

# Jesus the Teacher - The destruction of Jerusalem and Signs of the End of the Age

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[ 0 : 00 ] But anyway, I'm going to read through this. It's Matthew 24, 3 to 14 and 26 to 28. As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately.

Tell us, they said, when will this happen? When will the end come? What will be the sign of your return and of the end of the age? Jesus answered, watch out that no one deceives you, for many will come in my name, claiming I am the Messiah and will deceive many.

You'll hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Just remember that phrase. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.

Nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.

Then you'll be handed over to be persecuted and put to death and you'll be hated by all nations because of me. It's not particularly encouraging verse, is it?

[ 1 : 07 ] But it's a fact. And it's happening in this world today already. And it happened from the day people began to follow Jesus. We're in a spiritual warfare, so it's no surprise at all.

Verse 10, At that time, many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other. Sadly, that happens now in the countries where they are persecuted for their faith.

Not with everyone, clearly, but some people have betrayed them to the police in China and places like that where the underground church is. It's so sad.

And many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. But the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. But the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. Let me say that once more. I need to hear it three times, even if you don't. But the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.

[ 2 : 17 ] And Jesus said earlier, Don't worry. Don't worry. Don't be concerned about these things that will happen around you. He's got this. And this gospel, verse 14, of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations.

And then the end will come. So, Jesus said, If anyone tells you, there he is, out in the wilderness, don't go out. Or here he is in the inner rooms, do not believe it.

Because when Jesus comes, verse 27, makes it very clear what it will be like. For as the lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will it be when the coming of the man appears.

wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather. Next slide, please. For any visitors or anybody who's not been here more than once, whenever I preach, there's always motorcycles on the picture because that's the mission that we reach out to, the motorcycle world.

But sometimes, some of these pictures actually impact you in relation to what I'm saying. Not always, but most. Now on this occasion, Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives and he's with his disciples.

[ 3 : 41 ] They've gathered to him privately. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have been a private, the sort of central little group of disciples that went everywhere with Jesus and you had opportunity sometimes to go to him and say, what was that you said?

Or what's going to happen next? What am I going to face? I've given up so much, but am I having to give up so much more? In other words, the disciples were able to share their pain, their sorrow, their fear of the future, but also their joy and their marvellous, the marvellous things that Jesus did, their miracles and their power and authority.

You just want to sit with him, wouldn't you, and listen and soak it all in, but then use that to build the kingdom on this earth. So here Jesus is sharing biblical prophecy with his disciples and he's speaking of events to come.

And the disciples asked him when he would come in power and what they could expect. But Jesus' reply emphasised the events that would take place before the end of the age and that they should and we should be less concerned about the exact exact exact date.

I'm sorry, I can't say that word. Date and more concerned about being prepared for that time. So less concerned about the date and time and more concerned about being prepared for that time.

[ 5 : 17 ] We've just had communion and part of the communion service, as I'm sure you know, is that we will do this in remembrance of him until he comes again. It's so significant.

And Jesus implied here that we are to live consistently godly lives until he comes again, if we remain on this earth until that period. And we're to look to Jesus' return, but we're to live in the present, but be prepared and ready for the future.

And, I think we should add to that, prepare our community, our nation, our world for the coming of Christ. But I want to begin by acknowledging the key factors that are, I think, essential, just two factors.

Each factor has a lot of words attached to it, so forgive me, there's only two points I want to make today, really, but in the process there will be a lot of points and factors. So factor one, Jesus came as our saviour.

And you know, we take that for granted so much, don't we, because we come to church. I think it was great when Eve was sharing a testimony at the baptism there and she was saying from a young age she'd asked God, she'd prayed, she'd thought about God and Jesus and all this kind of thing, but ultimately now it's become something personal and intimate, but she'd been told all about it.

[ 6 : 43 ] You may be surprised there are many people outside of this church in this town, in this nation, in this world and certainly in the motorcycle community that, number one, have little interest in God, but number two, don't even appreciate Jesus came.

And when he first came, he came as saviour. And the reason why so many people don't believe this or expect it or understand it or have even given it a second thought is because they no longer are taught it at Sunday school, in assemblies, at school, or by their parents or whatever.

I've told you probably before when I was a youth evangelist of one of my colleagues saying that she'd spoken to a 14-year-old boy about the basics of the story of the cross at Calvary in Jesus' resurrection at Easter, the Easter story.

And this 14-year-old boy turned around and said, oh, that's interesting. So when did this happen? A couple of years ago? And he was being honest. He had no idea that Jesus came as his saviour and we need to make this known.

