

Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church

**Mark 13:1-13 | False Teachers, Signs & Persecutions**

August 22, 2021

**WELCOME:**

- Please turn your Bibles to Mark 13:1-13
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

**REVIEW:**

Last Sunday, Jesus taught us about the consequences of false teachers.

A false teacher is someone who is teaching something misleading, untrue, or unorthodox.

We learned several key points.

1. *Church history has shown us that the more flamboyant a preacher dresses, and the more theatrical his sermons are—the less he has to say.*

Jesus Himself said that these Scribes and Pharisees put on a religious "show."

Jesus called these men hypocrites and "white washed tombs!" (Matthew 23:27).

They look good on the outside, but they are dead on the inside.

Their words offer no life and no hope.

2. *When it comes to abuse—the most tragic is spiritual abuse.*

Make no doubt about it, false teachers abuse people.

Jesus gave us a living example of spiritual abuse as well.

He pointed out a poor widow giving all her money into a religious system that already took everything from her.

That kind of greed is why spiritual abuse is so demonic.

Not only will the false teachers take all that you own for themselves, but they lead you down a very wide road to a very real place called hell. in their theology

Next, we discussed some of our own ecclesiology here at River Bible Church.

I wanted you to know why I do some of the things I do up here week in and week out.

Lastly, I gave you five things to be on the lookout for when false teachers peddling a false gospel.

That's all a review from last week.

If you happened to miss that sermon, it is online for your review.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Today, we will dive into the most challenging chapter of Mark's Gospel—chapter 13.

When we started the Gospel of Mark, we discussed how this Gospel is really Peter's Gospel.

The writer Mark was Peter's disciple, and he wrote down what Peter said.

Peter obviously being the first hand witness. Mark's Gospel reveals Peter's impulsive personality, doesn't it?

Mark's Gospel is full of action— Mark uses the word "immediately" 102 times.

- *Immediately the Spirit drove Jesus,*
- *Immediately they dropped their nets,*
- *Immediately leprosy left him.*

And on and on, Mark writes.

Well, today's text is full of more action, but it's future action.

For the next month or so, we are discussing eschatology.

**X** Eschatology—The study of the end times.

A lot of cheesy Christian movies are made on the end times.

Eschatology is a big subject and includes many things.

- Difficult to understand  
- Weighty

It includes death, the afterlife, judgment, the apocalypse, the millennium, heaven, hell, and Jesus' second coming.

The word eschatology literally means "the study of last things."

Today's text is known as the Olivet Discourse.

The name comes from the place where Jesus gave this teaching—Mount of Olives.

It's a mountains that grows olives!



Mount of Olives is the hill that faces Jerusalem.

If this place sounds familiar, it's because it's mentioned in Scripture many times—including Jesus at the Garden of Gethsemane, also located on the Mount.

The Olivet Discourse is sometimes known as the Synoptic Apocalypse.

X Synoptic meaning "similar" because Matthew, Mark, and Luke give a synopsis of what happened in their writings. - somewhat similar

Apocalyptic meaning the complete destruction of this world as we know it.

The Olivet Discourse is the longest and most crucial teaching section about the future in the Synoptic Gospels.

In <sup>today's</sup> this teaching, Jesus tackles two things:

1. The future destruction of the Temple
2. ~~His second coming.~~ *Preparing His Disciples for persecution.*

The reason that Mark chapter 13 is the most challenging passage in Mark's Gospel is because of the prophetic language and the <sup>Apocalyptic</sup> imagery that Jesus uses.

Now, all that to say this... Some of you love eschatology, and some of you don't care what happens as long as Jesus comes back quickly.

Well, no matter what camp you fall into, today's text is so applicable to your life today.

How so? Let's find out!

*\*Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.\**

**SCRIPTURE: Mark 13:1-13 CSB**

X **Mark 13:1**—As he was going out of the Temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, look! What massive stones! What impressive buildings!"

X **Mark 13:2**—Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another—all will be thrown down."

+ **Mark 13:3**—While he was sitting on the Mount of Olives across from the Temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately,

+ **Mark 13:4**—“Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?”

+ **Mark 13:5**— Jesus told them, “Watch out that no one deceives you.

+ **Mark 13:6**—Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and they will deceive many.

