

The Gospel According to Mark - It'll Be Different This Time

September 1, 2019

It'll Be Different This Time, Very Different Indeed!

Mark 13:24-37

Only God could take a tool of torture used to punish the wicked, a symbol of death, and transform it into symbol of life and a make it a tool to forgive the sins of anyone willing to admit they've done wrong, that they need a Savior, and that they need to repent of their sin! Hallelujah for the Cross! The word Hallelujah is a from the Hebrew language and means "praise Yahweh!" Sometimes you'll find the word without the H, and it's just allelujah. So when we say Hallelujah for the Cross, we're actually thanking God for transforming what the cross once stood for and also thanking Him for using the sacrifice of His Son Jesus on that Cross to transform us!!!! Amen? Amen! This morning we're going to rap up our study of the "Little Apocalypse," Jesus' words on the end times found in Mark's Gospel. While Jesus was here on this earth He talked about His second coming. When He comes back, it will be different from the first time He was here, very different indeed. Let's pray and we'll talk about that!

Okay, our text for today is Mark 13:24-37. But we must remember the context. One of the disciples had asked Jesus to consider the majesty of the temple complex as they were leaving the temple area. This prompted Jesus to begin discussing with them the end of time as we know it. They walked over to the Mount of Olives opposite the temple where Peter, James, John and Andrew asked Jesus privately when all the things Jesus had talked about would take place. Let's begin where we left off last week in verse 24. Jesus said...

Mark 13:24 "But in those days, following that distress, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

Mark 13:25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

By the way, the words "following that distress" are translated "tribulation" in The RSV translation, and most scholars believe Jesus is alluding to the great tribulation. Let's continue...

Mark 13:26 "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

Mark 13:27 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.

Taking this in context it would seem the gathering of His elect takes place "following that distress." Jesus continues...

Mark 13:28 "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.

Mark 13:29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door.

Mark 13:30 I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.

Let me just interject something here real quick. A lot of folks wonder what Jesus' meant by "this generation." Did He mean that the disciples who were listening to Him speak, that their generation would not pass away until all these things had happened? I've read commentators who've debated many different possibilities, but I personally believe Jesus was saying that the generation who would eventually see all of these signs taking place would not pass away until everything was fulfilled and they would see Jesus' second coming. A generation is around 27 years. Why do I say this? Let's continue reading our text...

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Mark 13:32 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

See why I don't think He was talking about the generation of the disciples He was talking to? Jesus said He didn't even know when it was going to happen, but when the true end of time began, it would be over within a generation. Jesus then reiterates His warning...

Mark 13:33 Be on guard! Be alert ! You do not know when that time will come.

Mark 13:34 It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

Mark 13:35 "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.

Mark 13:36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.

Mark 13:37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

I know I told you last week if Jesus says something three times in one teaching it must be extremely important, but when we look at today's passage we notice He has added several more admonitions to be on your guard and to watch and they total seven! So let me say this again, it's not as important "when" Jesus comes again, as it is that we be ready "whenever" He comes again! Listen to these words from the Broadman Commentary...

"The further command to watch in verses 35-37 is an other word, meaning 'be alert.' All these commands are in the present imperative; they call for constant watchfulness, constant care, constant expectation. Mark's understanding of Jesus' teaching on things to come accents this single point. The disciples are to live always in anticipation of difficulty and pressure and at the same time in confident and expectant hope of the sovereign triumph of God."

In our passage today Jesus has given His disciples more detailed information concerning the end times and the second coming of Christ. We're going to discover this morning that the second coming of Christ will be very different from the first. It is my object today to encourage you and motivate you in your walk with God as you anticipate the second coming of Christ! Now I understand it may be a bit unnerving for some folks to think about the possibility of being here on the earth during the end times and for some of us who've always been taught we would not go through any of the tribulation, this might be a scary thing. However, it is not my desire to worry you or cause you to fret about things. Let me say this, even though we may go through some times of persecution because of our faith and commitment to Christ and the Word of God, we must remember that the second coming of Christ is good news for followers of Christ, bad news for the enemies of Christ, and sad news for those who have rejected Christ! Even though there will be some tough times before Jesus' second coming, we are reminded of this in Scripture...

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

1 Thessalonians 4:18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The second coming of Christ will ultimately be a wonderful thing for those of us who have placed our trust in Him and we know He will get us through anything we might face in this old world! This is true of the end times and of right here, right now! I just love the way Henry Turlington puts it:

"...the promise of the Son's triumphant coming offered God's people hope and encouragement. It affirmed that God is in charge and that He has not forsaken His people. He will claim and gather His own. Whatever men may do to the disciple, in whatever age, must not take away the faith by which we live and cannot destroy the hope by which we are sustained. The Son Will reign!"

