

# End Times 101 part 1

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[ 0 : 00 ] Mark chapter 13 this morning as we continue in our series here through the book of Mark. And we've seen last time as we concluded here at the end of chapter 12, we find that Jesus was in the temple and he had been teaching and been questioned.

And they'd looked at those that had given offerings and he'd given an assessment of that. And after watching that assessment, we find that Jesus completed his time in the temple.

And Jesus prepares to depart the temple for that last time. And of all the things that had taken place, it was clear that each one there that day had a choice that they had to make.

You know, just like today, there's choices that we have to make concerning who Jesus is and his impact upon us. You know, and the Bible tells us that many believed on him but did not confess him.

You know, I think we can see that a lot today in the world. As Jesus departs the temple of all the questions, all the things, all the revelation about who he is, there's still some that they recognize him, but they won't declare and confess him as their savior.

[ 1 : 14 ] And the Bible tells us that there in the gospel of John, John makes an interesting statement. He says, for they love the praise of men more than the praise of God. You know, and that's a lot of the struggle that we find.

And even the disciples were faced with some of those challenges. And as we find here, this crowd from which Jesus departed as he made his way from the temple towards the Mount of Olives.

We're going to get into what is called the Olivet Discourse this morning. You know, talking about as Jesus was giving some final encouragement to his disciples, but also talking about as the disciples' question about what is to come.

You know, in times, what's ahead? Because Jesus had made some statements that caused them to begin to say, okay, Lord, how are these things going to come to be?

You know, what and when? And how are these things going to look? What's going to come together along the way? And they began to question him about some of these things.

[ 2 : 14 ] And the discourse that follows records the events that reveal what's going to happen here upon the earth before the end of time. And so as we're going to look here this morning, there's questions that people ask even today.

And it seems to captivate people because they're concerned about what's going to happen. You know, people are concerned about the future. They're concerned about, okay, if the Lord's going to come, when is he going to come?

You know, what's going to take place? You know, and people are oftentimes today, just like they were in Jesus' day, they're worried about the signs. You know, how do I know? You know, how do I know if Jesus is coming?

And to be prepared, you know, the reality is, as we're going to see today, you'd better be prepared because you don't know the day or the hour. Things that you need to be prepared for now and to be prepared for that because one day Jesus will come again.

You know, that is a guarantee. Just as he came the first time, he will come again. But we're going to find here this morning the conversation between Jesus and his disciples was not only for them, but this conversation is even for us.

[ 3 : 23 ] Because we have those same type questions. You know, people will come up with those questions about what and when. And as we look at this this morning, I want you to keep that in mind as we look what's recorded, that we might know the events that characterize the end times.

Because we're going to look at how Jesus lays this out and put those things in context here with the rest of Scripture. You know, because context is always important. And we're going to find here when it comes to discussing end times, people love to take things out of context.

You know, and piecemeal things. And so let's take a look here this morning. If you found Mark chapter 13, let's stand together here for the reading of God's Word. We'll read down through verse 8 here this morning.

And follow along, and it says this, And as he went out of the temple, one of the disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here. And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings?

There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be?

[ 4 : 43 ] And what shall be the signs when all these things shall be fulfilled? And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed, lest any man deceive you.

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled.

For such things must needs be. But the end shall not be yet. For nations shall rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom.

And there shall be earthquakes in diverse places, and there shall be famines and troubles. These are the beginning of sorrows.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come before you today, Lord, as we look at your encouragement to be prepared for those things that are to come, Lord, to be focused upon who you are and what you've done for us in the present, Lord, and the need to respond to it and to be ready for that.

[ 5 : 48 ] Lord, I pray you just help us to heed even the warning given today, Lord, that we might understand how these things fit together. And how they fit into your plan of the time that is going to be before us, Lord, of the future events.

And as it's often referred to, Lord, we know it's the end of this world, but it's a beginning with you for eternity, for those who have called upon you. Lord, I pray that you just have your hand upon each one today, Lord.

You know those that are yours. Lord, we pray just to challenge those that know you as Savior to be consistent in these things, Lord. But also today, Lord, we ask that there's one here that's not sure, that they would call upon you, Lord, that they might know that they have eternal life, that they're secure no matter what happens in this world around us.

And Lord, we ask all these things in your precious name. Amen. May we be seated. You know, as we look here this morning, we see Jesus' disciples leaving the temple late on Tuesday afternoon. But not before Jesus makes a declaration about the city of Jerusalem and the temple because oftentimes in Scripture, sometimes like Mark chapter 13 seems kind of abrupt.

