

Sermon Notes: 11-13-11

Making Room for the End Times - Pastor Pete

Mark Chapter 13 (*in its entirety attached on pg 3*)

vv.23-27

So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time. “But in those days, following that distress, “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.” “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

Summary

It is truly said that if we knew the outcome of an event ahead of time, especially an event where much is at stake, we wouldn't worry so much. When Jesus was speaking to his followers of both the near destruction of Jerusalem (to occur in 70AD) and the distant tribulation to occur on planet earth, attempted to allay their fears as well. He is preparing both his historic followers as well as us - living in these last days - for tumultuous events that will be taking place that would cause the strongest of hearts to faint. (v. 23 ...*I have told you everything ahead of time*)

Jesus lets us know the glory that awaits us in His triumphal return; the resurrection of our bodies; the wiping away of every tear (Rev. 21:4) and his coming reign on the earth.

The church of this age and this culture preach a gospel of comfort and earthly triumph that contradicts the words of Jesus and leaves us ill-prepared for trials - *which are surely to come*. Those of us who love and serve Christ can still be expected to suffer loss after loss in the time of testing ahead. We will not be exempt. But we have a hope. We serve on the **winning team**.

v. 5 - Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you...” We will suffer shaking from within as well as from without. Things both inside you and outside of you will crumble.

v. 8 - Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

Don't be perplexed, although it is unnerving, when we see so much of these things which were prophesied occurring with increasing intensity. Birth pangs also increase with intensity when the actual birth draws near.

v. 7 - When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.

These things are alarming but there are simply signs that something new is about to be birthed.

v. 13 - Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved

Those *outside* as well as currently *inside* the church will hate Christians, not just in Muslim countries but across the globe in unprecedented numbers.

APPLICATION 1

Be calm (v. 23). There will be cosmic shaking but Jesus will come. When He comes we will know as we have been known by Him. It will all make sense in the end. We need not fear chaos or get drawn into over-control and rigidity. God will keep our minds and hearts fluid in that day.

We must stay sober and alert - make room for the spiritual disciplines and rhythms (silence, daily offices/prayer, meditating on the word, Sabbath) so that we have room for God during this time of churning. We cannot be too busy to pray.

APPLICATION 2

Be watchful, listen and discern the tasks he has for you. God is building something new even as the old is passing away. Get deeply connected to God and do your assigned tasks as you wait.

Small Group Study:

1. Read the entire passage -attached -as a group (silently, one section at a time, only pertinent sections - however you wish)
2. Discuss the sermon points listed above and share your reactions to them.
3. What does the term “end times” mean to you or mean *for* you?”
4. Read the first application: What is your visceral reaction (and intellectual) as you consider Jesus’ words of the times to come? Are you able to remain connected to God as you process these words?
5. Read the second application: Share your reaction to this idea that we are alive to complete assigned tasks. How does this awareness impact your reaction to Jesus’ words in light of this age we live in?
6. Pray for each other for the resolve to “endure to the end”.

Optional prayer points:

God’s day will come like a thief in the night. Are you living in light of this reality? God shortened the days of trouble or else even his elect wouldn’t survive? Are you able to believe for his provision for you in your current trial?

Mark 13

The Destruction of the Temple and Signs of the End Times

¹ As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!” ² “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.” ³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?” ⁵ Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁶ Many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and will deceive many. ⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁸ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

⁹ “You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. ¹⁰ And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. ¹¹ Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. ¹² “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ¹³ Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ “When you see ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁵ Let no one on the housetop go down or enter the house to take anything out. ¹⁶ Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. ¹⁷ How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! ¹⁸ Pray that this will not take place in winter, ¹⁹ because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again. ²⁰ “If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them. ²¹ At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. ²² For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²³ So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time. ²⁴ “But in those days, following that distress, “‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; ²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ ²⁶ “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. ²⁸ “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The Day and Hour Unknown

³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁴ It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. ³⁵ “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷ What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”