

Rick Warren: Prophecy is None of our Business?

By Warren B. Smith

Excerpted from *A Wonderful Deception*, pp. 96-100

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.
—Revelation 1:3

Prophecy ye not, say they to them that prophesy.
—Micah 2:6

Rick Warren openly discourages readers of *The Purpose Driven Life* from studying prophecy. Taking unwarranted and unbiblical liberty in interpreting Acts 1:6-8, he states that Jesus told His disciples that the details of His return “are none of your business”—that they needed to focus on “fulfilling” their “mission” rather than “figuring out prophecy.” He writes:

*When the disciples wanted to talk about prophecy, Jesus quickly switched the conversation to evangelism. He wanted them to concentrate on their mission in the world. He said in essence, “**The details of my return are none of your business.** What is your business is the mission I’ve given you. Focus on that! . . .”*

*If you want Jesus to come back sooner, **focus on fulfilling your mission, not figuring out prophecy.**¹ (emphasis added)*

In 2006, four years after *The Purpose Driven Life* was published, emerging church figure Brian McLaren also used this same interpretation of Acts 1:6-8 to similarly discourage his readers from studying prophecy. Echoing Warren’s words, McLaren states the following:

*Instead, he [Jesus] tells them it’s **none of their business** to speculate about how God plans to work out history, and then he **gives them a mission to accomplish.**² (emphasis added)*

C. Peter Wagner, Rick Warren’s former doctoral “mentor” at Fuller Theological Seminary,³ explains that what Warren and Brian McLaren were saying is actually what Robert Schuller has been teaching for years. Wagner points out that Schuller is a “pioneer of focusing on the mission of the church” rather than prophecy (eschatology). Wagner writes:

*A pioneer of focusing on the **mission** of the church to the surrounding world is Robert H. Schuller, founder of the Crystal Cathedral of Garden Grove, California.⁴ (emphasis added)*

*Robert Schuller's advice to young church leaders would seem to apply to new apostolic Christians: "**Don't let eschatology stifle your long-term thinking.**"⁵ (emphasis added)*

In a curious play on the words "New Age" and "mission" Robert Schuller concludes his 1982 book *Self-Esteem: The New Reformation* by describing how he believes that the twenty-first century would be a "new Age of mission":

I believe that today we are witnessing the last days of the Reactionary Age in church history. And I'm further convinced that we are witnessing the birth of a new Age of Mission.⁶

But Rick Warren, Brian McLaren, and Robert Schuller are simply repeating what New Age matriarch Alice Bailey received from her spirit guide, Djwhal Khul, concerning the coming of a universal New Age "Christ." In Bailey's 1948 book *The Reappearance of the Christ*, in a chapter titled "Preparation for the Reappearance of the Christ," Bailey writes:

*If our work is rightly done, He will come at the set and appointed time. How, where or when He will come is **none of our concern**. Our work is to do our utmost and on as large a scale as possible to bring about right human relations, for His coming **depends upon our work.**⁷ (emphasis added)*

More than fifty years after Alice Bailey channeled these New Age teachings regarding the coming of the New Age "Christ," Rick Warren and Brian McLaren were saying almost the exact same thing. Bailey said the details of "Christ's" return were "none of our concern." Warren and McLaren said that the details of Christ's return were none of our "business." Alice Bailey said that "His coming depends upon our work," while Warren stated "If you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission." All three of them emphasized human endeavor to build the kingdom of God. And all three of them discouraged understanding the details of Christ's return. Yet on the Mount of Olives, the real Jesus Christ went to great lengths to describe the details of His return (Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21). He shared important details of His return with His disciples so they—and we—would not get deceived by a false Christ—like Alice Bailey's New Age Christ. He did not tell them that the details of His return were "none of their business." He said, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matthew 24:4). To make sure they would not be deceived by a false Christ, he went on to provide important details concerning His return. He warned them that "many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:11). He also warned:

Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it

not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. (Matthew 24:23-25).