But why did Jesus come to earth for us as saviour? Because God loved this world of broken, sinful human beings, you and me.

[ 8 : 02 ] And still loves this world, you and me, in equal proportion today as he did then. God sent his son as if you were the only person on earth.

And Jesus left the glory of heaven to lay aside his majesty, as we say in a song, and became a man but without sin and yet completely God.

That song we sing is, you laid aside your majesty. You gave up everything for me. You suffered at the hands of those you created who he'd come to save. You took all my guilt and shame and there was a lot of it.

When you died and you rose again and now today you reign in heaven and earth exalted. So Jesus was born in human form yet as I said, holy God, holy man and that's so important.

2 Corinthians 5.21 says that God made Jesus who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

[ 9 : 12 ] Isn't that incredible? The righteousness of God. That's why the reason he came that we may be forgiven and be righteous. There's a terrible option of self-righteousness that that is not referring to.

This is righteousness when we are made right in the eyes of God and it includes certain aspects if not all aspects of our lives, our character, our nature.

When we have a character of righteousness, our nature, who we are is totally different to who we were. Again, as we said at the baptism there, we're new creations in Christ Jesus.

If your life is such that you want to be forgiven of your sin and start all over again, that's what God's offering and I'll explain that in a minute. So our character, our conscience, our conscience becomes righteous.

You know, when I was a police officer I arrested some people and I honestly think they had absolutely no conscience whatsoever of some of the terrible things they did. They certainly didn't give the impression they did.

[10:27] But our character is our nature, our conscience in Christ is our attitude to those around us and what we do and how that can have an effect on the people, the community, those we love even.

But also, righteousness affects our conduct, our actions. You know, it's very simple and very easy sometimes when we're not a Christian to ignore problems around us.

But when we become Christ's, when we follow Jesus, our conduct, our actions change in that He asks us to lift those up who are broken hearted, to go to those who are lonely, to go to those who have nothing to eat, nothing to wear, all those different things.

We can't walk past the broken world. And our righteousness, being right in the eyes of God, also affects the way we speak or the commands upon our lives.

The words we say can be building up or breaking down and so often, I think we as Christians need to stop a little while and think before we speak. And when we become a Christian, God changes and develops who we are in our entirety.

[11:45] And that's why as a church, our theme is be with Jesus, become like Jesus and do what Jesus did. I actually shared that with the church I preached at at Onken, a town in the Isle of Man.

And the guy I was speaking to, he said, wow, that is so simple yet so profound. To be with Jesus, become like Jesus, do what Jesus did. Romans 12.2 says, don't conform to the pattern of this world because that's the way I used to live before I became a Christian.

I was so affected by the pattern of the world, doing what everybody else was doing and not really regarding anything except being part of that world, if you like.

Getting in too deep and wondering if I could ever get out. But Paul says, don't be conformed to that, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

And then he goes on to say, and then you'll be able to test and improve what God's will is. His good, pleasing and perfect will. When we become a Christian, when we follow him, we want to know what he wants us to do.

[12:54] We need to be able to discern what that means. I love the way a Christian artist, an author called Matt Tommy, said, or explained the renewing of our mind.

He put it this way, that he believes it means interpreting life through the lens of God's word and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit rather than through the lens of my experience or my brokenness, my wounds of past life, my trauma that I'm going through or my preferences or the opinions of others I know.

Hope you got that. Because if God renews our minds and we focus on that and we look unto him, the author and finisher of our faith, we're not going to look and listen and live by the opinions of others.

We've got to look at the word of God which is right and true, which is a double-edged sword, which is powerful to change. Our righteousness is based upon God's standard as well.

You know, so often when we have children it's usually the bathroom door or the kitchen door we all mark off don't we, every year just how big they've got.

[14:13] I wonder if one day someone was to change that plan not based on the height of the kids but their righteousness and good behaviour of their children. I wonder how far up the door that would go.

I can't imagine where I would have been on that as a kid. So our righteousness is based upon God's high standard.

We can never achieve that high standard in our own ability. Nothing we can do could ever get near it. Even, be even on that scale but because we're forgiven by almighty God and that Christ came to enable us to be saved and forgiven and have this renewed mind.

Because of that we're made righteous in God's eyes. No longer a slave to sin as the song says. It's like wearing a royal cloak or like the prodigal son who comes home smelling of pig slop from head to foot stinking.

And his father doesn't say I'm going to renew you as my son go have a shower and then I'll put a ring on your finger, shoes and a robe around you. He wraps the sin a mess of the son in a royal robe.

[15:35] The fatherhood the renewed sonship. Actually sorry to refer to you again Eve but when Eve came out of the cold cold sea my goodness was that cold.

