



Luke 20a

Luke 21:5-19 Jesus' View of the Future: The Need for Endurance

Opening Discussion Question: what was the most tired you have ever been in your life? Why were you so tired? What energizes you more: rest or activity you enjoy? This lesson is all about enduring until heaven's rest.

- Opening Illustration: do you get sad when vacation is fully over or as it is happening? It really depends on if you are more emotionally attached to the anticipation or the event itself.
 - The promise and pledge of heaven is not just about our future context. God wants us to anticipate with hope that future reality.
 - What is that reality? No sin>God's presence>perfect peace (It is the reverse of the broken garden relationship)
 - God gives us clues to anticipate that reality, not so that we just look forward to that reality, but so that we can also see the blessings of God's presence today!
- **If heaven is the promise of my future reality, then it should create in me a heavenly attitude in my present reality. That Heavenly attitude strengthens the endurance of my faith.**
- Context: Jesus had just made an example of the humble simplicity of the widow's worship, but the background noise is the awe of the temple structure.
- **[5] And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, [6] "As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."**

Question: Do you like reading scriptural prophecy? Does it encourage you or discourage you? Why?

- This was fulfilled in AD70 when the temple was destroyed by Titus.¹

¹ I talked in detail about this last month in my sermon on Luke 19.

- We will never know Jesus is all we need until Jesus is all we have left.
- Reading prophecy:
 - **The fog lights: immediate context. (The first coming of Christ and how the world responded.)**
 - **The low beams: future implications for the direct audience. (The arrival of the Holy Spirit and how the world responded.)**
 - **The high beams: future implications for the universal church in history, from which we find an application. (The future return of Christ and what the world is doing.)**
- Implication>application

Question: Do you think Jesus will return in our lifetime? Why or why not?

- **All prophecy is focused on God's faithful covenant given in Gen. 3 and finally fulfilled in Rev. 22.** If you don't understand God's Hesed, you will never receive the true gift of prophecy!²
 - Imagine the prophetic word like a rock thrown in a lake. The ripple effect continues on and affects every part of the lake in some way. The truths we glean from prophecy speak to every generation in some way because Satan is always working his plans in a pitched opposition to God.
 - When we read prophetic passages in the New Testament, our lenses should be less focused on the what (events) and more focused on the who (Christ himself in covenant faithfulness).

Question: Why is Christ's covenant faithfulness the key to understanding the purpose of prophecy?

- **[7] And they asked him, "Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?" [8] And he said, "See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them. [9] And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once."**

² Graeme Goldworthy, Christ-Centered Biblical Theology (IVP Academic: Downers Grove, IL. 2012) 133,

- Jesus warned his followers about the spirit of antichrist.
 - 1 John 2:18 [18] Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. (ESV)

Question: Where do we see a “spirit of Antichrist” today?

- **Christ’s prophetic warnings were never meant to cause fear, but confidence.**
 - If we aren’t instilling confidence in God’s plan for the church, we aren’t reading New Testament prophecy correctly.
 - **The only people who should fear the future are those not living on mission for the Lord!**
 - This is a really important truth when we consider what Jesus foretells in his next statements.
- **[10] Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. [11] There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. [12] But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake. [13] This will be your opportunity to bear witness. [14] Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, [15] for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. [16] You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. [17] You will be hated by all for my name’s sake. [18] But not a hair of your head will perish. [19] By your endurance you will gain your lives. (ESV)**

Question: Are these signs of the times today as well? How do we see some of these same hardships today?

- Context: it was going to get very difficult for believers, but endurance by the church would bring true life (spiritual life) to the nations.
 - “They went out from us because they were never of us.” (1 John 2:19) ³

³ Hebrews 6:4-6; 1 Timothy 4:1; Matthew 24:10; Luke 8:13

- The word “endurance” is a very strategic word used in Scripture to motivate us to keep on keeping on.
- Endurance in our faith is the main sign that our faith is a legitimate and true faith!
 - **2 Timothy 2:10–13 [10] Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. [11] The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; [12] if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; [13] if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.**
 - Christ endures for us in faithfulness. He is remaining faithful to us! We are motivated out of his faithfulness to endure and keep on being faithful.
 - **1 Peter 2:19-20 [19] For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. [20] For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.**
 - The biggest threat to our endurance in faithfulness is suffering at the hands of others. Nothing causes us more discouragement. God doesn’t take it lightly when we endure unjust suffering at the hands of others when doing good. This actually shows graciousness in our hearts that God sees!
 - Rev. 1:9, 2:2-3, 2:19, 3:10 - endurance in hardship and persecution is repeated several times about the churches in Revelation.
 - **Revelation 13:9–10 [9] If anyone has an ear, let him hear: [10] If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints. (ESV)**
 - John was bringing forward the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah!⁴ He was putting into practice a proper approach to prophecy. Wave after wave of persecution throughout history against those who follow after YHWH.
 - **Revelation 14:12–13 [12] Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. [13] And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead**

⁴ Isaiah 33:1; Jeremiah 15:2

who die in the Lord from now on.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!” (ESV)

- Annie and I have a motto: “Let’s go to bed good and tired!”
 - You have the rest of eternity to rest. That is what John encourages us with in the call to endurance!
- **If heaven is the promise of my future reality, then it should create in me a heavenly attitude in my present reality.**
 - May our motivation be to go to heaven good and tired as we enter into eternal rest!

Closing Discussion: talk about what it really means to endure in your own context right now. What are you “suffering” that challenges your faith and faithfulness?