+ **Mark 13:7**— When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, don't be alarmed; these things must take place, but it is not yet the end.

+ **Mark 13:8**— For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

+ **Mark 13:9**— “But you, be on your guard! They will hand you over to local courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them.

+ **Mark 13:10**— And it is necessary that the Gospel be preached to all nations.

+ **Mark 13:11**— So when they arrest you and hand you over, don't worry beforehand what you will say, but say whatever is given to you at that time, for it isn't you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

+ **Mark 13:12**— “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.

+ **Mark 13:13**— You will be hated by everyone because of my name, but the one who endures to the end will be saved.

+ **PRAY:** AFGANISTAN

+ **EXEGESIS:**

**Mark 13:1**—As he was going out of the Temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, look! What massive stones! What impressive buildings!"

Notice here that Jesus is leaving the Temple for good.

Jesus has warned the Temple leaders for three years, and now he leaves for the last time—knowing that the Cross awaits him.

+ A disciple says  
**Mark 13:1**— What massive stones! What impressive buildings!"

Many people believe that this may be Peter speaking here, but if I had to guess, I would say Judas.

Judas was the one who was overcome by the thought of wealth and power.

This particular temple has been under construction for almost fifty years.

This was King Herod the Great's Temple. He's a humble man, obviously!

Herod doubled the size of King Solomon's Temple.

Some of the stones of this Temple were five stories high, and they weighed more than one million pounds.

The Temple was considered one of the great wonders of the Roman world.

It looked like a mountain of gold from a distance because much of its exterior was plated with gold and silver.

The Temple was so massive-- picture twelve football fields placed together.

**Mark 13:2**—Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another—all will be thrown down.”

When Jesus made this statement, you can bet that all the Disciples were stunned.

Jesus prophesied the destruction of the Temple.

He didn't predict it—He promised it, and it happened about forty years later.

The only thing left from Herod's Temple is a small part called the Western Wall today.

Spiritually, the Temple is the very heart of Judaism. *in the first century*

Physically, it baffled the Twelve that this massive and magnificent structure could be destroyed.

Maybe it's the same kind of thought that the Titanic couldn't sink.

**Mark 13:2**—“Do you see these great buildings?”

“To see” means to look with perception and to have discernment.

In other words, “Are you guys grasping the reality of what's getting ready to happen?”

Jesus is saying, “Look through the size and its beauty.”

Jesus said earlier that the Temple had become a fruitless fig tree.

Just like the false teachers we talked about last week—the Temple had become all image and no substance.

*Jesus continues*

**Mark 13:2**—Not one stone will be left upon another—all will be thrown down."

Jesus prophesies how thorough the destruction of the Temple will be.

And He was correct.

The Romans completely *destroyed* leveled it.

The Romans broke apart the stones to get the gold out of them— and then it was set on fire. *at first*

After the fire, the Romans leveled the Temple to the ground; thus, "all will be thrown down."

**Mark 13:3**—While he was sitting on the Mount of Olives across from the Temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately,

Between v. 2 and v. 3, the location shifts.

Evidently, Jesus makes his announcement in verse two about the Temple and keeps walking.

Mark doesn't record what the disciples said, most likely because they were in shock.

So Jesus keeps walking and leads the Twelve up the Mount of Olives to chew on the reality that the Temple will soon be destroyed.



V.3

Jesus is now on the Mount of Olives, and the inner circle of disciples comes to him privately.

Now the location of the Mount of Olives is crucial.

This is the same place where Jesus began his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (11:1).

Jesus' journey into Jerusalem began that Monday at Bethany, a tiny village at the top of the Mount of Olives.

Bethany is where Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus live.

Jerusalem sits three hundred feet below the Mount of Olives.

There is a special significance to all of this.

It points back to the OT book of Ezekiel— God gave Ezekiel a vision. (Ezekiel 11:23)

At that time, Jerusalem is being destroyed by Babylon because of their rebellion against God.

In that vision, Ezekiel saw the glory of God rise from the first Temple in Jerusalem and leave.

God's glory departs from the Temple, ascends three hundred feet, and rests on the Mount of Olives.

The Mount of Olives is where Jesus started this journey, and it's also where Jesus has this crucial conversation with His disciples.

The location of this conversation is not an accident

**+** **Mark 13:4**—"Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?"

So the Disciples are clearly shaken. They want to know specifics.

