

# Luke 21:5-38

## *The End is Coming*

Image Church // Inverted Kingdom Vol. 2 / Controversial Jesus: Wk. 9

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### Compassion Report/Echo Call

Image Family!

Listen, I want to celebrate what happened last weekend! We had our *first-ever* **Compassion Weekend**, where we responded to the gospel by rescuing children from poverty in Jesus' name!

- And we did this through child sponsorships through a strategic partner that we have called **Compassion International**.
- They work with local churches on the ground in Honduras that provide physical care, spiritual development, educational development, and job training through **Child Development Centers!**
- And it's more than just a sponsorship, it's a relationship that you get to have- you can write letters, they will write you letters, you can share the gospel, and even go visit them!

And you responded to the call!! **Are you ready for this, we have 44 children that are sponsored through Image Church!** *Can we put our hands together and celebrate that!*

- The kids that we sponsored, many of them waiting for a year or more, will get notified that they have been sponsored and that they now have access to an incredible opportunity because of your faithfulness! *So powerful!*
- **You gave up the cost of one meal a month so that a child can have the opportunity to flourish for a lifetime in Jesus' name!**
- This is something that is going to have a generational impact, not only for them but for us as well!

Now I know that some of you missed last week or needed some more time to process this and so we have the opportunity for you this week to join in on this... Want to see us exceed **50 kids!**

- Yall, this is such an exciting thing in the life of our church that's going to be a starting line for keeping us tethered to God's global mission!
- We have some great days ahead!

**Alright, if you have your Bible turn to Luke 21...**

### Intro:

Let me ask you this when you look into the future, what do you see? Where do you see yourself?

- What do you hope is gone in your life?
- What do you hope that you have in life?
- What things do you want to establish or excel in??
- What goals do you want to achieve?

**Stephen Covey**, in his book **7 Habits of Highly Successful people...** Says that we need to **begin with the end in mind...**

- Hey says that the key is looking to the future and letting it shape how you live today...

How often do we take the time to do this? How often do we lift our eyes up from the day-to-day to the future...

- I think for many people, the reason why they don't see a more significant change in their life is that they don't think about the future...
- There is a subtle satisfaction that we fall into...
- Or there are the stressors of today that keep us from looking forward to the future in order to shape how we live today...

**Here's the thing I want you to consider:** I wonder how true this is when it comes to our Spiritual lives?!?

- Have you ever considered your spiritual future? Have you ever considered how it can impact the now???

## ***We're going to be picking up in verse 5 of Luke 21...***

The setting has been the same, Jesus has been in the temple confronting the religious elite, and teaching and preaching the truths of God that ultimately point to ...

And this morning, we're going to watch a classic Jesus, where he takes some one-off comments that people are making and turns it into a powerful and prophetic teachable moment...

**Luke 21:5-38** *\*BTW: I want to give credit to theologian Tony Merida, his stuff on this was very helpful and influential in the flow and content of this sermon...*

**5** As some were talking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, **6** "These things that you see—the days will come when not one stone will be left on another that will not be thrown down."

So you got these people in awe of the temple, and Jesus takes this opportunity to let them know that it's going to be coming down...

Which, **BTW:** is a huge deal... The temple was the epicenter for the Jewish people... Everything it meant to be Jewish was tied to the temple... This is the place where God was... This is the place where they would worship... Everything was tied to this Temple for them...

- So this would have been a shocking statement by Jesus...
- For the people listening, they would have thought that this was the end of all things...
- But this wouldn't be the end of all things... This would be an act of Judgment and the end of the temple but with it, it would bring about a new era...

Here's the thing that I want you to understand... ***The temple was never designed to be end-all-be-all...*** The temple was designed to point the people to their need for the Messiah, Jesus!

- The temple was set up to show the Holiness of God and the separation that exists between God and man because of sin...

- It pointed to their need for atonement, the need to be covered, the need to be cleaned, the price and payment for their sin...
- This is what the sacrifices that happened there pointed to... This is what all the ceremonial acts pointed to...

This is why when Jesus died on the cross, the view would be torn... God and man are no longer separated... Jesus has given us unlimited access to God...

- No longer do we worship God in one place, but we can worship God anywhere because of Christ...
- For those who have trusted in Jesus because He becomes the new temple for us...
- The church would be established, and it would be called the Body of Christ...

But here's the thing, the people missed Jesus the Messiah, the deliverer- the very one that the law and the prophets and the temple pointed to... They rejected the one that everything was about...

- And because of that, God's Judgment comes on Jerusalem...

