

22T08d INFER? – Imminent Return

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table for INFER. I'm a scientist and engineer and in my profession, we use logical deductive reasoning. Another way to say it is, we infer things from other things. But it really is a guess, an educated guess but still just a guess. Believe it or not, many Christian doctrines use this same secular approach to interpret the Bible.

The question you need to ask is does it work? Well, that depends on what "it works" means. What is Right or Correct.

What do you know about the global warming theories and predictions? I'm sure you have heard this term. Now you hear the term Climate Change. Those who promote and believe this are always predicting an environmental apocalypse if we humans don't take drastic measures to save the planet. One of the more famous claim you never hear spoken about now was Al Gore, former vice-president, predicted in 2009 that the north pole would be ice free by the summer 2013. He even won a Nobel Prize. But it's 2022 and we still have ice at the North Pole. Over the past 50 years, Climate Change proponents have made more than 40 doomsday predictions. And they are a perfect on all these predictions. Or I should say, they have been perfectly wrong on every one of these predictions. They dumped the Global Warming for Climate Change because the Global warming did not work. Seas have not risen as predicted; Ice has not melted as predicted. And so on. This religion of Climate Change requires a lot of faith and selective interpretation of data.

Leap of faith #1: humans are the cause of global climate change. Of course, other scientists have told us about ice ages and extreme warm periods of the earth's history with no human intervention. Climate change is real, but it's also by design. It has happened in the past and will happen in the future. It is how are God designed things to work.

Leap of faith #2: the planet needs saving. You hear things like save mother earth, the dooms day clock is ticking. But they've been wrong so many times. It takes a lot of faith to keep believing this when every prediction has failed over and over again.

We can debate the data and predictions, but the fact are predictions of imminent doom have not been correct. As Christians, we make fun of this because we know that humans don't actually have control. But for the atheist scientist they need to make these gigantic leaps of faith to sell their religion.

So, what happens when Christians do this same thing in our philosophy or bible interpretation. The imminent coming doom approach.

How many of you believe in the imminent return of Jesus or the "any-moment" return of Jesus. I grew up believing this. Make sure you are right with God because if you have any unconfessed sin, you could be left behind. Ever hear that or something like it.

Now before we begin, I believe in the Imminent Return of Christ what I think we might disagree on is how do we define Imminent. The term Imminent or Imminence does not appear in the Bible. I searched KJV, NKJV, ESV, NIV, NLT, NASB with no occurrences. You can search Imminent Coming @ www.openbible.info. And you will get lots of verses. All of these verse have a sense of urgency, nearest but are they really about “any-moment-ness”. There is the parable of the ten bridesmaids in Matthew 25:1-13 and of course Jesus’ response to His disciple when they ask in Mark 13:32 (NKJV) *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”*

But if you look at Mark 13 closer, this concept of “any-moment-ness” does not seem to hold up. The disciples ask the question in verse 4, when will these things happen. They are actually asking three questions but they think it’s only one. When look at the parallel verses in Matthew 24, they ask when will the temple be destroyed, when is Jesus coming, and when is the end of the age. To then this was the same question, but to Jesus it was three. In Matthew 24:4-31 and Mark 13:5-27 and Luke 21:8-28, Jesus goes on to tell them signs and events that will occur before each of these events. Now scholars fight about the interpretation of these and their opinions are tilted base on their belief of end times. All I want to say about it is Jesus gives signs that will occur before His Imminent return. Not an “any-moment-ness” but a nearness. In Luke 21:28 (NKJV), Jesus ends this discussion with *“Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”*

Now this sounds “any-moment-ness” but only after those signs begin to happen.

In fact, we know of many things the scriptures said would happen but had not happened when Jesus spoke those words. Like,

- 1) The Great Commission
- 2) Peter’s death in old age (many years after)
- 3) Destruction of the temple (70AD)
- 4) Commission of Paul
- 5) And perhaps most of all, 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 contains Paul’s explicit teaching about the signs of the apostasy and the man of lawlessness must occur “first,” and it connects these events with a period just prior to Christ’s second coming.

Such teaching is inconsistent with “any-moment-ness” expectation of Christ’s return. Now of course many of these have come to pass, but it speaks the fact that this “any-moment-ness” was not intrinsic to the imminent return Jesus was speak of.

The language in the Bible which conveys urgency and imminence is used through out the Bible. It talks of the imminent return of Spring, the imminence of different Jewish Holy days, all of which everyone new clear when it would occur. Imminence or eagerness to see an event does not directly translate into we don’t know when it will happen or in the case of Christ 2nd coming this concept of “any-moment-ness”. No one

knows when except the Father, that is true. But it is also true we have been given markers and signs to guide our expectations.

Why is the “any-moment-ness” doctrine an issue. Well, it has cause Christian groups to withdraw from society and quit jobs because of this doctrine and belief of urgent imminence or “any-moment-ness”. In fact, the Bible gives us a case study in 2 Thessalonians. The people in Thessalonians believe this “any-moment-ness” so many people quit working and stopped their everyday lives. Then it led to fear and disbelief, when they began to believe Christ had already returned and they had missed. Paul, then gives them signs to watch for to reassure them Christ had not come again yet and would not come again until certain things took place. Please read 2 Thessalonians especially Chapter 2 & 3.

I’m not going to list the many leaps for faith necessary for us to believe this. In my case I believed it because that was what I was taught. And my point is not really about whether or not Imminent Return or this “any-moment-ness” concept is right or wrong. I’m actually indifferent because it does not matter. My point is does a doctrine like this help me to follow Jesus, help me to do the things Jesus has commanded me to do. Am I a better follower of Christ with this doctrine? The answer is No. This doctrine like all man-made doctrines, may be true but if they don’t help me be a better follower of Jesus, then why. Why are we so focused on these side issues, instead of where our focus should be? On Jesus.

Let’s Pray. Father God, thank you for your word the Bible, Thank you for the holy spirit to guide us, so we don’t need to guess. Help us to listen to you and allow you to give us the wisdom we lack such that we can have understanding. Give us the strength and will to evaluate what people say to determine if it is from you Lord or just from men. And Lord I pray if I said anything wrong today the listener would remember only what you wanted them to hear. I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen

Again, I can’t say if this concept of “any-moment-ness” is true or not. I can’t say if any of these viewpoints are valid or not. I’m not God. But you have to ask, does this doctrine encourage you to follow Jesus or not. If it doesn’t then, why do we teach it. If it does not make us better Christians, better followers of Jesus, then what’s the point. Should we Infer ourselves to a place that makes us be in constant fear or complacent, or should we spend our life following Jesus. Looking forward to His return. I’ll leave that answer up to you.

Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table our series INFER? See you next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God Bless.

[Christ Will Not Return at Any Moment \(thegospelcoalition.org\)](http://thegospelcoalition.org)

[What Does the Bible Say About Imminent Coming? \(openbible.info\)](http://openbible.info)

[Can the return of Christ truly be said to be imminent? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)