Let me show you how the Son will reign by showcasing some pretty amazing differences between the first time Jesus came and lived on this planet and the second coming of Christ! You're going to see some things that should get you so excited and pumped about the Savior you love and serve, that you will not just be on alert and on your guard getting ready for the return of Christ, but you will actually begin looking forward to His return. And if we embrace the truth of what we discover today it will impact our lives in powerful ways, because we will sense the urgency of letting others know about Jesus and His offer of forgiveness and love. As I told you in the first message on the "little Apocalypse" here in Mark 13, we have a job to do and that is to be ambassador's for Christ. It's not only our duty and responsibility to share Jesus with a lost and dying world, it's our great privilege! We should be excited about making a difference in this world while we await the second coming. And one of the things that should motivate us to be busy about our job as ambassadors for Christ is this first difference between the first and second coming of Christ.

Difference # 1 Bright Star\Darkened Sun and Moon (God sized events)

A. The first time Jesus came to this earth there was a bright star which pointed to the Messiah\Savior and it was a day of joy!

Mat 2:9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

Mat 2:10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

Mat 2:11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

Luke 2:8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

Luke 2:9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

Luke 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

And listen to the reason Jesus came the first time...

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

At the second coming the sun and moon will be darkened and point to the coming day of judgment...

Mark 13:24 "But in those days, following that distress, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

Mark 13:25 the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

And then these words in the Book of Revelation...

Rev 6:12 I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red,

Rev 6:13 and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind.

Rev 6:14 The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

Rev 6:15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.

Rev 6:16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

Rev 6:17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

So at the second coming of Christ, His reason for coming will be different. He came the first time to offer grace, mercy and forgiveness to whoever would believe in Him by admitting their sin, and trusting Him to be their Savior! The second coming will be as a judge. But here's what we as Christians must remember...

Jesus took our judgement so we don't have to worry about this.

Rom 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Rom 8:2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Jesus took our judgement so we will not suffer the wrath of God in the end like those who have rejected Christ. It is important for you to know the difference between the persecution of the world and the wrath of God! Jesus told His disciples over and over again that they would suffer persecution and suffering at the hands of the world. Remember?

Mark 13:9 "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.

But understand this: The persecution of the world during the tribulation is not the wrath of God that's the wrath of man. Before the wrath of God is poured out upon the earth at the end, after the second coming of Jesus, the church will be caught up into the clouds and into God's Glory! In fact, I believe this is what is talked about when we read these words...

1 Th 5:1 Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you,
1 Th 5:2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.
1 Th 5:3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.
1 Th 5:4 But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.
1 Th 5:5 You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.
1 Th 5:6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.
1 Th 5:7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.
1 Th 5:8 But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.
1 Th 5:9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Th 5:10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.
1 Th 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Difference # 2 Born in a stable\Coming on the Clouds

A. The first time Jesus came He came in humility - Born in a stable

Luke 2:4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.
Luke 2:5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.
Luke 2:6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,
Luke 2:7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Listen to what Paul had to say about Jesus' humility

Phil 2:6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
Phil 2:7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
Phil 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

But when He comes again it will be different!

B. When Jesus comes again He'll be coming on the clouds in glory

Mark 13:26 "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

Listen to the book of Revelation...

Rev 1:7 Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

Rev 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Folks, when Jesus first came to this earth it was in humility and in that humility He sought a relationship with humankind, but He did not force anyone into that relationship. He has called out to us in great love, but it's up to us to respond. In fact, listen to this verse from the Old Testament book of Jeremiah...

Jer 31:3 The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.

And the Psalmist...

Psa 86:5 You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you.

And then in the New Testament...

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,

Rom 10:13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

But here's the deal: God will never force anyone to invite Jesus to be their personal Savior, friend and Lord!

However, because of what Jesus was willing to do on that old rugged cross, even those who have rejected Him will at least have to acknowledge Him.

Phil 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,
Phil 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
Phil 2:11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Difference # 3 Riding on the Foal of a Donkey\Riding on a White Horse

A. The first time Jesus came riding on the foal of a donkey

John 12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written,
John 12:15 "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

A donkey was a pack animal. The donkey was a servant animal. Jesus came as a servant to carry our sin, our burdens, our shame, our sorrows, our brokenness.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

2 Cor 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

B. When Jesus comes again He'll be Riding a white horse

Rev 19:11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.

Rev 19:12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

Rev 19:13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

Rev 19:14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Rev 19:15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

Rev 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

If you haven't noticed, all of these differences share a common thread.

Difference # 4 Condemned as a Criminal\Coming as a King

A. The first time came He was rejected as the Messiah and condemned as a criminal

Mark 14:61 ... Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

Mark 14:62 "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Mark 14:63 The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked.

Mark 14:64 "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death.

Mark 14:65 Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.

B. At the second coming of Jesus He will be hailed as the King of Kings

1 Tim 6:13 In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you

1 Tim 6:14 to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Tim 6:15 which God will bring about in his own time--God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

1 Tim 6:16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

The second coming of Jesus is going to be very different from His first visit to planet earth, the question is, will you be ready whenever He does come? Let's pray!!