

Title: ECOLOGICAL OR THEOLOGICAL NIGHTMARE? 2 PETER 3:10-13.
(Chatham, NJ; 03/09/08, AM) [S-P, Inductive]

Theme: Of all the doomsday scenarios only the one that warns us of the coming judgment of God is the one we should be concerned about.

Purpose: To expose the foolishness of worrying about ecological or mythological doomsday disasters and to help us stay focused on being ready for the Day of God's Judgment.

Introduction:

1. It might be interesting to see if before the time of Christ there had been any myths about a final consummation of humanity and the end of the world.
2. Jesus himself warns us of an end time vision of judgment, John 5:28-29.
3. Hebrews 9:27 assumes the same scenario: man dies then faces God in judgment.
4. The Second Coming of Christ was on the minds of the first century church as attested by discussion about it in 1 & 2 Thessalonians and 2 Peter.
5. With the first coming of Christ we have been living in the last days since the time of Christ, Hebrews 1:2, a point often ignored by the evangelical "Left Behind" theology.
6. Today we don't lack other stories of a disastrous end-time scenario.
7. Which ones are worth our hand-wringing and ardent preparation?

I. Do the facts support these doomsday scenarios?

- A. In 1798 Thomas Malthus predicted the starvation of large numbers of people within a few years of his prediction because he believed population would outstrip the resources of the earth to feed them.
 1. In the late 1960s someone predicted a similar starvation doomsday by the end of the 70s.
 2. Needless to say that didn't happen either.
- B. Global warming alarmism is finally being forced to hear the voices of legitimate skeptics.
 1. A group of 400 scientists have called it into question. You can find their comments on a senate report from December 2007 online.
 2. A group of 100 scientists recently sent an open letter to the secretary general of the UN. Read some comments.
 3. A gathering this week in New York brought together a large number of warming skeptics, and contrary to one politician's comment that you can put all the global warming skeptics into a phone booth, there were quite a few of them who expressed reservations about the man-made warming alarmism.
 4. The assertion that global warming is entirely man-made and threatens the planet unless we enact regulations is not demonstrable scientifically.
- C. How about the recent prediction about how the world will end?
 1. Read portions of "The Sun Will Vaporize the Earth."
 2. We only have about a billion years left.
 3. These scientists believe that we can develop the technology to prevent it.
 4. They believe we can develop the technology.
- D. Terminator movies, rise of the machines, Sarah Connor Chronicles.
 1. The mythology of the machines
 2. It includes the notion that we will destroy ourselves.

3. But, of course, there is always hope in a few people who know the truth and by means of time travel can stop it.
- E. Several of these are based in secular mythology and faith of some sort—usually faith in humanity or some heroes of humanity who save us from ourselves.
1. First and foremost they aren't true.
 2. Second, they rely on man-made salvations.
 3. Third, they distract us from the one thing that we should be most afraid of: the Day of Judgment when we'll all have to give account of our actions to God.

II. The Theological Prediction to Be Afraid Of.

- A. John 5:28-29.
- We have already mentioned this.
 - One of the dominant messages of the Bible has always been to get ready to stand face to face with God.
 - Christ assured his disciples that there would be a day when God would set things in order.
 - We have been given the time and means to get right with God.
 - Unfortunately to many people that sounds like a distant echo of someone's imagination.
- B. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.
- The coming of Christ includes all who have already died.
 - It includes a trumpet call and Christ's appearance.
 - The faithful in Christ will be caught up to meet him.
 - Two angels in Acts 1:10-11 assure the disciples that he will return.
- C. 2 Peter 3
- a. Peter uses the standard image of a "thief in the night," (10).
 - b. The picture that he paints is clearly one of utter destruction of this world.
 - c. In warning us to be ready notice his further description in verse 12.
 - d. We hope for a new heaven and new earth, 13.

Conclusion:

- The assurance that this is true is nothing less than the Resurrection, Acts 17:30-31.
- If that isn't true then all else falls apart.
- But we are those who believe, and we seek to convince others of its truth.
- The Last Day scenario—a day of judgment when we will have to stand before God and answer for our behavior—is the one we should fear.
- It is the one scenario we can be sure of and it is the one scenario that will determine our eternity.
- Do not fear the apocalypses imagined by worldly mythologies.
- Fear God only and be ready for the most important day of your existence.