

## Mark Series: Let the Gospel Tell the Gospel

### WORSHIP, WATCH & FOLLOW

"What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'" *Mar 13:37*

Covenant Presbyterian Church

#### MARK 13:28-37

5 May A.D. 2013

**Preliminary Point 1:** We desire the Bible be systematic theology book/how- to-manual, but while deeply theological the Bible is essentially God's Word to shepherd us in worshipful discipleship. ***Worship Jesus, watch and follow.***

Moses was shepherding Israel out of Egypt with the Word God gave him (Genesis, Exodus, cf. Exo 20)

Jesus in Mark 13 (*Mat 24, Luke 21*) shepherds his disciples, giving them the word they need to face the future.

**Preliminary Point 2:** Sound biblical interpretation is not a choice between *Literal v. Figurative*, but rather between *Normal-to-the-original speaker/hearer/reader v. distorted by our assumptions/expectations*.

See: Mar 13:19 (cf. Joel 2:1-2; Dan 9:12); Mar 13:24-26 (Isa 13:10; Eze 32:7-8; Dan 7:13-14; Psa 104:1-4; Rev 1:7)

13:1-2 Leaving the temple a disciple remarks on the wonderful stones and buildings of the temple. Jesus promises, *Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down.*

13:3-4 Peter, James, John & Andrew question him...

**when will** these things be? ... **what the sign** when all these things are going to be fulfilled?

The disciples rightly assume the destruction of the temple is tied to the Lord's coming.

13:5-6 **See to it that no one misleads you**      Many will come in My name, saying, *I am He*

13:7-8 Wars/rumors of wars...not yet the end

Nations rise against nation      Earthquakes...famines      Merely the beginning of birth pangs

Unlike in so much prophetic speculation these things do not predict the end

13:9-13 **Be on your guard**

Deliver you to courts      Flogged in synagogues      Stand before governors/kings

*The gospel must first be preached to all nations*

When arrested...don't worry...Spirit speaks for you      Brother betrays brother, father child

Children against parents      Hated by all because of me

**But the one who endures to the end will be saved.**

The preaching of the gospel to the nations may be considered in 1<sup>st</sup> century ears to have been accomplished.

See Acts 2:5; 17:6; 24:5; Rom 1:8. This does not mean during these times of the Gentiles we cease witness.

13:14-23 When Abomination of Desolation is seen...

Those in Judea **flee** to the mountains      One on housetop—don't go into house      One in field not go back for coat

Woe to those pregnant or nursing      Pray it won't be winter

For those days will be a tribulation such has not occurred...and never will.

Unless the Lord had shortened for the elect, no life saved...

If anyone says, ***Here is the Messiah*** or ***Behold, there***, do not believe.

False Messiahs and prophets arise **to lead astray**...

**Take heed; behold**, I have told you in advance.

These words must apply to Jesus' disciples and those of their generation. See Luke 21-20-22.

13:24-27 But in those days, after that tribulation,

Sun darkened, Moon will not give light Stars fall from heaven/powers in heavens shaken

Then they will see **the Son of Man coming in clouds** with great power and glory.

**Then he will send** forth angels, and will gather together his elect...

It is reasonable to also take these verses to apply to the events and time of Jesus' death, , resurrection, ascension, Pentecost and Titus' legions in AD 70.

Jesus' kingdom is now established.

1. His death redeems it, buys it.
2. His resurrection seals it as his.
3. His ascension leads to his being enthroned on high. He comes into his kingdom first at the Father's side.
4. His Spirit is poured out at Pentecost with tongues of judgment on unbelieving Israel (a visitation of God a la Isaiah 28:11; 1 Cor 14:21; Joel 2:28) See Jer 5:15; 1 Cro 14:21; Acts 2:17-21; Mal 3:1-2; 4:5; Mark 9:11-13; Mat 11:12-15; 1 Thes 2:13-16.

13:28-31 Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when branch becomes tender and puts forth leaves, summer is near  
When you see these things happening, recognize that **he is near, at the door**  
Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until **all these things take place**.  
*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.*

Birth pangs are always around and about, but with the upheavals accompanying Jesus' death, Gentiles coming to Messiah by the thousands—know that a great visitation is upon us. Those in Judea needed to flee.

Only Jesus can say that heaven and earth will pass away but his words will not:  
*Worship him, trust him, alertly follow!*

13:32-37 Of that day or hour no one knows...but the Father. **Take heed, keep on the alert**, for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man on a journey...putting his slaves in charge, **to each one his task**, commanding the **doorkeeper to stay on the alert**.  
**Therefore, be on the alert**—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming...evening, midnight, rooster crowing or morning, in case he should come suddenly and find you **asleep**.  
What I say to you, I say to all, **Be on the alert!**

**Readiness:** If this interpretation is accurate, then much of the application of the apostolic teaching of Paul and Peter fits into this period between the cross and AD 70. If Revelation was written before AD 70 (as I believe it was) then much of our understanding of the book may need to be adjusted; it is likely that Nero (whose name in Hebrew letters/numerical equivalents adds up to 666) is likely the prominent figure in that book.

But do not let any of this keep us from the real fruit of the apostolic teaching. THINK OF THE APOSTLES' CREED:  
6. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
7. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Nothing stands in the way of his coming. His words are proven trustworthy. We await return & bodily resurrection.

**What are the ways we sleep? What are the ways we need to keep awake?** Luke 21:34–36 Romans 13:11–14

- 1/ Do you still hate sin as you did when you first knew God's mercy and forgiveness? Or have you grown accustomed to it?
- 2/ How often are you convicted of sin? More now than earlier in your walk with Christ?
- 3/ When was the last time you remember confessing specific sin specifically and asking God (and thanking him) for forgiveness?
- 4/ When did you last go to another and ask their forgiveness? If not recently it is not that you have not needed to; it is that you are asleep to the consequences of not honoring Christ's body by walking in the light so we may have close fellowship with one another.
- 5/ Do you ever think about the fearfulness of God's coming in judgment?
- 6/ Are you/we blasé about the power of God and his longing to work in and through his church?

**Wake up! Stay alert!**