

What's Next . . . Locusts?

By Taryn R. Hutchison

Hurricanes. Earthquakes. Floods. Wildfires. In the last month, our country has experienced each of these natural disasters. We've also remembered 9-11, the most horrific manmade disaster ever to hit our soil.

Across the globe, there are wars, rumors of wars, tsunamis, famine, poverty, and moral decay. As a friend of mine said, "What's next . . . locusts?"

Could these be the birth pangs that Jesus predicted as signs that the end is near? Did the figurative water break in 1948 when Israel arose from the ashes of the Holocaust to become a nation again? If so, the labor pains have intensified and sped up ever since.

The original disciples were convinced Jesus would return in their lifetime. They ordered their lives according to that hope.

But it didn't happen. It's been 2,000 years and it still hasn't happened. Perhaps it will be another 2,000 years.

No one knows when. Not even Jesus Himself. He said, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone." (Matthew 24:36).

I don't have a clue when Jesus will come back; I'm just convinced that He will someday.

And I also know that each day, we are one day closer.

The imminent return of Christ should bring joy, if we have given our lives to Christ by faith. Joy because we will be with the Lover of our Souls forever. Joy because He has prepared a place for us where there is no more sadness. Joy because He will set everything right.

Heaven's reality should also elicit a sense of fervency to bring as many people with us as possible. Our lives have eternal purpose and meaning that transcends what we can see and touch here on earth.

The Bible tells us every nation, tribe, tongue, and people will be represented in heaven. Not that long ago, that dream seemed elusive. But our world has shrunk in this global age.

Amazing strides have occurred in our lifetime towards the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Courageous missionaries are living in every pocket of the globe, many in places I can't mention due to security risks.

The "Jesus" film has been dubbed into more than 1,000 languages. People in remote areas, even ones who can't read, have been introduced to the Person of Jesus Christ through that film.

And yet we can't rest on the laurels of overseas missionary work that others are doing. We need to own that sense of fervency personally. We need to let it hone our priorities here, in Burke County, in the communities in which we live.

Every century in America, history has recorded periods in which morality declined and Christ-followers believed the end was near. That belief prompted them not to fear, but to pray.

Those fervent prayer sessions became the catalyst for sweeping revivals which turned their world upside down.

Revival means more than summertime tent meetings filled with people who don't know Christ yet. The point isn't about those who don't have life being changed.

We as Christ-followers need to change first. Revival means to return to life. We need to be brought back to life and joy, purpose and fervency.

The result? As we draw closer to the heart of God, that authentic relationship spills over. People are attracted to the One who has made the difference in our lives.

Christians long ago closed their letters with the words, “Should the Lord tarry.” Should the Lord delay His return, I want to live my life as a fragrant aroma of Him to those who are perishing. Will you join me?