

Introduction:

Do you ever look at the state of the world and wonder if the end is near? This week we see how Jesus respond to his disciples' questions about the future. You can find the sermon notes [here](#)¹ or listen to the sermon by clicking [here](#).²



Scripture:

Turn to Mark 13:1-13 in your Bible or [click here](#).

So What?

If you knew how your life would end, would it change how you lived today? Mark 13 is known as the Olivet Discourse as Jesus gave it on the Mount of Olives. It begins with Jesus predicting the destruction of the temple (2) which prompted the disciples to inquire about the timing of “these things” (4). In his reply, Jesus weaves together the near event, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the far event, the coming of the Son of Man in clouds with power and glory. Jesus' reply is both prophetic and pastoral. Rather than helping the disciples set dates, Jesus encourages them to stand firm. He explains, that a disciple is to remain alert to the dangers that will confront them (5). The presence of false teachers (6), wars (7), and natural disasters (8) do not signal the end of the world. They signal the beginning of labor pains. Rather than speculate about the end, we are to stay faithful in the present. Rather than give up and throw in the towel, we should view persecution as an occasion for mission. We should share our faith near and far (10). We are to depend on the Spirit for what to say (11). We are to stand firm to the end (13).³

Rather than focusing on the timing of the end, Jesus encouraged his disciples to stand firm.

What Now?

1. Jesus predicted the coming destruction of Jerusalem as well as other events that are yet to take place. God knows the future; it is in his hands. He is active in the world today. Nothing escapes his attention. We ought not despair at world events, rather we should take hope in knowing that the Lord will work all things to his glory. He is our sovereign king.
2. It is good to look forward to the coming of our Lord ([2 Timothy 4:8](#)), but we ought not be distracted by it to the point that we miss the opportunity given to us by God to be used by him as instruments of his will. As we wait, let us concern ourselves with honoring and worshiping him, as well as serving others and spreading the gospel message.
3. Regardless of when the end of the world comes (and it surely will, in God's perfect timing), we will all stand before him soon. For most, this will come long before the end of the world. If you were to die today, would you be ready to stand before the judge of all the earth? If you have not accepted Jesus as Lord, then you are not ready. Do not delay, he calls out to you even now. For those of us who do know him, let us spend a moment reflecting on exactly how short our time here is. How does this change your priorities?

¹ <https://wheelsms.wordpress.com/2016/01/03/the-beginning-of-the-end/>

² <http://firstcentralbaptist.com/sermons/gospelofmark.html>

³ This text is adapted from Pastor Mark's sermon notes.