



## The Gospel According to Luke

### Wk. 101 “A Grim Foretelling with a Tinge of Hope”

By Pastor Jody May

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#### Luke 21:5-24 ESV

#### Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

<sup>5</sup> And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said,<sup>6</sup> “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.” <sup>7</sup> And they asked him, “Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?” <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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.”

#### Jesus Foretells Wars and Persecution

<sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. <sup>11</sup> There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> This will be your opportunity to bear witness. <sup>14</sup> Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, <sup>15</sup> for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. <sup>16</sup> You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers<sup>[c]</sup> and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. <sup>17</sup> You will be hated by all for my name's sake. <sup>18</sup> But not a hair of your head will perish. <sup>19</sup> By your endurance you will gain your lives.

#### Jesus Foretells Destruction of Jerusalem

<sup>20</sup> “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. <sup>21</sup> Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, <sup>22</sup> for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. <sup>23</sup> Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. <sup>24</sup> They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

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#### Intro.

I got to go to New York about ten years ago, about 10 years after the terrorist attack of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. I went to see the memorial, to take in the size of the empty square, to picture in my head the amount of destruction that had to occur in such a quick rate all in one day. The memories I did have of the towers, like many of you, was from the movies (472 films to be exact). Back in the eighties they filmed non-stop in N.Y. and I learned about the Twin Towers from movies like *Superman*, *King Kong*, *Escape from New York*, and the list goes on. They (towers) were so iconic that if someone was to tell me that not one scrap of steel, not one yard of concrete would be left standing there, but it will be destroyed by an enemy, it would definitely heighten my curiosity.

These buildings were the symbols of our nation’s ability to build the biggest and the best. While they were a source of pride for Americans, to others they were a thorn in their side, a constant reminder of a scary super-power across the sea. There were definitely many lessons we learned from their destruction, for the good and for the bad, but the one I want to focus on today is that **nothing, not nothing, man-made lasts forever**. There is one thing though that the Bible tells us will never pass away:

#### **Luke 21:33 ESV**

**<sup>33</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.**

The Words of Jesus cannot pass away, not because they are magical, but because **Jesus will never pass away**. His Words remain true, authoritative, they never change in meaning, because He is alive at the right hand of God. Because He is God, He has all of God’s attributes, so right now His spirit exists in the past, present and future and because He’s the boss, He makes sure all things work towards His ends and His goals. That is why His Word is eternal. That’s why we don’t fear, we don’t quit, we don’t doubt, and we don’t argue because we believe in the only constant and supremely TRUE thing in all the Universe, Jesus, we are blessed...



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That is definitely a good thing to keep in mind especially when we feel **secular culture** emphasizing more and more that it **wants us to believe** in it instead, that **its’ values, that its’ commands, that its’ preeminence is more important than God’s**. It is only natural for a Christian as they follow Jesus, to rub against secular culture causing friction.

Jesus foretold of it over 2000k years ago and it happened you saw this week in the book of Acts, months after He ascended. There will be times of trial and persecution for the Christian, that’s a reality. This **Grim Foretelling comes with a TINGE of HOPE**, that will get us through if we remember what Jesus has said and that is that He will **RETURN! In order to see that day, there are 3 WARNINGS that Jesus gives us to ensure it:**

#### **1. Don’t get fooled – there are FALSE Messiahs. (vs. 5-9)**

#### **Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple**

<sup>5</sup>And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said,<sup>6</sup>“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.”

“The original temple of Solomon was an exceptionally magnificent building, but was destroyed in 586 B.C., by the Chaldeans. It was rebuilt by Zerubbabel and his companions after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. This rebuilt temple was comparatively small and simple. Herod the Great (who ruled over the Jewish people from 37 to 4 B.C.) was a great lover of architecture. And it is due to him that the temple, with its environs on the temple mount, was built up to such a massive and artistic building complex (nearly five hundred yards long and four hundred yards wide). Herod the Great drew up a grand architectural plan according to which the whole temple with all its surrounding buildings had to be rebuilt. He even caused a thousand priests to be trained as builders to do the work (so that the Jews could not accuse him of having the temple built by ‘unclean hands’). With this rebuilding a commencement was already made in 19 B.C., but it was only completed in A.D. 63 under Agrippa II and Albinus... It had been finished for hardly seven years when in A.D. 70 it was completely



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destroyed in fire and blood notwithstanding the fanaticism with which the Jews tried to defend it.”<sup>1</sup>

The disciples have just left the scene where Jesus condemned the Jewish leaders and had seen the poor widow that had been duped into believing the false religion of the day. They walk out of the temple and take in the beauty of it, this is the symbol of God’s presence on earth, and they, being poor *hicks for the sticks* probably have not been there as much as Jesus has. If I were them, I’m probably thinking, “WOW, hey Jesus when do we move in?”

Just so you know the desire here, this would be comparable for them to take over the White House. This temple, as Josephus describe it as he came in with the Roman Legions, was made of gigantic Marble stones and on many of the stones there was gold plating. This building, that sat on top of a hill, was said that when the sun hit it right, **it blinded you**, you couldn’t look at it! This was a giant building, **covering 5 football fields**, meant to symbolize God’s presence on the earth. In the end though, it became a giant sore for God’s people that needed to be lanced so that the people could move on from the false DEAD religion it had become to represent.

<sup>7</sup> And they asked him, “Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?” <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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.”

The disciples are interested in learning what is the Omen, that is a sign of the things to come, so they can get moved out! Jesus instead is more concerned with what will happen before the destruction, that is the more immediate danger.

He’s like, look and listen up, **BEFORE all that**, *things are going to get bad especially for the church, and when that happens there will be false teachers claiming to be from God that will claim to have the answer*, DO NOT LISTEN TO

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<sup>1</sup> Bobb Deffinbaugh, 65. *Jerusalem in the Last Days*, <https://bible.org/seriespage/65-jerusalem-last-days-luke-215-38>, (Web 2020).