We had a dry robe for her the sort of thing that if you wear when you come out of the sea for surfing or whatever and Sophie was trying to zip it up and the zip was awkward because it was too low to the floor.

I think it was probably mine anyway I don't know but then we just said no wrap it around you and she enfolded herself and did this and then she put the hood up and that warmth that she felt from that is just like the royal robes we don't deserve.

Didn't matter in the dry robe that she was wet because that's the point of a dry robe it kind of sucks it off you I suppose you'd say. But one of the most important verses in the Bible is this I think John 14 the disciple John could personally testify as we should he said the word Jesus became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us.

Next slide please. We've seen his glory the glory of the one and only son who came from the father full of grace and truth. Isn't that incredible?

[17:01] This isn't just an ethereal book we're reading this is the word of God talking about the truth and reality of God on this earth in Christ Jesus. He became flesh made his dwelling amongst us he understands what our world is about.

He created it but he lived within it but he never sinned and some people find that very hard to believe. And John said we've seen his glory we've seen the things he did the glory of only he the son of God could have done.

He commanded the winds and waves in the storm to be calm and it wasn't a sort of a delayed response he said the word and it was calm. and he's full of grace and truth.

And Jesus came to earth on that first occasion in God's perfect timing with one express and I call it magnificent purpose to save me a sinner to save you a sinner and that one purpose has many factors as well to pay the debt we owed to God for our sin.

We could never do that. So if we repent our sin would be forgiven. Then we would be free from all the guilt and shame we've carried. I'll never forget the day I experienced that the first time.

[18:26] Everything gone. All the burden. All the things that weighed me down. All the guilt and shame that stopped me sleeping in peace. being terrified that someone would find out who I was really like.

The life I'd led and all that can of rubbish. But so he also came so that we could have a personal relationship with Jesus with him our saviour and be filled with God's Holy Spirit.

Not one of those things did I ever imagine before I became a Christian that even vaguely we could experience but we can. John 3 verse 3 I love that verse because it's easy to remember where it is in the Bible isn't it?

John 3 3 because it's near John 3 16 as well. Jesus calls or spoke to Nicodemus a religious leader a Pharisee who should have really known what this was all about but Jesus said to him albeit you're religious you can't see the kingdom because you're not born again.

And he said born again? What do you mean? I've been born of my mother's womb with water. And he said no born of the Spirit of God and those who were baptized this week we could speak to him about how that new life in Christ means not only new life in Christ but Christ and the Holy Spirit in us.

[19:55] That's what makes the difference. And Jesus said to him unless you're born again you cannot see the kingdom of God which is like saying unless you're born again you'll never see the kingdom of God.

And unless you're born again you won't feel the reality of the love of God because when you are born again you do don't you? And it's so incredible you want to run and tell everybody about it but if you're not born again you won't understand the love of God.

it's hard to comprehend even as a Christian less more when you don't have the Holy Spirit within you to explain it and you won't have any desire to share the love of God if you're not born again. Why would you? There are many people in this country who say that they're a Christian. In fact I've met people all around the world where I've had opportunity with Sandy often to travel and just share the gospel with people.

But there's many people who use the term Christian particularly when they go to hospital and they're asked what religion are you? But they may have never been in a church or only in a church once or twice or they've never read the Bible.

[ 21 : 08 ] They've never begun any kind of relationship with Christ and they don't even know they can. And very very sadly they are caught up in a place of religion rather than going through and going through a process sorry of attending church each Sunday but they have no relationship with Jesus.

And there may be somebody in here today that you know about God but you don't know God personally. And that's the key reason why Christ came. In Isaiah it says that we are separated from God by our sin.

But then it says in 1 John that if we ask God to forgive us if we repent of our sin he gives us the right to be called children of God.

That's why we call him Abba Father Father God. That's why Jesus said to them when you pray say Father. And that was an anathema really to the Jewish people who were listening on.

That wasn't a position that they thought they could ever have. God willingly sent his son to earth as a rescue mission and that would not fail.

[ 22 : 27 ] It couldn't fail because it was something ordained by God in heaven. And it wasn't just at that moment it was planned before the time began. And there's a band called Wren Collective which Sandy and I love and I'm sure many of you heard this song.

I'm not going to read all the words of the verses but I want these two verses just to impact our lives to remind us that when Christ came he came as rescuer for us. The verse says that there's good news for the captive.

There's good news for the shamed. There's good news for the one who previously walked away from God. And there's good news for the doubter. The one religion failed for the good Lord has come to seek and save.