[ 7 : 03 ] You know, as we're looking and reading that, it seems like an abrupt conversation. Why would the disciples point that out? What was leading them up to it? Well, Matthew gives us a little insight.

And we can go back to Matthew's account. If you look over to Matthew chapter 23, because I believe the disciples here are responding to a statement that Jesus made. A statement that I declared in here.

Notice what it tells us here in Matthew chapter 23 in verse 37. Here's Jesus looking over Jerusalem. And he says, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and she would not.

You know, here's Jesus lamenting over the city of Jerusalem, over the Jewish people that he had given so much for. He had sent the prophets. They were possessors of all that God had commanded.

I mean, God had given them and blessed them so much. But notice it says, Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Why is it going to be desolate? That's what I think sparks the disciples' questions.

[ 8 : 17 ] Because remember, they're in the temple. They're seeing the splendor of the temple. The temple was the centerpiece of all that they'd been doing. All the worship, everything centered around the temple.

That was the focal point. And Jesus says, I'm going to leave this here desolate. Empty. And we're going to see here, notice what it says, verse 39.

For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Now, what is he referring to? He says, I'm not going to enter the temple again until that day I return.

When people say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Zechariah the prophet declares, there's coming a day when Jesus is going to step down once again and enter into Jerusalem and enter into the temple.

We're going to see here this dynamic that takes place. This is a picture that the disciples had in their mind. They're thinking, Jesus has already told us he's going to die.

[ 9 : 19 ] And, you know, we're already struggling with, okay, who's going to be in charge? You know, we looked at all those normal things, but now they're like another set of contemplation is, okay, when and where and how are these things going to happen?

How is this going to, how are we going to know? But we see here this verse 38 sets the stage for this question. As they walk out the temple complex, because I want you to understand, the temple was a portion of this complex.

The entire temple complex was a very large structure, even under Herod. And you see, if you can, they tell us that Herod had ornately remodeled Ezra's temple that he had built and he had expanded on it.

And there was all these glories that had been added in this remodel of the gold that was hanging on all the doors. And they had big, white, large stones that were around it.

Luke 21 tells us this. It says, Some spake of the temple how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts. So what are the disciples looking at? As they're walking out, they're saying, Jesus, if you're going to leave this desolate, this building, this structure, this compound, if you might say, with all these ornate things and all the effort, all the energy, all the things that have gone into it, the beauty of the place that we come to worship the Lord.

[ 10 : 45 ] And the disciples are looking at it. That's what we find here in verse 1 of chapter 13. It says, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here.

You know? They're looking at the majesty of the building, the structure. You know, they're not like on people today. Oftentimes we get fascinated with structures and buildings and things, and we get attached to them.

And since this was the place that they worshiped God, there was an attachment they had to all this happening. And Jesus then reveals something that would have startled the disciples.

First he says he's going to leave it desolate, and he's not going to come again until he returns. And now Jesus makes a very bold statement about the destruction of it.

We see this as an artist's rendition of what they think Herod's temple complex would have looked like. I mean, it's a very great structure, and here Jesus makes a statement. The destruction of the temple seemed contrary to everything they'd known.

[ 11 : 48 ] It had been the place of worship since David purchased the threshing floor from Orin as a place to offer sacrifices unto the Lord. Solomon later would build the first temple there after the death of his father David, only to find it was destroyed when Judah was taken away into captivity for 70 years there into Babylon.

But we find Ezra returned with the mandate to rebuild, and this was the same temple that Ezra built 500 years before, but had been remodeled by Herod and made even more ornate and more of a bold statement about who God is and the place.

He was trying to gain favor with the Jews. You know? You think the world is different today? You have a politician trying to bribe people with buildings and other things to try to gain their favor.

I want to let you know there's nothing new today that goes on that didn't go on back then. The same things happen, and the same people get caught up in the same things, but we find here that as they were there leaving that temple complex, Jesus tells them that's what?

It's going to be destroyed. He tells them that see this great complex? There's not even going to be a single stone left. Every stone is going to be taken down.

[ 13 : 15 ] And part of what we need to understand this morning is that what Jesus was really saying because the temple complex was fascinating to see. They say you could see it all over the place.

