

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

## "WHEN THE WORLD SHAKES, STAND FIRM" | MARK 13:1-13 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

### WARM-UP QUESTION:

What was it like the last time you experienced an earthquake?

### *"Don't Be Dazzled by Temporary Glory" Mark 13: 1-4*

Jesus' disciples were amazed at temple building, but Jesus shares this building will be torn down. **What does Jesus' response imply about what humans build and create? How should that impact Jesus' followers today?**

### *"Don't Be Deceived by False Saviors" Mark 13: 5-8*

The disciples are curious about end times and Jesus answers their questions by warning them to not be alarmed at disasters and to not be deceived. **How can people who are alarmed fall to deception? How can Christ followers avoid being led astray?**

### *"Don't Be Deterred by Suffering" Mark 13: 9-13*

Jesus warns them of harsh persecution His followers will face, yet they are to preach the gospel and endure with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Which form of persecution would be hard for you to face? How can persecuted believers still proclaim gospel?**

### REFLECTION QUESTION:

Jesus uses the fascination with the temple to warn the disciples of the tough times. He wants them, and His followers today, to watch, don't be alarmed, don't be deceived, to keep witnessing and endure, all with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Have you been struggling with being shocked or panicking over bad news? Has your fear led you to follow deception? How can you share the gospel and endure this week and month? Ask God to empower you with the Holy Spirit to have faithful endurance.**

**Jesus Journal: Write down at least one thing about Jesus that impressed you in the passage and message.**

## *When the World Shakes, Stand Firm*

### I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those watching online.
- B. Slide1-6 Shane: CG. MOMS. Grill & Chill. GriefShare. CK. Video!
- C. Slide7 Baby Dedication 10am: Heidi Pearl Elder. Parents: *Joshua & Christina*.
- D. Slide8 Israel Trip: in April 20-May1. I will be doing an informational mtg very soon
- E. Slide9 Prayer:

### II. Slide10 Intro: Olivet Discourse *When the World Shakes, Stand Firm*.

- A. Summary: The world will shake and storms will come - but in Christ, you have a firm foundation. *Stay alert, stay faithful, & stand strong in His unshakable kingdom.*
- B. \*These are some of the most problematic in all of scriptures. Differing views, let's be charitable.
- C. I don't claim to know how to *unravel everything* in the end times. I like what Tony Merida said, *I'm not on the planning committee. I'm on the welcoming committee.*
  - 1. **We will not** make it a test of orthodoxy or spirituality. **We will not** hold a narcissistic / self-centered eschatology [like anything that happens to Merica, *it must be the end*]. **We will not** set dates. **We will not** be obsessed by it, **nor** ignore it. **We will note** the Jewish atmosphere of the discourse. [We have: 4 Jewish men, asked a Jewish Rabbi, about a Jewish Temple. He warned them of: false Messiah's, referred to Jewish courts & trials, & talked about fleeing Judea. And remember, this Tribulation to come was called *the time of Jacob's trouble* Jer.30:7]
- D. Context: Ch.'s 11 & 12 have been about temple controversies. Now ch.13 follows with *this temple will be destroyed*. *Not watch the news about what's going on in Israel and then come to this passage and try to figure it out.* It's the wrong starting point. The historical context is always the right starting point.
- E. Purpose: is not to help us with all the minutia of the end of the world. *His purpose is our present faithfulness.* **Not** sit in our lawn chair and pray for the rapture. **There is**

going to be suffering, some challenges, but Jesus reigns. He is Lord and will be coming back.

- F. This text is to help us *in the present tense*. There's **17 imperatives** (or directive warnings, *strong action verbs*) Jesus speaks to His disciples in this chapter, *to inspire faithfulness, inspire hope, and to ensure the faint hearted* in the midst of mission.

### III. Slide11 **DON'T BE DAZZLED BY TEMPORARY GLORY (1-4)** *Read*

- A. **Set the scene:** Disciples are in awe of the Temple (as it was *impressive!*); but Jesus points them *beyond temporary glory* to *eternal realities*.
1. **Slide12 Explain:** standing on Mount of Olives - kidron valley - dome of rock mosque.
  2. **Slide13 Temple Timeline:** (Trib. Temple (anti-Ch defiles) Mill. Temple (Jesus builds); Eternal Temple (God/Lamb are).
  3. **Slide14 Josephus quote,** "The exterior of the building wanted nothing that could astound either mind or eye. For, being covered on all sides with massive plates of gold, the sun was no sooner up than it radiated so fiery a flash that persons straining to look at it were compelled to avert their eyes, as from the solar rays. To approaching strangers it appeared from a distance like a snow-clad mountain; for all that was not overlaid with gold was of purest white." Josephus, War, V.5.6.
- B. **Main Truth:** Even the most impressive works of man will pass away, *but Christ's kingdom* is *eternal*.
- C. Jesus shocks the disciples by saying *the Temple will be destroyed*.
- D. **Theologically:** Earthly beauty and stability can mask fragility; God calls us to set our hope in the unshakable (Heb.12:28 *Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful & please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe*)
- E. **Illustration:** Do you remember the **Implosion** of *the Kingdome* in Seattle. A massive stadium reduced to rubble in seconds (opened 1976 - demolished 2000). *People were stunned*.
1. **Tie-in:** If our hope is built on what humans create (*whether architecture, governments, or even religious institutions*) it will eventually *crumble*. *Only Jesus lasts*.

F. Transition: If **buildings** can fall and **kingdoms** crumble, we need to know what's next ... and that leads to *Jesus' warning*.