*The reason they are so disturbed is because*  
 The Temple has been the center of their universe for their whole life.

They ask two questions:

1. When?
2. What?

Does that sound familiar to you personally?

Don't you ask these kinds of questions when you pray?

Why do we want to know when things will happen?

How many times have you prayed for a sign from God?

*"Lord, give me a sign if I should marry this girl.*

*Lord, give me a sign if I should say yes to the boy."*

*"Lord, show me if I should take this job."*

*We start telling God what to do - Act like God can putting a fleece on the ground  
 Judges 6:36*

Why do we all do this?

Because we are all control freaks.

At the end of the day, we want to know the details and the timing of what God is doing in our lives.

The Disciples are no different.

The disciples were concerned because they connected the destruction of the Temple to the end of the world.

So naturally, the disciples wanted a sign.

They wanted the insider information so that they would know for sure know that the destruction of the Temple was about to happen so they could prepare for the end of the world.

But, the Disciples continue to have a problem.

They thought that the Messiah would only come one time.

And since Jesus is sitting in front of them, that's what they were focused on.

But the reality is that God the Father has revealed through His Word and now His Son that the Messiah will come twice.

The first visit Jesus comes as a suffering servant. (Isa. 53:1–12).

Jesus' first coming was to serve and redeem mankind as the Lamb of God who takes away their sin.

What the Disciples didn't know is that Jesus will come again as the conquering King (cf. Rev. 19:11–19).

But they had no idea of the extended time frame between the two visits.

And that's where we live—it's been 2,000 years and counting.

**Mark 13:5**— Jesus told them, "Watch out that no one deceives you.

Jesus' first word from last week was "BEWARE!"

Here we see it again.

+ **KEYPOINT 1:** Disciples  
Jesus doesn't give ~~them~~ what they want; He gives them what they need.

And the same principle holds true for us as His disciples today.

The disciples assume that the destruction of the Temple will coincide with the end of the world, but Jesus corrects their thinking.

Back to...

+ **Mark 13:5**— "Watch out that no one deceives you."

"Watch out" —As a disciple, you have a responsibility to avoid being deceived.

Jesus' first priority was to alert and caution His disciples about **deception**.

Pause...have you noticed that false teachers **always** come out of the woodwork when you start talking about the end times?

Two things!

1. We have dozens of false prophets today who falsely prophesied the presidential election, **incorrectly**.

Internet

2. None of these so called prophets said anything about COVID— **A world wide virus that shut down the world - is still causing havoc?**

+ **cf. Jeremiah 23:16**— This is what the Lord of Armies says: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They are deluding you. They speak visions from their own minds, **not** from the Lord's mouth

+ **cf. Jeremiah 23:28**— The prophet who has only a dream should recount the dream, but the one who has my word should speak my word **truthfully**, for what is straw compared to grain?"—this is the Lord's declaration.

+ **cf. Jeremiah 23:29**—"Is not my word like fire"<sup>boxed</sup>—this is the Lord's declaration —"and like a hammer that pulverizes rock?"

+ **cf. Jeremiah 23:30**—Therefore, take note! I am against the prophets"—the Lord's declaration—"who steal my words from each other."

+ **cf. Jeremiah 23:31**—I am against the prophets"—the Lord's declaration—"who use their own tongues to make a declaration.

+ **cf. Jeremiah 23:32**—I am against those who prophesy false dreams"—the Lord's declaration—"telling them and leading my people astray with their reckless lies. It was not I who sent or commanded them, and they are of no benefit at all to these people"—this is the Lord's declaration.

~~All that to say this...~~ <sup>Key Point 2 - False prophets love dreams & visions because the Bible is not enough for them. Back to our text in Mark</sup> the picture here is that Jesus is telling His disciples to act like soldiers and stand their post.

If they don't, they are in danger of being misled spiritually.

Now think about that.

If the Disciples are in danger of being misled—the ones who sat at the feet of Jesus... —how dangerous is it for the rest of us to be misled and deceived.

Dear friends, we too must stand our post and be very discerning.

+ **Mark 13:6**—Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and they will deceive many.

So Jesus doesn't give a sign. He gives examples of false signs.

<sup>for people who will say that they are the Christ</sup>

Jesus is saying, "Beware of the Jim Jones', Charles Manson's, and David Koresh's."