You could see it as you entered the city. It sat up on the hill, and they tell us here that the stones that they were used in this, some of them were 40 feet long by 18 feet high by 15 feet wide. Precision cut to where you couldn't put a piece of paper between them. And Jesus is looking at his disciples and saying, hey guys, I know you're fascinated with this, but there's going to come a day there's not going to be one stone upon another.

All this is going to be taken away. All the gold, all the things that Herod had done to remodel the temple to make it look as an amazing place to worship God.

But we find here that we know from history that in 70 A.D. the temple was destroyed. They dismantled it completely, stripping it of gold and precious stones.

[14:18] Exactly what Jesus said was going to happen to it. Exactly how he had described it. But I do want to let you know there is going to be another temple built. You know?

But as we study through, I want you to understand there's going to be sacrifices that resume during the time of what we call, the Bible calls the time of Jacob's trouble, also known as the tribulation.

And then we're going to find there's going to be a temple built during the thousand year reign of Christ. We're going to see all these magnificent things. But as they're departing out of the temple, Jesus tells them there's going to be a destruction of the temple.

And I'm not going to enter in again until the time I come in power and in glory. So the disciples are trying to process all this information.

They're trying to put all the pieces together to understand those things. When he says, okay, if Jesus is leaving and the temple's going to be destroyed, but he's not going to do this again or enter in until we find that he is coming in his power and glory.

[15:28] You know, when blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord when they receive him as their king. They're trying to put this timeline together in their head. You know, it's not unlike people today.

You know, when people start studying the end, they're trying to put, okay, it says this here and that over here and this over here and this over here. And okay, how does that fit together? How's this puzzle come together to paint the picture that God has?

To reveal what God has in store. The disciples were trying to figure this out. They're trying to discern, okay, if this was going to happen, how and when was it going to happen?

Because notice their discernment that Jesus is going to give. But look at verse 3 there in verse 13. And it says, and he sat upon the Mount of Olives over against the temple.

Now, I want you to get this picture because here is Jesus. They've left the temple complex. They've went through the city and they went up on the Mount of Olives, very likely to the very, close to the place that he would soon to be arrested because Judas told them where to find Jesus because it's a place he went off in.

[16:38] So I think this is probably the same place that they could oversee the city and oversee the temple. And they're sitting there and it just tells us they were there and they were having another discussion about things.

And it tells us that the two pairs of brothers show up again, you know. Peter and Andrew and James and John. And we find that they sit down with Jesus privately and say, Jesus, what about this?

Because notice what they ask him. Notice what they say. Tell us in verse 4, when shall these things be and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

Now as we see here, Jesus is telling them, had described these things, this catastrophe that was going to happen with the temple. And he says, when are these things going to happen?

You know, Matthew chapter 24 also records for us this. It says, and he sat upon the Mount of Olives and the disciples came to him privately saying, tell us when these things shall be and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world.

[17:46] They were worried about, okay, how is this going to come to fruition? What's this going to look like? They were looking for signs of his coming and the end of the world. The establishment of the kingdom was paramount to the disciples.

You know, one thing we always got to keep in mind is that we're looking at this passage. You have to look at it through a Jewish lens of what they understood and what they knew. Their focus was, hey, one day there's going to be a kingdom that our Savior is going to rule and reign and we're going to be free from all those that have oppressed us.

That was their mindset, their vision. That's what they had come to understand. And we're going to see as Jesus begins to broaden their perspective to understand the big picture of what God is doing.

The establishment of the kingdom was just that. It was paramount to them. When is this going to happen? Even right before he was taken to heaven, you know, Jesus has died and arose again and he's getting ready to go up into heaven.

Think about the disciples' last question. If you don't think this is on their mind, Acts chapter 1, Jesus is getting ready to depart from them and notice they're still asking this same question.

[18:59] It says, when they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? You know? I mean, this is something that was stuck in their mind.

I mean, this is something that weighed upon them to say, how is this going to fit? They were still trying to make sense of it. Now, us today, as we have a completed canon of Scripture, we can look at it and say, well, what did they miss?

But I want you to understand, they were operating with what they understood, with the information that they had. Now, we often have the same problem, don't we? We make decisions sometimes or get caught up into things based on the information we have and not all the information.

We can say we are blessed because we have all the information we need in a completed Word of God. God's complete revelation to us.

We live in a blessed generation. that we have that. So I want you to understand when the disciples are asking this, you need to remember where they were and what was happening and how their mindset had been focused and positioned in their thought processes.

