

STONE HARBOR

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Date: September 27th, 2009
Series: Who Jesus Is & Why He Matters
Section: Jesus on Mission in Jerusalem
Topic: The End
Message Title: How Jesus Prepared His Disciples for the Time Until He Returns
Short Title: Until He Returns
Text: Mark 13:01-13

Logical Structure of the Passage

- 1-2 Jerusalem temple is exalted as an object of wonder by Jesus' disciples, and humbled as the object of coming destruction by Jesus.
- 3-4 Jesus' disciples ask Him **WHEN** "all these things" will take place, understanding Jesus reference to the destruction of the temple to indicate a larger more complex culmination of God's plan for Israel.
- 5-23 Jesus Answer to His Disciple's Question
Prevailing Tone of Warning against being Deceived
 - 5-13 Troubles Jesus' Disciples Would Face
 - 14-23 Abomination of Desolation with Great Suffering and Deception
 - 24-27 Coming of the Son of Man in the Clouds
 - 28-31 Timing of Jesus Coming in relation to these Events
 - 32-37 Exhortation by Jesus to His Disciples to "Be on the Alert!"

Exegetical Main Point of Passage

Jesus clarifies His disciples understanding of the events associated with the end, informing them of the facts, warning them of dangers they will face and encouraging them to persevere in their mission and endure the hardships God will allow them to suffer until the end.

Homiletical Idea

Jesus prepares us for life up until the time of His return: informing us about this time, warning us of its dangers, calling us to the mission it requires and encouraging us to endure its hardships.

Subject & Compliments

How Jesus Prepared His Disciples for the Time Until He Returns

- He Teaches Us About that Time
- He Warns Us of Its Dangers
- He Calls Us to the Mission It Requires
- He Encourages Us to Endure Its Hardships

Goals of Message

1. That we would receive the preparation Jesus gave His disciples regarding the end (Be prepared)
 - Hear/heed Jesus' warnings
 - Know the facts Jesus revealed
 - Alert to and ready to face the dangers Jesus indicated
2. That we would be actively engaged in the mission Jesus gave His disciples (Be on mission)
 - Begin, or
 - Continue
3. That we would endure the hardships He allows us to experience (Endure)

Transformation Card

This page provides an overview of the message and resources for individual and group study.

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Text: Mark 13:01-13
Key Words: end, warning, mislead, birth pangs, wars, earthquakes, famines, persecution, gospel, mission, preach, betray, endure

Message Outline

How Jesus Prepared His Disciples for the Time Until He Returns

- I. He Teaches Us About that Time
- II. He Warns Us of Its Dangers
- III. He Calls Us to the Mission It Requires
- IV. He Encourages Us to Endure Its Hardships

Related Scripture

1. Mat 24 (esp. 1-14)
2. Luke (esp. 5-19)

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. What might Jesus' disciples have understood about "the end" before Jesus gave them this instruction?
2. What clarification did Jesus bring in verses 5-13 to their understanding about the end?
3. What dangers did Jesus warn His disciples they would face; and as His disciples today, are we subject to the same dangers?
4. What mission did Jesus call His disciples to and does this remain our mission?
5. How did/does Jesus encourage His disciples to endure the hardships they will face?

Memory and Meditation Verse

***"You will be hated by all because of My name,
but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.***

Mark 13:13 NASB

How Jesus Prepared His Disciples for the Time Until He Returns

Intro

Let me tell you what the future holds. The future holds... don't we wish we knew?

We do know at least in part because **God has revealed His grand plan** to us in the history of His dealings with mankind, His promises and prophecy all of which are recorded in Scripture. We encounter the future promised in the OT, initially fulfilled in the NT in the person of Jesus and we await its ultimate fulfillment at the time of His return. What does the future hold? It holds communion with God, intimacy with Him, the restoration of all things fallen to the way God originally designed them to be.