Then it goes on to say so come and be chainless. Do you understand that? You know when we sin, when we're in sin we have no place to break free of the chains that hold us in that.

But when Jesus met a man who was living in a cemetery, he'd been chained and shackled but he could break those chains. The physical chains but he couldn't break the sin and the demons that dogged his life but Jesus broke everything.

[ 23 : 46 ] And he walked away from that cemetery in his right mind. Some of you may have heard me speak recently and asked you to pray for the son of some friends of ours who live on the Isle of Man.

And their son is called George. George is a schizophrenic. He's sadly been very ill all his life. but at one point in his life on the Isle of Man he became very kind of belligerent and kind of went off on one but this day he left the island and he disappeared from his mum and dad.

George is about 35 I would imagine but he looks about 60 because of the life he's been leading. His mum and dad are great Christians and were terribly worried and they contacted me and many other people to say if ever you come across George somewhere anywhere put him out on Facebook if you see our son please let us know where he is.

But George wasn't in a rational frame of mind but then right out the blue answer to prayer not a coincidence somebody in Moscow contacted my friends and said I think I found your son.

He's living rough amongst all the Russian people in Moscow. He's the only English person that's there. Everybody else are drunks and drug addicts.

[ 25 : 14 ] And their hearts leapt with joy but they knew that the road ahead wouldn't be an easy one. But every day they were getting updates from this friend who is a Russian who looks after those who are living on the road and two Americans who also separately had a chance to get to know George and give him food and what have you.

But still George refused to do anything but live where he lives. Don't worry Libby you're a busy lady. Don't worry. If there's a cow need your help this is the time.

But the week before the TT which is about two and a half weeks ago now my two friends mum and dad of George flew out to Moscow against everything that the home office said.

You'd do that wouldn't you because it's your son. And this guy called Pavel who was helping them took three days to find George. And then eventually they found him in a cemetery.

Living amongst the graveyard the gravestones just like that man. And they ended up standing four metres away probably a metre a little. And to their heartbreak even though they'd gone all that way George said he didn't want to speak to them and walked away.

[ 26 : 39 ] Desperate circumstances desperate people. And they did everything they could. You can imagine Fiona the mum was desperate just to go put her arms around him. In the hope that he would say yeah I'll come home.

But he didn't. And he doesn't want to. But the great thing is as we pointed out to him as I prayed with him in a cafe that God's got his eye on George at all times.

Christ came as saviour to reach out to the broken hearted. So where this verse says in the song so come and be chainless. Come and be fearless. Come to the foot of Calvary.

That's where we need to pray that George will go. Because there's redemption for every affliction. Even schizophrenia. And worse. Here at the foot of Calvary.

You know when Christ came as saviour we didn't deserve it. That's not why he came. We never will deserve it. We never could deserve it.

[ 27 : 37 ] And we can't buy it. But many people have tried. And we can't inherit it. Please bear that in mind. Especially if your parents are Christians and you're not. We need to believe it by faith and receive it by faith.

So. Next. Next slide please. So. The second factor. The second key essential I believe is that Jesus will come again as judge.

Jesus will come again to earth in God's perfect timing. Not according to our calendar, our plan and expectation. And he'll come for one express purpose.

As judge. The second coming of Christ is mentioned in over 1500 passages in the Old Testament. And interestingly, one out of every 25 verses in the New Testament.

Jesus answered the disciples by saying, watch out that no one deceives you for many will come in my name claiming that they are the Messiah and will deceive many.

[ 28 : 45 ] And you know, there have been so many fake Messiahs. Even in the Jewish history, countless numbers of them. But also in lots of different cults as you would expect.

cults who have taken scripture and twisted it, using it for devious means, etc. Do you remember the Moonies? The Unification Church, I think was the other title, but everybody knew them as the Moonies.

I once had a chance to meet a Moonie when I was a policeman. It was nine o'clock at night and all my colleagues said, oh my goodness, we don't understand this guy. Somebody had sort of been knocking him about a bit and they gave him to me and I spent a couple of hours in a police interview room talking to him about Jesus.

And he was really grateful because what he'd been soaking up from the Moonie organization was absolutely garbage and deceiving. But the person whose name I can't pronounce, I'm not even going to try, who heads up the Moonies was implying he was God incarnate.

So many people deceiving, as Jesus said. Watch out, he says, to those who believe so that no one deceives you.

[ 30 : 01 ] And there's an inevitability, isn't there, of fakes and deceivers claiming to be the Messiah because Christ on this earth is so important. Great member of CMA, a great friend of ours, Sid, from Widness.

