



THE GOSPEL of

MARK

Signs of the End

Last Week of Jesus Public Ministry

- Passover celebration
- Jesus heralded as Messiah – Son of God
- Exercised authority – direct conflict
- Greatest commandment – honest question
- Two pictures of hearts – scribes and pharisees vs widow
- Pay attention – words when time is short

“And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?” And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.

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Mark 13

But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

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Mark 13

Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that it may not happen in winter. For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days. And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

“But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”

1. What Jesus Told Them

a) amazing temple would be destroyed

- 172 ft long, 20 stories high, rebuilt by Herod, astounding
- 70 AD after siege by Titus – burned & pulled apart
- Discussion with Peter, James, John & Andrew – signs of end

b) imagery of contractions – birth pains

- three stages, sort of an increasing frequency & intensity
- would be something new and promised at the end

i) Distressing World Situations

Wars and rumors of war, nation vs nation, natural disasters, famine and suffering

Leaders claiming to be sent by God leading many astray

ii) Persecution and Hatred for Faith in God

On trial for belonging to God, beaten & accused, betrayed by one another and by family, hated for faith

Opportunity for witness – Holy Spirit provides words to declare
Gospel must be declared to all nations

iii) Emergence of antichrist, tribulation, return of Jesus in Power

Prophet Daniel, Rev. 13:5-8 – predict this world leader

Great tribulation & difficulty, fleeing for life, desperate times

So tragic – cut short so not all perish

Time of false prophets, signs and wonders all meant to deceive

c) Two Key Points

Imagery of the fig tree – obvious season changes

- generation – suggest race of people
- note – you can depend on word of God in all circumstances

No One Knows the Day or Hour

- will happen without warning
- will be signs the time is approaching
- important for you to live awake and aware

2. Why Did Jesus Tell Them These Things?

a) Be Aware – information you need, shapes your understanding

- not diverted – led astray
- not deceived – follow false leaders
- not dismayed – when world situations seem dire (alarmed)
- not disheartened – by the struggle of a broken world

b) Be Awake – there will be action you need to take

- vs.10 – gospel must be declared to all nations
- persecution & trial – opportunity for proclamation & witness
- so you are not anxious – understand & trust
- pray, be on guard, watch – head in the game

c) Be Assured – God is delivering on His Promise

- will be saved, reward for those who endure
- see Son of Man coming in power & glory (1 Thess. 4:11-18)
- God will gather the elect – his children, witness
- dealing with finality the problem of our enemy & sin

3. Life in Light of These Realities – a conversation with the Pastors

a) Types of Responses to this we have seen

hyper vigilant – obsessive

indifference – avoidance

fear & anxiety – bunker mentality

b) Tools to living in Assurance – among difficult realities

Greatest Commandment – keep this in view

Gaze of the Soul – faith as a practice

Hebrews 12:2a

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith.”

A.W. Tozer – The Pursuit of God

“Faith is the gaze of the soul upon a saving God”

A.W. Tozer – The Pursuit of God

Believing, then, is directing the heart's attention to Jesus. It is lifting the mind to "behold the Lamb of God," and never ceasing that beholding for the rest of our lives. At first this may be difficult, but it becomes easier as we look steadily at His wondrous Person, quietly and without strain. Distractions may hinder, but once the heart is committed to Him, after each brief excursion away from Him the attention will return again and rest upon Him like a wandering bird coming back to its window.

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Living in the Tension – life rhythms that bring peace

The Words of Dr. Luke - 20:25-28

“And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”