And here's the thing, what Jesus is saying that's coming with the fall of Jerusalem happens about **40 years after Jesus made this statement...**

**Let me give you a helpful timeline that's going to help as we walk through this...**

- The Crucifixion happened in **AD 30...**
- The book of Acts ends in **AD 60...**
- Fall of Jerusalem **AD 70...**

***I want you to pay attention to what Jesus says will happen and how it all plays out because it's going to point to something for us that has life-changing implications...***

Ok, Jesus started by talking about the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, and so naturally, it leads to a question from those listening...

**7** "Teacher," they asked him, "so when will these things happen? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?"

**8** Then he said, "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Don't follow them."

Jesus answers them with a warning pertaining to some things that are going to happen before the time He's talking about gets here...

He says to watch out, there are going to be others coming who claim to be me...

- And we see an example of what Jesus is talking about in **Acts 5:36-37**...

He continues in **Verse 9**:

**9** When you hear of wars and rebellions, don't be alarmed. Indeed, it is necessary that these things take place first, but the end won't come right away." But wait there's more...

**10** Then he told them, "Nation will be raised up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. **11** There will be violent earthquakes, and famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights and great signs from heaven."

Jesus is saying here's what coming leading up to **AD 70** and the destruction of the temple and the fall of Jerusalem... And watch this, these things happen...

- What we know from history is that **AD 70 was bloody**...
  - 50,000 Jews were killed in a riot in Alexandria...
  - There were also other major riots that lead to mass casualties of thousands in **Caesarea** and **Damascus**...
- There were also other conflicts and rumors of war all over the world...
  - There were conflicts in Germany, Africa, Gaul, Arminia...

- **Earthquakes** happened, specifically one with Paul and Silas singing in prison in **Acts 16**
- **Famine** happened: we see that in **Acts 11**, and in addition, there were 3 famines that happened during *Claudius'* reign who was the *Emperor of Rome* from **AD 40** to **AD 54**...<sup>1</sup>

**Verse 12** Jesus gives them more that will happen before the destruction of Jerusalem... He says:

**12** But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you. They will hand you over to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name."

He's saying there will be opposition and persecution that will come...

**And it does!**

- **Acts 4-5**- persecution starts with prison and being put on trial...
- **Acts 6-8** Stephen the first martyr...
- **Acts 9** shows us that Saul (who would become Paul) had been wreaking havoc on the church...
- **Later in Acts 9**, after Saul/Paul got saved, the Jews conspired to kill him...
- **Acts 12** James is Killed, and Peter is thrown in prison...
- **Acts 14** persecution against the church
- **Acts 16** Paul and Silas are put in prison
- **Acts 17**, a riot broke out because of what Paul was teaching, and the attacked Jason's house and drag him, and his brother is the street
- **Acts 18**: resistance against Paul's message...
- **Acts 19**: Another riot in Ephesus because Paul confronts people's worship of carved idols... The people that made the idols and those that worshiped them got mad...
- **Acts 20-25**, we see a laundry list of persecution against Paul...

**Then Jesus says this about these encounters with opposition...**

<sup>1</sup> I owe credit in this section to Tony Merida, *The Future: Certainty and Preparedness*

### Verse 13:

**13** This will give you an opportunity to bear witness. **14** Therefore make up your minds not to prepare your defense ahead of time, **15** for I will give you such words and a wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

What we know is that all of the opposition that they faced in Acts, all the ones I just laid out... Every one of them served to advance the gospel!

**Note: Opposition isn't an obstacle it's an opportunity... The same is true for us today...**

Also, don't miss what Jesus shows them here... The power of God at work in all this, in the midst of all the chaos... In the midst of the persecution...

- Jesus says, **no need to prepare, I will give you the words to say!**
- They don't know it yet, but it will come through the Holy Spirit that Jesus gives them access to through His finished work...

**BTW:** It's the same Spirit that you and I have! Let that sink in!!

**Verse 16** *Jesus continues...*

**16** You will even be betrayed by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends. They will kill some of you. *James is one of those, Acts 12* **17** You will be hated by everyone because of my name, This is a tough reality that became very true for them... We just saw that in all the references I listed off from Acts...

But then Jesus says this in **Verse 18:**

**18** but not a hair of your head will be lost. **19** By your endurance, gain your lives.

**IOW:** You may lose your life on this earth, but you are not lost, you will be mine for all of eternity...<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Jesus says that **it's through your endurance, your steadfastness, as you continue in the faith that you gain eternal life!**

- Endure now leads to a great gain later...

**BTW:** *this is the goal of the Christian life, to endure in faith to the end!*

- *Again, this is why the gospel can't just be the starting line, but why it has to be the essence of the Christian life... It's continual faith in Jesus that we have until the end...*

### Verse 20:

**20** "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that its desolation has come near.

We know from History this is exactly what happened...

