

The Later NT focuses on life in the Church “in these last days”

The Last Days stretch from Christ’s First Coming to His Second Coming

1. Jesus’ ministry inaugurated the Last Days
 - a. ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for **the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**” (Matthew 4:17)
 - b. ²⁸ “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then **the kingdom of God has come** upon you.” (Matthew 12: 28)
 - c. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but **in these last days** he has spoken to us by his Son. (Hebrews 1:1-2)
 - d. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made **manifest in the last times** for the sake of you ²¹ who through him are believers in God.. (1Peter 1:20-21)

2. Jesus’ death and Resurrection inaugurated His reign as the Messiah
 - a. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.** ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, **I am with you always, to the end of the age.**” (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - b. ¹ The Lord said to my Lord, “**Sit at my right hand** until I make your enemies your footstool.” (Psalm 110:1)

3. Jesus currently reigns by His Spirit through the Church
 - a. ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ “**And in the last days** it shall be, God declares, that **I will pour out my Spirit** on all flesh,...¹⁹And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire, and vapor of smoke; ²⁰the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood **before the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.** ²¹And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Acts 2:16-21)

“These Last Days” are marked by conflict with false teachers and the Devil

4. ⁴ Now the Spirit expressly says that **in later times some will depart from the faith** by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, ² through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, (1Timothy 4:1-2)

5. ³ But understand this, that **in the last days there will come times of difficulty.** ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. (2Timothy 3:1-5)

6. ¹⁷ But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ They said to you, “**In the last time there will be scoffers**, following their own ungodly passions.” ¹⁹ It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. ²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, **waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ** that leads to eternal life. (Jude 17-21)

7. ¹⁸ Children, **it is the last hour**, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, **so now many antichrists have come.** Therefore we know that **it is the last hour.** ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. ²⁰ But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. ²¹ I write to you, not because **you do not know the truth**, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? **This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.** (1John 2:18-22)

8. ⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, ⁷ casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. ⁸ **Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion**, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that **the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.** ¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, **will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.** (1Peter 5:6-10)

The Later NT emphasizes living well as the Church “in these last days”

9. ²² But **you have come to** Mount Zion and to **the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

10. ⁷ **The end of all things is at hand**; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. ⁸ Above all, **keep loving one another earnestly**, since love covers a multitude of sins. (1Peter 4:7)

11. ⁸ At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because **the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining**. ⁹ Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. ¹⁰ Whoever **loves his brother** abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling (1John 2:8-10)

12. ²⁶ I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. ²⁷ But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, **abide in him**. ²⁸ And now, little children, **abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming**. ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. (1John 2:26-29)