By providing these and other details, Jesus was saying—in essence—don't be deceived by those who tell you that the details of my return are none of your business. On the contrary, Jesus told His disciples that the details of His return *are* of great importance and that prophecy *should* be properly understood (Matthew 24:15). Furthermore, in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 Jesus gives a much different picture of what the last days before His return will be like. The leaders I have discussed seem to suggest that if we fulfill our “mission” or “God’s Dream” we will create a world where peace prevails. They believe Christ will then return to a world ready to accept Him. But the real Jesus warns that false Christs will appear (leading eventually to the Antichrist)—and they will perform signs and wonders, promising peace and harmony.

My original concern about the New Age implications of Rick Warren’s discouragement to study prophecy was further heightened as similar statements by Brian McLaren, Robert Schuller, and New Age matriarch Alice Bailey came to light. Adding to this concern was the fact that emerging church leaders like McLaren, Tony Jones, and others were teaching that the prophecies and predictions in Matthew 24 and Revelation had already been fulfilled by 70 A.D. (preterism).⁸ This kind of false teaching is part of the very deception that Jesus was warning His disciples to beware of. This kind of false teaching makes the study of endtime events irrelevant and opens the door to a false New Age Christ and even further deception.

Endnotes:

1. Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, op. cit, pp. 285-286.
2. Brian D. McLaren, *The Secret Message of Jesus*, op. cit., p. 171.
3. Rick Warren’s doctoral thesis outline, op. cit.
4. C. Peter Wagner, *Churchquake*, op. cit., p. 177.
5. Ibid., pp. 70-71.
6. Robert H. Schuller, *Self-Esteem: The New Reformation*, op. cit., p. 174.
7. Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Company, 1948, Eleventh Printing, 1996), p. 188.
8. Brian McLaren’s Everything Must Change Tour, Goshen College May 9-10, 2008; Report by Jeffrey Whitaker, “How ‘Everything Must Change,’” <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2008/06/how-everything-must-change.html>; Tony Jones, *The New Christians: Dispatches From The Emergent Frontier* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2008), p. 98.

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Richard Duane Warren (born January 28, 1954) is an American Baptist evangelical Christian pastor and author. He is the founder and senior pastor of Saddleback Church, an evangelical megachurch affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention in Lake Forest, California, which is the sixth-largest megachurch in the United States (including multi-site churches). His books include his guide to church ministry and evangelism, *The Purpose Driven Church*, which has spawned a series of conferences on Christian Rick Warren openly discourages readers of *The Purpose Driven Life* from studying prophecy. Taking unwarranted and unbiblical liberty in interpreting Acts 1:6-8, he states that Jesus told His disciples that the details of His return "are none of your business" that they needed to focus on "fulfilling" their "mission" rather than "figuring out prophecy." He writes: "The details of my return are none of your business" Rick Warren. *Purpose Driven Business Salesman*. [bctt tweet="Rick Warren The Ecumenical Pope: Teaches Prophecy NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS? Jesus says different." username="Rick Warr... Rick Warren Quote - Character | ChristianQuotes.info. "Character is both developed and revealed by tests, and all of life is a test." -Rick Warren. Prayer Scriptures. Heartfelt Love And Life Quotes: We are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of it. ~ Rick Warren. We are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of it. Best Inspirational Quotes Great Quotes Quotes To Live By Happy Thoughts Positive Thoughts Positive Quotes Gratitude Quotes Positive Attitude Positive Affirmations. Happiness isn't about getting what you want all the time. Rick Warren is seen slyly referring to Pope Francis as "our pope", and then going on to brag about what a great job he is doing. He wants you to blithely assume that of course Pope Francis is the "spiritual head" over all of Christianity and not simply over the Roman Catholic corporation. He slips it in like that's what everyone already thinks and believes. This is nothing more than mental conditioning.