

What If December 21 Really Is the End of the World?

In a global event that eclipses the hype of Y2K, **doomsday preppers** all over the world are readying for the end of time. As born-again, blood-bought, Bible-believing, and, yes, tongue-talking Christians, we, of course, know better than to buy into the Mayan calendar hype.

But what if Dec. 21 really was the end of world? What if Jesus cracked the sky on Friday and we were caught up to meet Him as Scripture prophesies. That's not likely to happen, either. Even **doomsday prophet** Harold Camping finally admitted no one knows the day or the hour of the end of the age.

Still, it's times like these that I can't help but hear the lyrics to an . refrain dancing around in my mind. You may know the rapid-fire song I'm thinking about called, "It's the End of the World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)."

Apparently, . front man Michael Stipe knows enough about the Bible to wax somewhat **prophetic**—if not apocalyptic—with his lyrics that suggest, "That's great, it starts with an earthquake, birds and snakes, an aeroplane..."

Although the song is catchy—catchy enough to find its way into my stream of consciousness 25 years after it hit the radio airwaves—Stipe wasn't aiming to pull a Harold Camping and prophesy impending doom. Yet, as I look around at the world, political and economic landscapes—and social and cultural paradigms—are shifting before my very eyes (and rapidly).

Friday does not mark the end of the world, but we've definitely come face to face with the end of the world as we know it—and I don't feel fine. My daughter, who is 15, will probably be the last generation to remember the world as it is today.

I'm no doomsday prophet—in fact, I'm believing for the Third **Great Awakening**—but as we laugh and howl at all the mystics and New Agers who are awaiting the end of time on Friday, we should drop to our knees. Not because the world is ending and we have no hope. But because the world is not ending and our hope is in Christ.

Along with Stipe's poetic pop classic, there's another string of words running through my mind these days. Jesus said, "On this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (see Matt. 16:18). Oh, the gates of hell are trying and they are making a dent in the faith of weak believers who would rather find a way of escape than stand up and fight the good fight.

The gates of hell will not prevail, but that doesn't mean we should lay back on our spiritual gifts and play church. For multiplied thousands of people who die on Friday without meeting the leader of this church the gates of hell will not prevail against, Dec. 21 will mark the end of the world as they know it. And when they get where they are going, they will not feel fine. Neither should we.

So what if Friday did mark the end of the world? What would you be doing today? And what would the world look like if we spent as much time evangelizing the mystics, New Agers, and other lost souls who are buying into the ridiculous doomsday gimmicks? Well, we might get to the end of the world a little sooner. Amen.

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