



Week 11 | March 30, 2014
Signs of the End
Mark 13:1-31

Mark 13, known as the *Olivet Discourse*, is the most difficult and complex chapter in Mark. Two weeks ago, we looked at the last part of Mark 13 concerning staying alert because no one knows when Jesus is coming back. This week we see Jesus prepare His disciples for future hardships and temptations after He is gone. Jesus is very specific about the signs of the end times and what the world will look like just before He returns.

Discuss: Name some examples of Christians being deceived or ways they are being led astray.

Read Mark 13:1-31.

The parallel passage in Matthew 24:3 expands the disciples' questions slightly. There were several events that they wanted to know about:

- (1) the time of the destruction of the Temple
- (2) the time of the Second Coming
- (3) the time of the end of the age

The disciples probably thought all three would happen at one time.

[Q] Jesus doesn't seem to answer the disciples' question in verse 4 directly, at least not at first. What is he concerned about?

In 70 A.D. the Roman army under Titus destroyed Jerusalem. He razed the Temple to the ground, as a "lesson" and warning to all rebels.. According to historian Josephus, the temple stones measured nearly 40 feet long and 12 feet high. They weighed tons... and became a pile of rubble.

Standing Firm

Jesus gave the disciples five admonitions about serving Christ in distressing times.
(See Mark 13:5-13 in the NIV.)

- 1) Watch out that no one _____ you. v. 5
- 2) Do not be _____. v. 7
- 3) You must be _____ v. 9
- 4) Do not _____ beforehand. v. 11
- 5) _____ to the end. v. 13

Apply:

[Q] What are some ways we can guard our thoughts against those who will attempt to deceive or distract us from following the truths of Jesus?

[Q] How would Jesus' warnings and encouragements have helped the disciples in the early years of the church? (See Acts chapters 4, 5, 7, 12, 16, 21–28.)

[Q] Describe a time when the Lord gave you the faith to stand firm in the face of difficulties.

[Q] Christians have sometimes disagreed about how to interpret Jesus' words in Mark 13:14-23. What does Jesus say about *God's* work in the midst of all this turmoil?

Respond

[Q] What lessons does this chapter give you when you feel that things are spinning out of control?

[Q] If the end of the world is near and time is limited, how should you spend your time? What is your assigned task?

What's the safest place for you from the danger of the end of the age? Right next to Christ!

¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. ²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.
1 John 5:19-20 (ESV)

Recommended resources from Pastor Jay:

- Daniel Vol. 2: God's Plan for the Future*, Charles Swindoll, insight.org
- End Times: Understanding Today's World Events in Biblical Prophecy*, John Walvoord
- Understanding Bible Prophecy for Yourself*, Tim LaHaye

Pray