[20:13] Because as believers, sometimes, if we're not careful, we can end up the same way as the disciples. We get caught up in something and don't look for the information that God's given us. To put things in perspective because notice Jesus' response there in Acts and he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.

You know, I want to give you a little heads up. Anybody that says Jesus is going to return right now, you can put a mark through them. You know, I won't ask for a show of hands, but how many have heard people make declarations like that?

You can look at history. History's filled with it. The one thing I can tell you, if somebody says Jesus is going to return on this date, you can put a mark through them and say you're a liar because Jesus made it clear you don't know.

You've just identified yourself as somebody contrary to Scripture. But you know what? Oftentimes they get caught up in it because notice here what Jesus responds to them in this because Jesus, look at verse 5 of chapter 13 there in our text.

It says, Jesus answering them began to say, take heed lest any man what? Deceive you. He said, you guys need to use some discernment.

[21:26] You need to be discerning in processing all this. Don't go by how you feel or how smooth somebody's words are. He says, take heed lest any man deceive you.

There's going to be deceivers out there. This world is filled with deceivers. When it comes to those things, there will be people that come to you that will try to deceive and we need to be discerning about that.

Jesus warns them they need to be aware of the deceivers, that the disciples could be drawn away by the things that they might see and hear. Think about the potential we have today. If they could be deceived with Jesus giving them direct information, how much more in danger are we today? To be paying attention, to take the full counsel of God's word to put those things together? What will be the part of the deception? Is that, notice what he tells them, for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ and shall deceive many.

You know, over the years there's many who have said they've come in the name of the Lord. We even have people that declare themselves to be the Messiah, be the deliverer. You know, I don't have time to go through all the list of individuals, but sometimes we think, well, that was a future thing.

[22:48] Acts chapter 5 reveals something very interesting because when they're assessing the apostles after Christ's resurrection and the early church, you'll find there in Acts chapter 5 in verses 36 and 37, we won't go there, but it makes mention of two individuals, Thaddeus and Judas of Galilee, both whose movements came to nothing and were dispersed.

These were individuals that said, hey, we're the Messiah, follow me. And these were in the very same time frame that Jesus walked the earth. Even while he was present, there was deceivers out there.

And some people fell into it. It's a reality. There are those that came a few years after Jesus and down through the ages. You know, some of you here have been around long enough to know names like Sung Moon, Moon, you know, that crazy Korean guy that declared himself the Messiah. Now, some of you have been around long enough to know a name by Jim Jones. He was another one that declared, I mean, the list could, I mean, you look up history and the list just keeps compiling. It's amazing the list of people throughout the ages who have declared to say, I come in the name of the Lord.

I'm the Messiah. I'm the Deliverer. And many were deceived. Why? Because they didn't pay attention to what Jesus had to say. As the end approaches, there's going to be more and more put forth to claim.

[ 24 : 17 ] You know, we've always got to be careful not to be deceived by eloquent speech and smooth demeanors that people have. Because no matter who a person is, you better judge them by the book. Judge what they say by the Word of God.

Does it line up to be paying attention to those things? It tells us here we're going to have wars and rumors of wars. You know, the world in which we live has experienced more times of war than at peace.

You know, think about how many conflicts exist even in our lifetime. I mean, we have an entire generation that is growing up in conflict. Since 2001 forward, there's been a conflict happening. There was conflicts before that. I mean, you'll find there's wars and rumors of wars. Even in our lifetime and in times to pass, there's going to be more coming. You know, what it reveals is something very simple is that instead of becoming better, the world just continues to rage wars against one another.

You know, we find all sorts of organizations that people found and other things contrary and try to say, we're going to make people better and better. You know, if you understand the Word of God, this world's not going to get better and better before Christ returns.

[ 25 : 28 ] It's going to get worse and worse. Why? Because sinful people do sinful things. Wicked people do wicked things. Our heart is deceitful because I want you to see here what Jesus makes a statement here.

Look at the end of verse 7. It says, for such things must needs be, but the end shall not be yet. You know, Jesus is making an obvious statement here that I think we need to pay attention to because they're not to trouble us or to cause alarm because the end is, they don't mark the end.

Jesus is admonishing His disciples. He's admonishing us today. Don't get caught up in the news cycle. Just in my lifetime, it's amazing how many people, every time something happens in the middle, oh, the end is here.