#### IV. Slide15 **DON'T BE DECEIVED BY FALSE SAVIORS (5-8)** *Read*

- A. The questions weren't really being asked the right way, because they still had many political overtones in their questions. (eg. Acts 1:6 - post res - they were still asking, *Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*)
1. It's like the boy asking his father, *Daddy, why does the sun shine in the daytime when we don't need it and not at night when we do?*
  2. That kind of question is difficult to answer, not because the answer is hard, but because the question is so wrong.
- B. Jesus' aim in answering these questions, *wasn't* to satisfy their curiosity about the future (or ours) but to *encourage their faith & help them face the challenges that lie ahead*.
1. The destruction of the temple was a clear marker in history. The Roman Jewish war began, 66-70 AD. **Titus** (son of the Emperor Vespasian) led the charge & ended it the summer of 70 AD. It was destroyed to where *not one stone was standing on another*. (Over a million killed, mostly starvation. 100,000 taken captive).
  2. A photographer has the ability to make 2 objects (1 in the foreground, 1 in the background) **both** come into focus. That's what **Jesus** does here: w/an event in **70 ad**; and an event to come ... **The Tribulation**.
- C. **Main Truth:** In a world full of fear and deception, *keep your eyes on the true Christ*.
1. Maybe a false Messiah's today could be: a "*DIY spirituality*" approach where you pick and choose from various beliefs to suit your preferences.  
Or, Treating wealth or the economy as the ultimate provider and protector.  
Or, Trusting that innovation, AI, or medical breakthroughs alone will "redeem" humanity's problems like *disease, poverty, or even death*.
  2. Jesus warns of *false messiahs, wars, disasters* ... These are birth pains, **NOT the end**. (actually all these are *common* in a troubled/fallen world)

a) Why is it that as soon as there's *a new War, new Calamity, new Famine*, people come running back to church? They think *maybe this is it, maybe this is the end*. The WW's, Hitler, Persian Gulf War, Y2K, Covid.

3. The predominate note of the age will be one of **deceit and confusion**.

4. **Ps:** Did you know the world produces enough food to feed everyone.

[yet **821 million** people are considered to be *chronically undernourished*.  
**1/3** of the food produced each year is loss or wasted]

D.(6) **False prophets** do not advertise themselves as that. No business cards. Know that it **doesn't** mean that they're wrong in every category, **or** in everything.

1. **If they were wrong about everything, you wouldn't listen to them.** The problem is that they're wrong about *the most important things, critical things*.

E. **Theologically:** **Trouble** *doesn't mean* God is absent; **it means** God is bringing forth His new creation.

F. **Illustration:** *\*Labor Pains – painful but purposeful*; they signal **life** is coming!

G. Tie-in: Jesus calls these disasters *birth pains* ... each a reminder that **His return** is *nearer* and **His kingdom** *is coming*.

1. **Like** the **stress** before *a big game, graduation, or an interview* ... **hardship** often comes before **the joy**.

H. Transition: But it's not just about *recognizing trouble* - it's about **remaining faithful** in the *middle* of it.

## V. Slide16 **DON'T BE DETERRED BY SUFFERING (9-13)** *Read*

A.(9) You would think if you and your family are **being persecuted** that would be a time where you **get a pass** on *needing to witness*, **but no-no-no**, that's a very important time to share your faith ... always has been (since Acts 4! Pete/Jn arrested the 1st collision of *the church & the world* - oh and 5k saved)

B.(10) I don't think that *taking the gospel to all nations* is a **condition** for our Lords return; **but** it is certainly Christ's **commission** to His people. *Will you participate?*



C. (12,13) **Why would family members rise up against each other?** We see this even today in Honor Killings. (1 week ago in Pak, it just came out of a brother shooting to death his brother & a woman because of an adulterous affair. But it happened a month ago. Only became something because of the video footage the world got a hold of. *Al Jazeera News*)

D. (13) **The one who endures to the end shall be saved** – Not as a condition for salvation, for it applies to *witnesses during the tribulation*.

1. During the Trib **true believers** will *prove their faith* by their faithfulness.

E. **Main Truth: Persecution** is **not the end** of our mission; **it's often the means** by which *God spreads the gospel*. (Book of Acts)

1. Jesus promises persecution, **but also the Spirit's help**.

F. Theologically: **Endurance** is **not** about *personal grit*, it's about **being held by Christ** until the end.

1. **Illustration:** The Olympic Summer Games were held in London, 1948 (just post WWII). - **The Olympic Torch** was carried through 8 countries, over 2 days, 1,960 miles, w/1,416 torchbearers. *Through rain, storms, & political unrest* (Greece - civil war) **yet** it was never extinguished **til** it reached its goal.

a) **The gospel** is *the flame we carry*. The **Holy Spirit** is our strength. **No matter** the obstacles, our mission is to pass the flame to the next person **until the whole world hears**.

2. It's like keeping your phone alive at 1% **w/o** plugging into the power source, *you won't make it*. **Endurance** comes from connection, **not just effort**.

### G. **Wrap Up/Call to Action:**

H. **I want to reiterate imperatives** from the passage: *Watch, don't be alarmed, don't be deceived, keep witnessing, endure*.

I. **Our endurance** is the evidence that we belong to **the One** who will **hold us to the end**. [**what I am** is God's gift to me; **what I do** with it is my gift to Him] (Warren Wiersbe)

J. **Slide 17a** Our Summary Statement in the beginning was: The world will shake **17b** and storms will come - **but in Christ** you have a firm foundation. Stay alert, stay faithful, and stand strong *in His unshakable kingdom*.

1. One day, *every kingdom of man* will fall, but *the kingdom of Christ* will stand forever. Where is your hope built? [*On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand: all other ground is sinking sand; all other ground is sinking sand*]

K. Keywords: temple, Tribulation, kingdom.