis 1:14-19). I would argue one reason God created time is it allowed Him power to control His creation and a means to which it would be subjected. As an example, the end of life "protects" Believers from continual decay and living in a world of sin. It also allowed God to have a special relationship with those to whom He granted insights into his timeline. Examples from the Bible include Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Ezra, Nehemiah, the major and minor prophets (with Daniel being the greatest of these in terms of understanding the times, Daniel 9:23), John the Baptizer, John the Apostle, and Paul. Even today I believe the Holy Spirit gives us insights into the timing of God's events.
- **Question #2: What does the Bible say about God's timeline?** The Bible has a great deal to say about God's timeline; however, listed below are a few we will use to construct the timeline itself:
 - Creation and the Fall (Genesis 1 through 3)
 - The nation of Israel
 - Daniel, especially Daniels 70 Weeks in Daniel 9
 - The Gospels: the timing of the Messiah's birth as presented in Matthew and Luke
 - Paul's writings concerning End Times, specifically 1st and 2nd Thessalonians
 - Revelation: John's apocalyptic account of things yet to come
- **Question #3: Why is understanding God's Timeline important?** This is a loaded question and one whose answer has a profound impact on our lives. The answer also highlights a harsh reality associated with the ignorance of mankind regarding God's Sovereignty and control over time (I see much of the concerns over CO₂ and reducing greenhouse gases reflected in this argument). Let's be candidly honest with each other, even as followers of Jesus we do not live as if we are bound by time. We do not live like a people who believe Jesus can return at any moment or have an urgency to share the Gospel, recognizing most of the people on this planet are destined to Hell. Think about what you just read for a moment as it's a brutal reality. Men and women who understand and appreciate God's timeline and Jesus's imminent return fill their days with focus and intentional activities that bring glory to God.
- **Questions #4 and #5: What is God's Timeline and where are we currently?** We are going to combine these two questions because the answers are intertwined. Only after we construct God's timeline can we determine where we are on it. The goal of this lesson is for you to be able to draw the timeline yourself for two reasons. First, to build confidence in your knowledge of God's Word and His timing related to past and future events. Secondly, so you're able to teach others about the Bible. We need more Bible teachers!!! Interestingly, when Andy Donlon asked me to teach this series, he asked me to focus on discussions related to the Biblical timeline, something I was very excited to do.

Questions for Discussion

Refer to the Old and New Testament timelines on Page 3 that will serve as the basis for our discussion.

1. Read Genesis 1 and 2. Can you identify what happened on God's Six Days of Creation? We'll discuss a neat technique I learned / developed when I started teaching 1st graders here at MBC. I still use it today! We'll practice drawing the Six Days of Creation in the Small Group discussion time.
2. For those of you who grew up going to church, what were you taught about end times?
3. How do Jesus' words in John 9:4 inspire you to do more with the time you have been given?
As long as it is day, we must do the works of Him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.
4. Do you feel a sense of urgency to do certain things? Please share them with your group.
5. Using a blank piece of paper draw a timeline from Creation to Eternity. Don't get fixated on dates but think in terms of the "sequence of events." From the Old Testament table on Page 3, focus on the **BOLD** entries.



Old Testament Timeline

(Creation to the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.)

Provided below is the framework for a basic timeline. I would be very careful arguing about exact dates, but the basic idea is to get an idea when certain events happened relative to other events. The focus here is to think about God's Timeline and how He has worked to orchestrate certain events in the life of His people. As noted below the table, the source of these dates are based on the Jewish calendar.

Time Period (B.C.)	People, Places, and Events
3,760	Adam & Eve created (Year 1 of Jewish calendar)
2704	Noah born
2150	The Flood
1813	Abraham born (dies 1638)
1713	Isaac born (dies 1533)
1677	Isaac prepared as sacrifice; Sarah dies
1653	Jacob born
1562	Joseph born (1546: sold into slavery dies 1452)
1393	Moses born (1314: sees the burning bush 1300-1200 Mosaic period)
1280	Exodus from Egypt, Sinai Torah, Canaan Entry
ca. 1030-1010	Saul (transitional king)
ca. 1010-970	David, conquers the Jebusites and makes Jerusalem his capital
ca. 970-931	Solomon, builds the First Temple on Mount Moriah
ca. 931	Secession of Northern Kingdom (Israel) from Southern Kingdom (Judah)
722/721	Northern Kingdom (Israel) destroyed by Assyrians; 10 tribes exiled
701	Assyrian ruler Sennacherib besieges Jerusalem
587/586	Southern Kingdom (Judah) and First Temple destroyed-Babylonian exile
541	First Jews return from Babylon in small numbers to rebuild the city and its walls. Seventy years of exile terminated. (Daniel 9, Haggai 2:18-19)
539	Persian ruler Cyrus the Great conquers Babylonian Empire
538	Edict of Cyrus (first return from Exile)
520-515	Jerusalem ("Second") Temple rebuilt
333/331	Alexander the Great conquers the Land of Israel
63	Rome (Pompey) annexes the land of Israel
5	Birth of Jesus
66-73 (A.D.)	First Jewish Revolt against Rome
70 A.D.	Destruction of Jerusalem and the second Temple

Extracted from the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. (<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>)

New Testament Timeline

Provided in the figure below is the framework for a basic New Testament timeline. It reflects a pre-tribulation / pre-millennial return of Christ that is consistent with the teachings of Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) and many of today's Bible teachers knowledgeable of End Times events.