I mean, every time you have something, oh, the tribulation has begun. Just remember Jesus' statement, but the end is not yet because the one thing you'll know is that when Jesus tells us what's going to happen, it's going to be clear.

You won't have to ask, is this? It'll be, it is. But oftentimes, we get caught up in that every time something sparks up and moves forward.

[ 26 : 39 ] I want you to understand that they're wrong by declaring, hey, this is what it is. You know, we should be paying attention to world events, but we need to understand they don't direct the sign of the end nor His coming by themselves because God also gives us an order of what things are going to take place.

You know, it's amazing how many people when something happens like this, there's a war someplace and they'll pull some verse out of Revelation that has to do with maybe close to the area that it might be in.

Oh, this is happening and my question is what happened to all the stuff that came before it? If the rest didn't fit, if this doesn't fit after in the right order that God said, you know what, I can guarantee it's not it.

You've got to follow the Word of God to follow those things. Notice what he says, there's going to be earthquakes and natural catastrophes, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, droughts, tsunamis, all these are going to occur for the result of a fallen world in which we live.

Those things just happen. You know, we live in a generation, they try to make excuses to say men cause it, but I tell you what, that's a pretty arrogant statement. It amazes me how arrogant people are when they consider we can control our world.

[ 27 : 53 ] I want you to understand there's only one in control of this world. And the Bible tells us that it's by him all things consist.

He is the one over all things. He's the creator. He is the one that designed and put together. He knows exactly how it operates. When these things happen, they're not signs of the end by themselves.

There's going to be famines and troubles. You know, we see in the world there's starvation from famines. They're going to occur. I want you to understand it doesn't mean we shouldn't help, but these things are going to happen.

Jesus says these things must be. They're going to be. This is the way it's going to be. We find troubles. Troubles in Matthew chapter 24 refers to them as a pestilence, a disease, or plagues.

You know, don't be disturbed. Jesus said it was going to happen. You know, a few years ago when COVID came through, people went ballistic. Oh, you know, the end, all this stuff.

[ 28 : 59 ] People start, I want you to understand it's stuff we have to endure, things we go through, but Jesus said, hey, it's going to be. Those same things that happened throughout history, we don't get exempt cards from.

Our day is going to have the same problems. You know, it's not hard to find the end is near crowd that's trying to base it off these things. I want you to understand, I believe Jesus can return at any time.

We need to be prepared for His return, but I want you to understand we should not live our daily life only thinking, because we have to think Jesus tells us that we need to be ready, but we also need to be living.

He says, you'll know when the time is. You know, we understand it as an attempt to twist Scripture out of context in order to reinforce their error. Jesus declares that these things are just the beginning of sorrows.

Now, I want you to see here the declaration that Jesus makes here, because Jesus says these are the beginning of sorrows. Now, this term beginning of sorrows, this declaration that Jesus makes to the disciples, you cannot judge the end by the things happening solely around us, as they're just the beginning of sorrows.

[ 30 : 15 ] this word sorrows refers to birth pains. Okay? Now, all the moms in here can probably understand this phrase, this context in reality, but when a woman gets ready to have a child, they'll begin having pains right before it delivers, and you know, they're thinking, oh, this is pretty bad.

Then they realize by the time they get in the middle of it, it gets a lot worse. The beginning is just that. There are some pains involved, but they're nothing in context to what it is in the actual giving of birth.

This is the same picture Jesus uses here. He says, all these things are the beginning of sorrows. They're like those initial contractions that a lady has when she gets ready to give birth. You know, they're like, oh, you know, I've been around a few ladies that have given birth.

You know, most of them, they, you know, at the beginning it's just like, oh, you know, then by the end it's a whole different song. We'll just leave it there. Amen? But that's what Jesus is giving as an illustration here to help us understand.

Because the beginning of those things is not the actual. The actual is way different. To understand those things, you can't judge the end by those things that are just happening.

[ 31 : 29 ] The pains at the beginning are not even close to the intensity of actual birth, and we know it's going to be soon, but we don't know when. Jesus wanted His disciples and everyone else to know that yes, He will return one day in power and in glory.

Notice what Jesus tells them here. He says, these are the beginning of sorrows, but He's speaking here about when He's going to return. Remember, that was the initial question. That was what was leading up to these things, and I want you to know today as we begin looking at this passage that Jesus is coming back.

John chapter 14, Jesus makes it very clear to His disciples. Remember what He says, let not your heart be troubled. You know, isn't that some good news for today?