He always says, Widness is a great place to come from as often as you can. But Sid has a passion even for motorcyclists to reach them for the gospel. But every year, he commits two weeks of his personal holiday to go out to Uganda with a team and they reach out to the locals and see God do mighty things.

But he one day, last time he was there earlier in the year, he was confronted by a very scary and evil tribal leader who lived an opulent life but everybody who followed him lived in absolute fear and he stated to Sid that he was the Messiah and that he would never die.

Well, the man died and everything he said and did came to nothing and those who followed him for fear, otherwise, nothing happened because he was an empty man who also Christ died for, don't

forget.

But not everybody will see the truth. Sid said you could feel the tangible presence of evil in this man and many cults have declared that they knew the time and date of Jesus' return.

[ 31 : 28 ] But also, Jesus said that there will be followers, even the elect, I think the phrase is used in one translation, even they will be deceived about when he's coming.

Now, Sandy and I know some wonderful Christians. We know one particular couple who began to think that Jesus was coming last year and they were starting to replan their lives on the basis of we won't need all this anymore because Jesus is coming.

And we were desperately concerned. By the way, they were wrong. And everybody who attempts to work out the date have always been wrong.

Isn't it interesting, though, that after they're wrong, they always have an excuse and often come up with another date based on, ah, things change. It wasn't quite as we all anticipated, but we haven't lost face.

Oh, yes, you have. Matthew 24 puts it right. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away, Jesus said. But about that day or hour, no one knows.

[ 32 : 36 ] Not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, only the Father. So stop worrying about that. Worry more, be more concerned about that aspect of how we live.

Consistent godly lives, looking for Jesus' return, but living in the present, being prepared and ready for the future, but sharing that gospel that will have to be proclaimed.

Now, Jesus said there will be signs and there are signs and wonders that we could look at and think they're all coming together so maybe Jesus will be returning soon and that's okay because some of them look like they are, but don't think you've got it sussed because nobody else other than the Father knows the time.

Jesus said, you will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed by it. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.

Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these things are happening and have happened on and off since time began if we're honest.

[ 33 : 49 ] But Jesus said all these are the beginnings of birth pains. Now, any lady who's ever given birth understands this, but I have to say just on behalf of the husbands, any husbands that's ever sat in that uncomfortable chair when your wife's going through pain but she's on the comfortable bed and it's like 13 hours.

There was, there's only one way to console a man at a time like that. Just go down to the garage, buy some Coke and crisps or if there's a McDonald's near the hospital, which is always a good plan. It's the only way to get through this.

The baby will come when the baby will come. Isn't that true? Is it such an effort? It is, isn't it? No, no, I knew it was.

Oh my goodness, Carolyn Deirdre just gave me the eyes. I don't know. But in the same way, the coming of Jesus will be in God's timing.

We're not going to force that to happen. Oh, sorry, I'm going to stop that analogy now. Okay, the gospel message of salvation, Jesus said, through the death and resurrection of Jesus will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come.

[ 35 : 07 ] I love the fact that years ago when I was looking around and praying about God, do you want me to go to Bible college? And I came across All Nations Bible College. It's a tremendous place with a great reputation for preparing people for missionary work, not only biblically, which is obviously so important, but for where they were going to go to how to strip down a Land Rover engine, build a wall and make toilets work and things like that.

Great preparation. But that reminds me that Christ will come when all nations have heard. And there are still maybe some nations nowadays that haven't heard, but certainly by the means of the internet and all the rest makes a big difference.

So when the day of Jesus' return occurs, no one will be left in any doubt. It's not like the sun has risen at Castleton and we see this amazing sun rise as we saw today.

It's nothing going to be like that at all. Because Jesus said, for as the lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be coming, so will be the coming of the Son of Man, surrounded by the angelic host.

So to round this off, what happens when Jesus returns? Well, evil is defeated, the earth is restored and God wins.

[ 36 : 29 ] And our response to Jesus' return will depend upon our relationship with him or not. It will either be, as John MacArthur wonderfully calls it, the greatest calamity in all of human history, for those who don't know or believe, or the fulfillment of the blessed hope that Titus 2 says in verse 13.

We are waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. What a moment that will be. What a day that will be.

For those who are in Christ, for those who believe, but what a day that will be of terror for those who are not. And faith in Christ makes a difference.

So I ask today, have you been born again? That's a very ill-used word in the world. But it's the word that Jesus used. It's the difference of going to church and leaving the church.

Not knowing Jesus, but maybe know about him. Luke 18.8 says, But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?

[ 37 : 53 ] I hope he comes and finds that we have stayed the course. We've run the race. We've not given up. We've not backed down. So let's bow our heads, shall we?

Thank you.