Did these men deceive many? Yes indeed.

Jesus says they will come, "In my name" or more literally "upon my name;"

In other words, they will base their claims on the authority of "my name."<sup>Jews</sup>

These men will claim the title of Messiah for themselves.

This idea of deception comes from people's emotions.

These false teachers will trap people in their enthusiasm.

And they will be successful to a point—and it's their success that makes them dangerous.

### **KEYPOINT 2: 3**

*Some of the greatest threats to the church don't come from outside the church but inside.*

These men will have power and some type of religious credentials that will somehow deceive people into thinking that they are Christ.

Pause...

I want you guys to know that I have a new appreciation for being an undershepherd of River Bible Church.

Because over the past 18 months or so, I've learned firsthand what it takes to keep the wolves away.

This biblical concept of protecting the sheep is a much more significant part of the pastorate than I initially thought.

I'm so grateful that the Lord Jesus has provided a membership structure that takes a lot of time and work to go through to become a member.

And believe it or not, we also have COVID to thank for that.

Moving on...

**Mark 13:7**— When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, don't be alarmed; these things must take place, but it is not yet the end.

Jesus says that wars must happen. Two things on this.

1. God allows these kinds of tragedies because they are a part of His divine plan—I know that's a painful pill to swallow.
2. We are not to use wars as some kind of proof text that the end is near.

Just this week--Taliban in Afghanistan

Jesus is telling us today - not to be freaked out about what's on the news, - @.t. listening to the talking heads.   
 It's not so much that God has preordained wars to happen, but rather wars are the inevitable consequence of human depravity.   
 *is read the whole of God.*

Jesus says, "these things must take place," Jesus is telling the disciples that none of these things are outside God's control.

Wars, rumors of wars, hatred for one another are the result of sin.

+ **cf. James 4:1**—What is the source of wars and fights among you? Don't they come from your passions that wage war within you?

+ **cf. James 4:2**— You desire and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and wage war.

WAR w/ one another  
We fight because these others don't look like us, talk like us or believe like us.

Moving on to verse 8...

+ **Mark 13:8**— For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

Has there ever been a time when a nation wasn't warring with another nation?

At the same time, earthquakes, famines, and other natural disasters are always happening somewhere in the world.

Jesus identifies all these tragedies as the "beginning of the birth pains."

~~This is a time of suffering.~~

For you mothers you didn't know how long you would be in labor.

You had no idea how intense that pain would be.

Jesus is saying something similar.

The suffering only marks the beginning of what is to come.

But Jesus' statement brings certainty.



This time of history will be an exceedingly painful labor and an extremely hard delivery.

In other words, these things will happen over a long period of time.

In the OT, birth pains are a sign of divine judgment.

And that's precisely what we're also seeing here.

**Mark 13:9**—*"But you be on your guard! They will hand you over to local courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them."*

Wow - not good - Let's break down what Jesus is saying here.  
Jesus changes his tone here in verse 9.

The previous warnings are for everyone.

But here, this is a warning specifically to His disciples.

"You don't worry about any of that stuff—you be on guard!"

Is it starting to sound familiar? BEWARE!

Be on your guard," literally reads, "Watch yourselves."

"Hand you over" refers to betrayal.

In less than 24 hours Judas will betray Jesus.

Verse 9 is all about persecution, mistreatment, and abuse of the Twelve Apostles.

Yet, once again, this principle holds true for some of us today.

+ **KEYPOINT #4**

Sharing the Gospel is more important than your personal safety.

Read v. 9 again. Jesus says "you will ..."

You think, "I don't like that at all."

The church's primary task, whether you live in Cottonwood or Afghanistan, is to share the Gospel.

Preserving your life was not the point then, and it's not the point now.

+ Did I mention that Mark Chapter 13 ~~is~~ the most difficult chapter in Mark's Gospel?

Mark 13:9— ...You will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them.

Lastly, notice that persecution is an opportunity to share the Gospel.

Why?

+ **KEYPOINT #5**

Your suffering is not about you.

Suffering serves a divine purpose.

In other words, your suffering for the Gospel serves a greater purpose in the Kingdom of God.

The central issue that Jesus is addressing is what they will do when they are persecuted—not if.

Why?