Don't be troubled over all these things. Don't be troubled of all the things, the catastrophes and other things. That word troubled means to be worked up or upset or to be dominated by. Remember, Jesus said these things need to be so. He says, let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.

[ 32 : 41 ] I go to prepare a place for you. Now notice verse 3, it says, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will do what? Come again and receive you what?

Unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. Jesus is coming again. You can rest assured, it's clear He's coming.

But as we're going to find here as we look at this passage, as we continue in the weeks to come, we don't know the day or the hour. We don't have a set time frame to be able to say this is it.

You know, we need to be looking for Him to understand what we need to do. Turn back over to Acts chapter 1 for a moment. Acts chapter 1.

Here Jesus has answered the disciples, you know, you don't know the time or the hour and He tells us that you're going to be witnesses into the whole world and that Jesus gets caught up into the cloud and the disciples are standing there with their jaws open.

[ 33 : 43 ] Now, you say, how do you know they had their jaws open? Because the Bible says they stood there gazing into heaven. I think I would probably have the same response right there. If you were talking to Jesus and suddenly He just parted up into the clouds, you'd be going, normal response.

apostles were just people like you and I. They're looking at Jesus go up into the clouds and notice here in Acts chapter 1 verse 11, which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?

This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as you've seen Him go into heaven. I want you to know that Jesus is coming again.

There's coming a day He's going to come and He's going to come first for His people. You know, Paul writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he reveals a mystery that those that believe one day are going to be caught up to be with Him.

You know, this catching up, we often use that term rapture. That's what that term refers to as the idea of being caught up. And he makes it very clear, 1 Thessalonians 4, he says this, for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God.

[ 34 : 57 ] And the dead in Christ shall rise first when we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with Him in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, notice this, comfort one another with these words.

You know, one of the things we can keep in mind that helps give us comfort as believers is Jesus is coming again. He's coming for His own. To take us out out of this fallen world.

We know He's coming for the saints and also return in majesty and power to establish His kingdom. But He doesn't want us to be distracted by His coming. He wants us to be ready for it.

Because it's going to happen when it happens. I want you to know that it's important to be ready when He does come. Because if you're not a believer today, the things that Jesus mentions in these verses to come could very well come upon you.

There's coming a time of the Bible refers to as tribulation. The question is, are you going to be in it? Or are you going to be above it? Because Jesus says He's going to take us out.

[ 36 : 08 ] To be with Him. We're not appointed under wrath. And we know He's coming for the saints. And you know, if you're not a believer today, these things ought to serve as a wake-up call for you.

Because the fact is, Jesus is coming. The world is going to go into a time of terrible tribulations. Billions will die due to war and disease and starvation and other plagues.

And the only way to guarantee you miss it is to have accepted Christ as your Savior. That's how you miss it. When people are ready for the Lord's return when He's coming for His people.

You know, today we need to be ready because Jesus is even telling His disciples as we continue looking in this passage, be ready, but occupy until He comes.

To be working for the Lord. Today, if you've never trusted Christ as your Lord and Savior, I challenge you to consider being prepared.

[ 37 : 09 ] And that takes recognizing your sin and your pride and to come to Jesus in humility and believe the gospel because He died for your sin and mine.

And it's for whoever will call upon Him. You're the one that makes the decision of what you're going to do with Jesus. As heads are bowed and eyes are closed this morning, are you ready for the Lord's return?

Are you ready? If you're not sure that you're ready, today would be the best day in the world to get ready. We can have somebody show you from God's Word how you can know, not just guess or hope, but to know that you have eternal life from the promises of God.

What about you today, Christian? Are you living in light of His return? What about you today? Is the Lord speaking to you? Is there a need that God has revealed to you, decision or direction?

If that be you, I encourage you to be with Him. Pray today. Call upon Him. Heavenly Father, as we conclude this service here today, Lord, we pray just to have your hand upon each heart, each life.

[ 38 : 15 ] Lord, you know we might be able to put on a good front for others, but Lord, you know the heart of every individual. Lord, I pray just to work mightily your spirit would just convict and convince.

Lord, you know the need of each one. Lord, maybe it's some encouragement that's needed.

Knowing that we can trust you and that Lord, you're above all the woes of this world. Lord, I pray just to have your way in each heart and life here today.

And let's give you all the praise in Jesus' name. As the piano plays, what about you?