We saw two weeks ago in our survey of Mark 13, Jesus' "Olivet Discourse" (so named because Jesus gave this teaching while He was on the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem and the temple), that Jesus taught His disciples about the events that were still future to them so that they would be prepared for them. We have in these words the heart of a pastor preparing His sheep for challenging times they must face.

Jesus spoke of several events:

1. Destruction of the Temple
2. Coming of Jesus [fr. Mat parallel] = Son of Man coming in clouds
3. The end of the age [fr. Mat parallel]
4. The abomination of desolation
5. A Time of Terrible Tribulation

Today we will look at Mark 13:1-13 in more detail than in our first survey. This will take us up to the time of the Abomination of Desolation and a radical tribulation (14-23). We'll take that on next week. Then on the week after that we will address the second coming of Christ (24-27).

The events we will speak about today were future to Jesus' disciples. Much of what Jesus warned has already taken place. But His warnings and instruction fit the circumstances of the entire period from His first coming to His coming again. Therefore as we listen to Jesus speaking to His disciples then, we can hear instruction for us now as well. It is for all disciples right up until the time Jesus returns.

I have titled this messages *How Jesus Prepared His Disciples (that's us) for the Time Until He Returns*. We need this instruction as much as Jesus first century disciples did.

Repeated Exhortation to Humble Pursuit of Truth: We saw that many wonderful believers have many different views on exactly what these events will be and when they will take place. I conveyed to you then and I reemphasize again today that Stone Harbor Church is a place for people with different understandings and misunderstanding to move towards truth in a spirit of humility and dependence on the Holy Spirit and giving ear to those God has gifted in teaching for the purpose of leading us into truth.

We saw that iron sharpens iron **if the angle is right**; iron can dull iron if it is brought down hard against it. My heart is that no one in this church come down hard against another, but that we encourage each other, i.e., that we sharpen each other that we all might rightly divide the word of truth.

How Jesus Prepared His Disciples for the Time Until He Returns

I. He Teaches Us About that Time

A. **General Statement: Jesus sheds light on what was known in part**

On this topic regarding the future events and on all topics related to God and His dealings with man, Jesus brings more light to the table helping us see more clearly what was understood less precisely before He came. In the past God spoke to His people through His prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us in His Son (Heb 1:1-2). Jesus explains God (John 1:18) and His dealings with man. I regard Him as the divine interpreter of Scripture. He is the one who shed's the most revealing light on the Scriptures of the OT. Indeed, as God the Son His heart is one with the Holy Spirit who has inspired all Scripture (2 Tim 3:16-17). He is one with the Author, no wonder He can explain the book.

It is the way of Jesus to bring to His disciples all the Father had made known to Him. (John 15:15) And so, we see in Mark 13 Jesus is clarifying His disciples somewhat confused understanding of the time He labels "the end."

B. **What His Disciples Understood the Destruction of the Temple to Indicate**

The destruction of the temple was a huge thing. The temple was highly regarded and acknowledged as the most holy place, the place of God's dwelling with man. Its destruction implicated the end. What was the end? It was...

1. **The Fulfillment of All that their Faithful God had Promised**

This is the end/completion/consummation of God's grand plan for His creation -- The OT promised and anticipated and advanced towards an end. What is that end? It is the restoration of sacred space, the righting of all that is wrong with fallen creation, the joining together in perfect union of God the Father and His image sons and daughters, it is Immanuel -- God with us in peace and rest.

2. **The Judgment of All that Sinful Man Deserved**

What was the OT expectation of a final cataclysmic judgment?

3. **All the Events Associated with "The End of the Age"**

a. cf. Dan 12:7 "all these events" with Mark 13:4 "all these things" (see Lane)

C. **What Jesus Added to the Disciples Understanding**

1. **Re: Time Period of the Events of the End**

Jesus helped His disciples see that the end is a complex of events happening over a non-specific **expanded period of time** as opposed to one compound event happening all at once.

2. **Re: Timing of the Events of the End**

Jesus helped His disciples see that the end would be characterized by **delay** (Lane). Verse 7's "not yet"; verse 10's "first", verse 13's "endure"... all indicate many events happening **before** the end.

