

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
Presbyterian Church

“PREPARATION FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE, PART 1”

For individual study or group discussion

Recall from last week's study in Luke 20:45-21:4 that Jesus warns his disciples to beware of empty religion. He points out the scribes who walk around in long, beautiful robes. Beautiful on the outside, the robes are a religious façade that hide corruption underneath (cf. Matthew 23:27-28). A marvel of engineering and beauty, Herod's temple was one of the wonders of the ancient world. But, like the religious leaders and their robes, the temple, adorned with gold and gemstones, was also a religious façade. It had ceased being a house of prayer and had become a den of robbers (Luke 19:46). In Luke 21:5-11, Jesus **prepares his disciples for faithful service** as he shockingly prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem's magnificent edifice.

Be careful: don't presume on spiritual safety. (vv. 5-6)

As Jesus and his disciples leave the temple, the disciples call his attention to its beauty. The Jews think that their temple will be a permanent monument to their religion. But Jesus says otherwise. Note that Jesus quotes Jeremiah 7:1-15 when he cleanses the temple. Jesus' overturning the tables is a foreshadowing that the location of worship will shift, from the white marble stones of the temple to that of faith in his single sacrifice for sins (Hebrews 10:12). But the Jews continue to presume that they are spiritually safe within its walls, even while they “*devour widows' houses*” (20:47).

- What is the significance of Jesus' shocking prophecy given the role the temple plays in the life of the Jewish people? Read Luke 19:41-44. What similar warning does Jesus give at his entry into the city of Jerusalem?
- Read 1 Peter 2:4-6 and Hebrews 10:9-18. Where once the people of God would go to be reconciled to him, the temple has now been replaced by Christ. How is one made right with God?
- Refer back to Jeremiah 7:1-15. Both Jeremiah and Jesus warn Israel of presumptive spiritual safety. How does this study inform you about your tendency to seek spiritual safety in religious institutions rather than in Christ?

Be cautious: don't be deceived by end times speculation. (vv. 7-8)

Over the years, many false predictions have been made about the end of the world. At the turn of the 21st century, there have been 20+ phony prophecies beginning with Y2K.¹ Even church leaders such as Tim LaHaye, Pat Robertson, Harold Camping, and Hal Lindsey have misled others with their predictions. But Jesus warns, “*See that you are not led astray*” (v. 8). Only the Father knows such mysteries (Matthew 24:36).

- What two questions do Jesus' disciples ask in verse 7? What do you notice about Jesus' immediate response to the disciples in verse 8? What is his primary concern for them?

Be calm: don't be alarmed by world chaos. (vv. 9-11)

When Jesus tells his disciples, “*do not be terrified*,” he's encouraging them to trust him even in the face of trials and tribulations. New Testament scholar Kenneth Bailey writes, “*We can affirm in quiet confidence that the ship of history moves in the direction God intends even when we live in the midst of destruction, horror and tragedy. We can pray ‘Thy kingdom come’ in faith and confidence as we labor to prepare for that coming.*”²

- Read 2 Chronicles 15:1-7. What must God's people do when they find themselves in distress? Compare to Jesus' admonition “*do not be terrified*” (v. 9). How is it similar to Jesus' warnings?
- What two things does Jesus say will not be signs that the end is near (v. 9)? What does this say about people who claim to have knowledge that the end is near based on what they see in the news headlines?

DATE: October 20, 2024

SPEAKER: John Mark/Brian

SERIES: The Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 21:5-11

RENEW: 31 Days of Prayer

DAY 8: Indispensability of the Church

PRAYER: Almighty God, you have built your church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. We worship and adore the chief cornerstone, Jesus, from whom we are built together as living stones. You have made us a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people belonging to you. Enable us to shine your light on the mountain, in the city, and around the world. Embolden us with the wonderful security that the church is not only indispensable: it's indestructible. For we rest in the words of our Savior, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.” Abide with your church locally and globally, while on earth her faith is tried. Keep the doctrine and life of the church pure in this broken and crooked world. Grant unity to your church in truth and charity, so that the world knows of our faith in you because of our love for one another. Arm the soldiers of your church with the cross, who are brave to suffer toil or loss because we count earthly gain but dross. Knowing that you love and cherish the church more than any of us ever could, we offer this prayer in your name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS
Lakeway Presbyterian Church,
supported church plant
PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS
Kim and Michael Essenburg,
supported missionary partners

¹ Wikimedia Foundation. *List of dates predicted for apocalyptic events*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_dates_predicted_for_apocalyptic_events

² Bailey, Kenneth E. *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*. 2008, Downers Grove, IL. InterVarsity Press. 115