- **Titus**, a future emperor of Rome, lead the Roman army to surround Jerusalem...
- They lay siege to it for around 5 months, and then they busted in and destroyed the city and the temple...<sup>3</sup>

Jesus goes on to describe the chaos and distress that will take place...

### Verse 21:

**21** Then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. Those inside the city must leave it, and those who are in the country must not enter it, **22** because these are days of vengeance to fulfill all the things that are written.

Jesus is saying when you begin to see these things, run for the hills! Get out of the city... And We know from history many Christians were able to escape to a place called **Pella**.<sup>4</sup>

**23** Woe to pregnant women and nursing mothers in those days, for there will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. **24** They will be killed by the sword and be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

This is what's coming for Jerusalem...

<sup>3</sup> Darrell L. Bock, Luke: 9:51–24:53, vol. 2, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 1676.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 1678.

Again, this *isn't* just a political thing that's about to go down between Rome and Jerusalem... ***This is an act of God's judgment on this city...***

And I know that this can be unsettling when we hear this... For some of you, it can even be a point of dismissal- where you say this just doesn't seem fair...

But here's what we have to understand...

- Justice is a necessary part of God... Part of His character...
  - In it we also see the beauty of His love to provide a way out so...
- The thing that we have to see is that they had a way out and chose not to take it...
- They had all the prophets, and they had Jesus Himself, and they chose to reject the prophets and kill Jesus...
- This was self-inflicted... And it's a really sad reality...

The question is, ***will the same be true for us?!?***

Here's what I want you to see, and *I need you to pay attention here...* This is where it gets really cool! Are you ready for this?!?

- Jesus has been doing more here than just describing what's going to happen to Jerusalem...***He's also giving us a foreshadow of what the end of the world will look like when Jesus returns...***

**IOW:** There's a pattern here where Jesus is showing that what happens to Jerusalem is a picture and a foreshadow of what will happen at the return of Jesus...

***And here is the point: Jesus tells us about the coming Judgment in the future for us, so we don't have to endure it!!***

- *Flee the wrath of God and find your refugee in Jesus Christ, there is a way of escape, and His name is Jesus...*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Credit for this section goes to Tony Merida, *The Future: Certainty and Preparedness*

***The beauty behind God's Judgment is that He provides a way out when he didn't have to...***

- God, in His sovereign plan, stays true to His character bringing perfect justice and Judgment, ***but He does it in a way where we don't have to endure it!***

\*Jesus would come and live perfectly in our place, living rightly before God... And then He would go to the cross and bear the wrath of God in our place, taking on the judgment that we deserved...

- He would become our perfection in His life and our punishment in His death...
- And He would raise from the dead and extend to us His life in place of ours...
- And it's through faith in Him that we don't have to fear the Judgment of God...

We have a way of escape, ***the question is will you receive it, or will you reject it?!?***

Now, what Jesus is about to do is He's is transitions into talking about what things will be like surrounding His second coming when He returns... Jesus is looking through one event to another that will be similar in nature but greater in scale. *It's what He wants them to see.*

**Verse 25:**

**25** "Then there will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars; and there will be anguish on the earth among nations bewildered by the roaring of the sea and the waves."

Notice the shift the judgment is no longer just focused on Jerusalem, it's focused on the world!<sup>6</sup>

**26** People will faint from fear and expectation of the things that are coming on the world, because the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **27** Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. **28** But when these things begin to take place, stand up and lift your heads, because your redemption is near."

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

Here's the thing that we need to see... Jesus will either be the means of salvation for those who believe or the means of destruction for those who reject Him...

***And what I don't want you to miss is the beauty that comes out of the ashes of God's Judgment...***

Jesus points to the reality that ***when His judgment comes, so does His redemption*** for those who are in Christ...

- What I want you to see is an incredible hope here...
- It's wrapped in this word ***redemption***...
  - This is more than deliverance from sin that Jesus is pointing to, ***this is deliverance from a fallen world...***
  - This is the restoration of our bodies (Rom. 8:23)... This is the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21)...
  - This is saving you from brokenness...

*Apply... Get personal here... Talk about the longing and the hope!*

*Then Jesus moves into a parable, verse 29:*

**29** Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. **30** As soon as they put out leaves you can see for yourselves and recognize that summer is already near. **31** In the same way, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. **32** Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all things take place. **33** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Now, most of this is pretty straightforward... The only challenging part is **verse 32** about this generation...

- There are a lot of ways that you could take this... Scholars argue over this...
- I think it's best to take this in light of what Jesus is talking about, which is His return...

