

Introduction:

1. It happens in every NFL game. It happens twice. The two-minute warning is part of football culture.
 - a. Its original purpose dates back to when the official game time was kept by a member of the officiating crew, with the stadium clock being unofficial. Its purpose was a checkpoint to ensure that the teams knew how much time remained in the half. In the late 1960s the NFL stadium clock became the official clock, but by then television was an important factor in the NFL. Thus, the two-minute warning was retained as time for a commercial break and to serve as a tension-builder, and so it has become an important part of every game.
 - b. My son and I used to play a football simulation game on the computer. When the two-minute warning came, he would say, "Dad, I'm warning you. Time is running out. You're gonna lose!"
2. Let's move beyond football. Looking at real life, we ask the question, "Is time running out for planet earth and mankind?" Are we working with a clock that's nearing the two minute countdown? Some say yes; some say no. What does the Bible say?

The Lesson:**I. Is God sending signs to warn the human race?**

- A. We know that for more than 100 years religious teachers have predicted that the end of the world is near. We may be aware of some of those. But, once we look at history, we will see predictions of the end that began almost from the beginning of the New Testament period.
 1. As early as 50 AD, before all the books of the Bible were written, there was talk that Christ had already returned and that folks had somehow missed it! See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2.
 2. Before 130 AD, a rabbi named Jose the Galilean predicted the Messiah's return within three generations (60 years) after Jerusalem was destroyed.
 3. In 381 AD, according to a fourth century writer named Tichonus, Jesus was to return.
 4. 400 AD was a date set by Hippolytus. In 234, he calculated approximately 5,600 years from Adam to Christ; he said that the earth had 6,000 years total. Leaving only about 400.
 5. 470 AD. A third century rabbi (Hanina) suggested 400 years after the temple was burned.
 6. 500 AD. Numerous writers picked this date, based on the 6,000 year earth theory.
 7. 1000 AD. A wide variety of theories point to the end of the millennium. No less than 60 separate writers set dates from 950 to 1033 AD. The main idea being that Christ would reign for 1000 years and that time was just about up. (So far, no date setter has it right.)
 8. 1533 AD. Michael Stiefel predicted the judgment would take place at 8 AM on October 19. Stiefel lived in the early part of the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation brought on hundreds of date-setters about Christ's coming and the end of the world. All failed.
 9. 1843, 1844. William Miller set a one year time table beginning March 21, 1843. When March 21, 1844 came he pushed the date to October 22, 1844. The modern Seventh-Day Adventists grew out of this movement.
 10. 1914. This date was set by Charles T. Russell (Jehovah's Witnesses). When the date came and went, the Witnesses claimed Jesus had made an invisible return and a new world order had begun. The witnesses also said the end of the world would happen in 1918, 1920, 1925, 1941, 1975, and 1994.
 11. So many dates were offered in the 20th century that they are literally impossible to catalogue. Such dates as 1948, 1981, 1988, 1989, 2000, 2001, and on and on.
 12. Among the latest: 2012. New Age writers cite the Mayan calendar which ends on December 21, 2012. Still others just say the end is coming "soon" without setting a date.
- B. It boggles the mind just to deal with all the numbers and theories that men have on the end.
 1. It isn't just the numbers. It is also the rise of Hitler's Nazism, Soviet-Russian Communism, and even radical Muslim Jihad that have all been treated as signs of the end.
 2. Even nature gets into the act. When the 1989 World Series was interrupted by an earthquake, some said it was a sign of the end and a divine warning to America. What do you think date-setters are saying about the earthquake in Haiti? "The clock is running out."
 3. Every time a war breaks out on the planet, someone will say, "It's another sign of the end."
- C. It is believed by many that God is sending signs to warn planet earth that the end is near.

II. There is no two minute warning—or any warning at all!

- A. If we understand the Bible, then these facts are abundantly clear:
1. The end of the world is coming, 2 Peter 3:10.
 2. The end of the world—the Judgment Day and all that is associated with it, vengeance on the wicked and a reward for the righteous, heaven and hell—coincides with the second coming of Jesus, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10. All of these things take place when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven.
 3. The time of the end is completely unknown, Matthew 24:3, 36. Someone may ask, “What about all the signs Jesus gave, like in Matthew 24:6-7? All of those signs are related to the destruction of Jerusalem (see Matthew 24:1-3).
 4. The end of the world will come suddenly and without warning. There is no warning at all—not of two minutes, two days or even two years, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3.
- B. In football, the two-minute warning is given as a checkpoint to make sure the teams know how much time remains. If they are going to win the game, they need to make the right plays right now, because time is almost out. In light of the fact that God gives no two-minute warning of the end, how should we be preparing ourselves?
- C. We don’t know when the end is, but if the end was coming right away and men knew that to be so, what kind of answers might men make? Here are some responses men might make.
1. One man said, “Well, then God will just have to judge me as I am.” The Bible talks about that man in Revelation 22:11.
 2. An atheist said, “I don’t believe there is a God, so it doesn’t apply to me.” Oh? See Psalms 14:1. The fact that someone says there is no God, doesn’t change anything. God is!
 3. One lady said, “I guess I’m about as ready as the average person.” That’s not so good, Romans 3:23; 6:23.
 4. Years ago, a co-worker said to me, “God wouldn’t be much of a God if He didn’t give us a second chance.” No second chance salvation will be offered, 2 Corinthians 5:10.
 5. Another co-worker said, “I’ll just wind up with all my friends in hell.” He said that somewhat as a joke, but it is no laughing matter, Matthew 25:41.

Conclusion:

1. Can I give you a two-minute warning?
 - a. What if I could tell you—and be certain—that the coming of the Lord will be two minutes from right now?
 - b. Are you right with God? Would you be willing to meet God just as you are? Your whole world as you know it is about to end forever. All the stuff that you have been interested in and has taken up so much of your life—whether good or bad—will come to an end in just two minutes.
 - c. Are you ready just as you are? Your DVR that is recording the Super Bowl as we speak will be burned up in two minutes from right now. You will never know who won the Super Bowl. Was it the Saints or the Colts? You will never know because the second half was never played. The game was called—it was ended by God without a two minute warning!
2. If the end were to come in two minutes from right now, I am persuaded that so many of you would enter into a paradise that is more beautiful and wonderful than the grandest thing on earth. It is pleasure forevermore in the very presence of the awesome God!
3. By contrast, if the world were to end in just two minutes from right now, there is a fate that is awaiting millions that is too terrible to contemplate. I will not even discuss that in this lesson.
4. Someone may say, “What if the Lord doesn’t come back and bring this world to an end in the next two minutes?”
 - a. It doesn’t change anything. We still need to be ready, don’t we? We are going to die aren’t we? (Hebrew 9:27)
 - b. Did you know that statistics show that the world death rate is holding steady at 100%? According to the World Health Organization, sooner or later, everybody dies (54,000,000 each year). That comes out to about 100 every minute of every day. In the next two minutes, more than 200 people will die. How many of those will die without warning?
5. The message of the scriptures is “Be ready.” The song we will now sing will be just about two minutes long. Do you need to change your life today?