+ **Mark 13:10**— And it is necessary that the Gospel be preached to all nations.

Have you noticed that the more the church is persecuted, the faster the Gospel spreads?

We read about it in the book of Acts, - 1st Century

Today, we see it w/ the underground church in China

We are called to be a witness “to all nations.” Why?

Because God has decreed it.

Jesus is saying, “Instead of looking for signs for the end of the world, instead of making graphs and charts, and coming up with dates—you guys need to get busy and share the 3 Circles.”

+ **Mark 13:11**— So when they arrest you and hand you over, don't worry beforehand what you will say, but say whatever is given to you at that time, for it isn't you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

~~This verse~~ has been taken out of context concerning teaching and preaching.

Jesus is not speaking to preachers regarding their sermon prep here—that's another topic for another day.

The correct context is a Christian speaking to national leaders.

Jesus offers full assurance that the Holy Spirit would speak to these national leaders through the Believer.

+ **Mark 13:12**— “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.”

This is a terrifying verse—awful.

Persecution will even tear apart families.

The commitment which the gospel demands can and will disrupt even the most sacred family relationships. That's a true reality.

+ **Mark 13:13**— You will be hated by everyone because of my name, but the one who endures to the end will be saved.

In saying, "*You will be hated by everyone,*" Jesus meant people in general.

This includes people within the church.

Those who say they are Christians but are not.

In fact, these people will actually persecute true Christians.

This kind of hatred is an ongoing hatred for Believers.

**+** *but the one who endures to the end will be saved.*

"Saved"— Sozo. —to be delivered.

Jesus is not saying that your endurance based on your own work saves you.

This is not works-based salvation.

*Ides is this*  
Your endurance proves that you are who you say you are.

**+** *cf. James 1:12*—*Blessed is the one who endures trials, because when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.*

**+** KEYPOINT 5:

*Endurance is a key characteristic of the Christian life.*

In other words, those who suffer well and ~~endure suffering~~ demonstrate that they are true Believers.

*Notice that we said "Suffer well" - not "Suffer perfectly"*

And because they are true Believers, they have been saved and will be saved.

On the other hand, those who fall away during persecution reveals they were never truly saved in the first place.

+

**PREACH:**

So how does this disturbing message from Jesus regarding the destruction of the Temple and the persecution of the Disciples impact you today?

How do we apply this to our own lives?

+

Let me give you several things:

- 1. *Beware of false teachers.*

Be on the lookout for people who use the latest headlines as "signs" for the end of the world.

There have always been false teachers, and there will always be false teachers.

You must recognize what is going on around you.

*I emphasize this time & time again - because some of you may be watching these guys & gals and not recognize them as false teachers.*

You must continue to read the Word of God by the Spirit of God so that you can experience God day by day.

And by doing so, you can smell the rat. You can call a spade a spade.

So beware of the misuse and the spiritual abuse of signs.

+

- 2. *Sharing the Gospel will be met with persecution.*

And when it does, you must be ready.

We talked a lot about this in our 3 Circles Evangelism class several months ago.

+

*NOT JUST US*

We've discussed how many people in the church refuse to share their faith because they're scared of some kickback or won't have the answers.

Dear friends, by God's grace, we live in one of the safest countries in the world—

In one of the safest cities to share our faith.

We are blessed beyond measure.

We have it so much better than we deserve to live in the Verde Valley.

And what I want to leave you with this morning is to please don't take what God has given you for granted.

He has given you a gift to specifically use for the spreading of the Gospel.

And I want to cheer you on to use and develop whatever gift that is.

And that leads me to my next takeaway.

3. *Evangelism has always been and will always be the priority of a church.*

*If a church is NOT sharing the Gospel - it is a club,*

The last thing Jesus told Peter in the Gospel of John was to feed my sheep, tend my lambs and feed my sheep. (John 21:15)

The last thing Jesus told his disciples in Mark's Gospel "**Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.**" (Mark 16:15).

**Matthew 28:18**—*Jesus came near and said to them,* "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth."

+ **Matthew 28:19**— *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

+ **Matthew 28:20**— *teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Jesus says, "remember—I'm with you—always."

Jesus' presence will be really important for us as we move into next Sunday's message on the Great Tribulation.

**PRAYER ROOM:**

**PRAYER:**





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