**IOW:** What Jesus is saying surrounding His return will take place over one generation... The generation that sees the beginning will also see the end...<sup>7</sup>

But more important than the specifics on ***when*** it will exactly happen, is ***that it will happen***... Jesus says at the end of this...

**33** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

**IOW:** Jesus is saying you can bank on what I am saying... It's true, and it will happen... *My Words are more permanent than even creation is...*

And here's the thing... We already have tangible evidence of Jesus' track record on this! ***Evidence to validate it...***

- Everything that Jesus said would happen, the coming fall destruction of the temple and the fall of Jerusalem and the aftermath that came from it...
- All of it happened just as Jesus said it would...
- This is why it was so important we did our work on the front end to see the validity of that...

***Which leads us to this point that Jesus is driving at...*** In the same way, everything Jesus said about the immediate future happened, the same will be true about the coming future with He returns...

- You can bank on it!
- His Word has always been true, and it will always will be true...

The question is, ***do you believe it?!?!***

Here's the thing, ***if you do***, then it changes everything... You can't believe what Jesus is saying, and it have no impact on your life...

<sup>7</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: 9:51–24:53*, vol. 2, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 1692.; I will also cite Theologian Tony Merida on this who tends to agree.

What Jesus is pointing to has eternal implications... We can't just say I know and move on...

**Example:** if you were given a week to live, it would change everything for you... The coming end would reshape each day leading up to it...

- The same should be true for us as Christians...
- This life is a breath, a fleeting moment in time as it relates to eternity...

And **where your heart is today impacts your eternity**... This should cause a huge perspective shift for us... Taking our eyes off the things of this world and onto the God of this world...

It should be the motivation for us to really embrace the things of Jesus... It should give us hope to endure even when it's hard...

**We need to live with the end in mind...**

- For some of you, the lack of spiritual fervor in your life, the mundaneness that exists is because you're not **living with the coming end in mind**... You've not taken time to seriously consider the end...

Where Jesus finishes here, is by pointing us to our need to live with the end in mind... **Verse 34:**

**34** "Be on your guard, so that your minds are not dulled from carousing, drunkenness, and worries of life, or that day will come on you unexpectedly **35** like a trap. For it will come on all who live on the face of the whole earth. **36** But be alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place and to stand before the Son of Man."

Jesus says...

**Be on guard**

- Don't let your minds be dulled by **substance** or by **circumstances**...
- **Substance:** carousing/drunkenness:

- **Circumstances:** worries of this life...
  - Brokenness...
  - Worldly desires...

**Practical:**

- **Why the church matters...**

**Be alert**

- At all times... Stay ready... How do you stay ready...

**Practical:**

- Be in the Word...

**Be prayerful:**

- For strength to escape...

**Practical:**

- **The power of prayer...**

**Orient your life around the things of Jesus...**

**Conclusion [VAMP]**

Would we be a church that lives with anticipation of the return of Jesus...

If you're here and you're not a Christian... You're not surrendered to Jesus- He doesn't shape your life...

- You need to hear this as a call to respond to Jesus... To embrace the way out that God has provided...
- Don't be like the religious who were around the things of Jesus but missed the person of Jesus...

As Christians, would we allow the truth about the coming of the end to shape how we live today...

- Hold on in faith...
- Keep your eyes on Jesus...

**PRAY**

## Questions for discussion in Community Group

- What does Jesus say in verse 13 through 15 about opposition to Christianity?
- How can we view opposition as an opportunity for evangelism and missions?
- What comes to mind when you think about God's judgment?
- How can a proper view of the end influence our daily lives today?
- What are ways that we can be on guard and be alert as Christians (see verse 34-36)?
- What are specific asks that we should be praying continuously?

### Pertaining to verse 24:

Real quick, think back to **Parable of the Vineyard** that we talked about several weeks ago, **Luke 20:9-18** where Jesus is speaking to the Jewish religious elite...

- *Give an overview... Leased a vineyard, send 3 servants to collect first fruits of the harvest, they beat and send them away... Sends His son, they kill him...*

Jesus says this... in **Luke 20:15-16, 18**

...**"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and kill those farmers and give the vineyard to others.**  
...**18 Everyone who falls on that stone [Jesus is talking about Himself-the cornerstone] will be broken to pieces, but on whomever it falls, it will shatter him.**

**IOW:** Everyone will encounter Jesus one day, and He will either be your means of salvation for those who believe or the means of destruction for those who reject Him...

What I want you to see is that what Jesus says in the **Parable of the Vineyard** in **Luke 20** is the coming reality that Jesus is describing here...

### Outtake: