

You are not to know when this is going to come. He does not say it is not going to come. He didn't say they had the wrong idea of what was going to come. He said you have not the right to know the time. Because the Father is keeping this in His own power. But, he said, you are to be my witnesses. He did not say you are to establish his kingdom. He didn't say you are to be my instruments to bring the whole world-- for bringing the whole world into subjection to the law of God. He did not say the fact that there will come in three centuries to be people in all parts of the Roman empire, a minority-- but a very strong minority who will recognize Christ and try in their hearts to make Him supreme. He didn't say that at all.

He said you are not to know the times or the seasons which the Father has set in His own power. Certainly the implied answer is that He is going to set up the promised kingdom. That this world would not be brought into being by the Lord simply to experience wars and rumours of wars, persecution, suffering, wickedness, and then to be destroyed. But that this world is to have a new period of Edenic conditions. A period which can properly be called the kingdom of God. And we are not to know when it is to be but we can know that God's promises are going to be fulfilled. We are not to know the time but we can be sure of the fact.

He stressed that our duty is to witness to Christ during this period. Some of us find positions where we can witness for Christ and we can be supported for doing it. We are what is sometimes called in full time Christian service because other Christians give the money to support us. But this is a distinction that is not made in the Bible. In the Bible the duty of all Christians is to witness to Christ.

I know people who have graduated from seminary, who have studied the Scripture and have thoroughly gotten a good understanding of the great Christian truths and then graduated and nobody calls them to a church so they go into carpenter work, or something else, or some other activity. Whatever they do, their primary purpose--whether it be that which gives them their livelihood or not--is to witness to Christ.

You shall be my witnesses, he said. You don't know when I'm coming back but you're to be my witnesses here and in the neighboring areas and to the ends of the earth. That is our duty. Whether He gives us the particular gifts or whether we devote ourselves to getting the particular training instead of simply taking courses and getting credit in them, but to training ourselves in the particular ways that we may be deficient before others who feel they should support us for so called full time Christian service. In either case our duty as Christians is to be His witnesses, witnesses to His salvation, witnesses to His truth, witnesses to the results of our careful study of His Word.

As we noticed there is no promise here that our witnessing will bring the promised kingdom. Some have the privilege of witnesses for Christ and thousands come to know Him. Others speak for years and witness constantly and never have the privilege of