3. **Re: Analogy of a Mother's Labor?**

Jesus described the unfolding of the visible events associated with the end as "the beginning of birth pangs." (8) "Doctor, doctor" says the first time mother, "I feel a cramp." What does this indicate? Well, the baby could come quickly, or it could be a long time out; it is just the beginning of birth pangs; the baby is coming and all that is associated with labor and delivery will take place in its proper order, but it may not all happen today, it might not even be tomorrow, it is just the beginning of birth pangs.

Enough on time-talk. Let's look at what else Jesus reveals about the end.

II. He Warns Us of Its Dangers

A. Being Mislead (5-6)

1. Many Misleaders
2. Many Mislead
3. **Nature of the Deception: Believing someone else besides Jesus is the Christ.**

B. Fearing that World Events Indicate the End Has Come, Before It Has (7-8)

1. World Events Specified

- National Conflicts
- Natural Disasters
- Famines...

2. What We Should Know About These Things

- They **“must take place”**
- **“but that is not yet the end”**
- They are **“merely the beginning of birth pangs.”**

3. What We Should NOT Do about These Things

- Fear (7) – **“do not be frightened”**
- The dissuaded fear has to do with fear that this indicates the end. This sounds like the good advice of a wise doctor saying to a scared expectant mother experiencing false labor, “Don’t fear, this is not the end, you will carry your baby to term, then you will deliver.”
- This reminds me of Jesus’ advice in [Matthew 6:34](#) – “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

C. Persecution (9-13)

In verse 9 Jesus warns, **“Be on your guard!”** Why? Because...

1. Disciples of Jesus would be:

- Delivered to the courts, (9)
- Flogged in the synagogues,
- Made to stand before (JP: as in someone having to give account to an authority for challenged behavior) governors and kings
- Arrested (11)
- Betrayed (12)
 - even by their own families
 - even to death!
- Hated by all because of their association with Jesus (13)

2. These things would be **DONE TO Jesus disciples BY OTHERS**

- Delivered, flogged, arrested, betrayed, hated!

3. These things would be done to Jesus disciples **SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY ARE DISCIPLES OF JESUS**

- **“for My sake”** (9)
- **“because of My name”** (13)

Jesus, the ultimate shepherd/pastor, prepares His disciples to face the significant dangers that will come with the end. Jesus is not a mother hen who protects us from difficulty and danger, but He warns us of it. We are not excused from it but prepared for it. Anyone want to accept this Jesus? Not only will we have to endure very real dangers, but in the times until He returns...

III. He Calls Us to the Mission It Requires

A. Indications (Hints) of Mission

1. v. 9 – “you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them.”
2. v. 11 – “When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry...about what you are to say...”

When some of us are arrested for our faith in Jesus Christ, we may not be worried as much about what we are to say as about how to get out of Dodge altogether. Jesus is here extending to His disciples great respect by treating them as genuine disciples of His. As such, they will be arrested and handed over, but that is not even their greatest concern. Even at the time of arrest, the genuine disciple of Jesus would be wondering, “What can I say that will represent Jesus properly?”

3. v. 11 – “but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit.”

I get the picture of a military officer reassuring a subordinate messenger in a time of war, “Don’t sweat what the message will be, when the time comes for you to deliver the message, I’ll give it to you.”

What mission does Jesus call His disciple to?

B. The Mission of Jesus Disciples

1. Preaching the Gospel (v.10)

a. Allusions to Preaching

- Standing before authorities “as a testimony to them” (v.9)
- Don’t worry about what you are to say...but say...” (v.11)
- These indicate a speaking out to others, as representatives of Jesus, for Jesus’ sake, what we know to be true about Jesus, as given to us by His Holy Spirit.

b. Explicit Reference to Preaching

- v. 10 – “The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.”

2. What the Gospel Is

a. When Matthew speaks of the gospel being preached in the parallel passage he refers to it as “the gospel of the kingdom.” Matthew 24:14 – “And the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached...”

b. **The gospel** is what Jesus preached when He began His ministry based on what had already been revealed in the OT.

Mark 1:14-15 -- 14 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

c. In addition to the Good News of the kingdom of God in the OT, the gospel is the new information about Jesus we can learn from His life found both in “the Gospels” and in the balance of the NT which also speaks of Him.

d. Summary: The Gospel Message = OT + NT

e. Summary Expansion in Context of This Passage: **The Gospel is the Good News of the End** – The Gospel is the Good News of God’s purpose=end for His creation. It is:

- the promises of God found in the OT about His plan of redemption and restoration of His creation under His sovereign rule, i.e. the OT promises regarding the establishment of the kingdom of God (KoG),
- + NT truths re: the past inauguration of the KoG in the first coming of Jesus,
- + NT truths re: the future consummation of the KoG in Jesus’ second coming.

The mission of Jesus disciples then and now is the preaching of the Gospel!

IV. He Encourages Us to Endure Its Hardships

A. Jesus Encourages His Disciples by Declaring a Truth

The road ahead is full of dangers and hardships you will encounter while on mission; but, Mark 13:13b says, “**...but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.**”

B. Understanding Endurance

Enduring is all about continuing after your natural man says STOP.

The endurance athlete has to overcome his or her body's natural calls for rest. Pain must be demoted from Lord to mere messenger. Relief must be deferred. Perseverance is primary.

One more stride, one more stroke, one more mile, one more lap... Why does the athlete endure? To finish the race, to reach the end.

Jesus tells us, “**...the one who endures to the end will be saved.**”

Our Christian lives as disciples of Christ are significantly lives of **endurance**. We must continue in the race Jesus has set before us even when our natural man and the world around us say, “STOP, you'll be hurt, you need rest, save yourself, treat yourself, indulge in the pleasures available to you, turn away from this hard road, you don't need to fight this fight.”

Don't listen to that man or that cunning voice of the world! But, listen instead to the one true Man, Jesus. He has demonstrated what God intended mankind to be. He endured great hardship for the eternal good of others. So must we.

Having said that I want to clarify that endurance is not so much what we must exercise in order to be saved. It is what the indwelling Holy Spirit enables the already saved to exercise. God's grace is the agent of our salvation. Endurance is the fruit and characteristic of the saved – the true disciple of Jesus.

C. Understanding Salvation

Leslie Sugar made the great observation that all the suffering Jesus warned His disciples about in this passage Jesus Himself would shortly endure. He was hated, betrayed, arrested, made to stand before religious and then secular authorities, flogged and finally killed. These are the exact hardships Jesus warns His disciples that they must be prepared to endure until He comes again. If He is looking to get a bunch of new clients, Jesus is not being a very good salesman. Having heard of the hardships that await the believer until Jesus returns, now do you want to receive Jesus and become one of His disciples so you to can endure all these hardships?

But Jesus did not only endure, suffer and die. He also rose again! The Bible speaks of Him as the first fruits of the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15:20). All who are joined to Christ by God's grace through faith have also already been seated with Him in the heavenly places (Eph 1:20, 2:6) and have the hope of a future bodily resurrection (1 Cor 15:22) that we might always be with the Lord (1 Thes 4:17).

Here again we take note of this same hope. What Jesus assures His disciples (whose faith is proved by enduring hardship to the end) is that they will be saved. This is not the salvation from hardship or even death, but the salvation of our souls for all eternity.

Conclusion

“You will be hated by all because of My name,
but the one who endures to **the end**, he will be saved.”

Mark 13:13

“The end” is the consummation of God’s perfect plan of redemption. It is a good thing! Press on towards it through the hardships God allows you to face. Endure! You have the help of the indwelling Spirit, “...all things are possible with God” (Mark 10:27).

Recommended listening

http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/resources/author-index/a/DA_Carson/scripture/matthew#

The Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25) Parts 1- 5 [5 separate sermons]

Part 1 begins with discussion on different views on this controversial passage.

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