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THEM! They will use the difficult times, the people’s fear of what is to come, to put people under their influence. These trials (wars & tumults) have to happen before the end, before the destruction of the temple and even then, these hard times are strung out, ongoing.

You know what you get when you string out calamities, when people are stressed by their world being turned upside down? **People who are hungry to follow someone with an answer...** Most of the time though, the false messiahs’ answers are to blame other people and to get you mad at a person. **You know why, fear is easily turned into anger. Fear freezes people and they won’t move but anger gets you moving, and an angry person is easy to control.** False Messiahs are people that turn up one’s wrath towards someone else in the world, they promote the **Mob Mentality & the Idol of Group Think.**

Right now, in our world everyone is mad at someone else, because everyone is fearful for their future! In our country, what if 2020 is a sign of things to come, what are we going to do!? I don’t know about everyone else, but I do have an answer for my family in here.

**1<sup>st</sup> here’s a Truth, “Fear is both the enemy of, and the opposite of, faith.” – Bob Deffinbaugh** While we remain fearful, we are not going to grow in our faith, our witness will diminish, and the church will decline. **Fearful Christians do not call other people to hope they call them to false Messiahs.)** BUT the Tinge of Hope for our tomorrow comes in if we will embrace our destiny, as Jesus called us to, He will use us to repel this darkness! Listen to Paul describe this for us here in Ephesians:

**Ephesians 5:8-14 ESV**

**<sup>8</sup> for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>14</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light.**



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Here’s a 2<sup>nd</sup> Truth, *“When times are dark that is when Light has the opportunity to actually shed some **LIGHT!**”*

**Philippians 2:15 ESV**

<sup>15</sup> that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

The darker it may become in our land the brighter we will become. And we won’t become like a fake light of a man-made temple like many of our modern churches and leaders have become. No, but like our savior, who He Himself who is the cornerstone (Isaiah 28:16; 1 Pet. 2:7-8) of the new temple, and we are the living stones (1 Peter 2:5) that make up this building of light. Let us actually not fear BUT believe that we have been called to be the light of the world, to call our brothers and sisters to light, and let’s be a part of the New Temple and believe Jesus’ words that the gates of Hell cannot stand against us!

**2. Don’t get scared and FAIL to WITNESS. (vs. 10-18)**

**Jesus Foretells Wars and Persecution**

<sup>10</sup>Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. <sup>11</sup>There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

Now this is where this passage gets really interesting, Jesus moves from a present concern to a broader topic of what will happen on a Global level before His return. This pertains to the end-times and more specifically what we call the Great Tribulation. Later on, in the Bible, in Rev. 6-18, we see more of these signs that precede the 2<sup>nd</sup> physical coming of Jesus. BTW the OT prophets also predicted this time of Tribulation on the earth: (cf. Isa. 13:10, 13; 34:4; Jer. 30:4-7; Ezek. 14:21; 32:7-8; Dan. 9:26-27; Amos 8:9; Hag. 2:6; et al.).



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BTW we really need to do a good study on that in the next couple of years, but now I want to review again from our sermon from Luke 17: 20-37 when the Pharisees asked when the KoG would come?

There are three views that reformed Christians entertain, Premillennialism, Amillennialism and Postmillennialism.

- Premillennialism – there is still to come a great tribulation then the second coming then the millennium then the last judgment. (Albert Mohler, John Piper, John MacArthur, Francis Schaeffer, & D.A. Carson). Mostly Baptists
- Amillennialism – sees the current age of the church as the metaphoric 1000 year reign and afterwards is the second coming when the last judgment will take place. (Sam Storms, Ligon Duncan, R.C Sproul and most the PCA). Mostly Presbyterians
- Postmillennialism – the millennium is still to come but the church will first gain dominance over the earth through the Gospel and at the end there will be a judgment. (Doug Wilson, Charles Spurgeon) Goes either way...

All I want to say today about the end times, Tribulation, the Millennium at this point, is that the more I have studied here’s what all three view-points have in common: **for Christians everywhere it is going to get harder and harder to live because of the increasing persecution of the church and the increasing apostasy of the church.** Now knowing that, here’s what Jesus has to say about that fact:

**<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> This will be your opportunity to bear witness.**

We know this happened to the Apostles, we know it happened to the first century church, and guess what? **It has been happening since then.** As persecution increases those that were once friendly to the church **turned on them** and that has always been the pattern. That goes back again to the problem with fear, when it increases the false Messiahs turn that to anger, which gets people motivated against the church. If you think I am joking, this past week Supreme court Justice Alito spoke at a virtual event and gave this statement:





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“For many today, religious liberty is not a cherished freedom. It’s often just an excuse for bigotry and can’t be tolerated, even when there is no evidence that anybody has been harmed,” Alito said during a virtual event with the Federalist Society’s National Lawyers Convention, a conservative legal network. “The question we face is whether our society will be inclusive enough to tolerate people with unpopular religious beliefs.”

"One of the great challenges for the Supreme Court going forward will be to protect freedom of speech," Alito said. "Although that freedom is falling out of favor in some circles, we need to do whatever we can to prevent it from becoming a second-tier constitutional right."

Immediately he was attacked by progressives who said that speaking against the practice of homosexuality is hate speech and that Alito was a Right-Wing hack.

It is easy to blame the church when the majority of Americans **no-longer see us as an asset but as a hindrance**. In light of where we may be headed please hear the rest of Jesus’ statement.

<sup>14</sup>Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, <sup>15</sup>for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.

Jesus’ expectation, which never changes because He lives, is that **we don’t cow before the masses but that we stand taller, because He will give the Words to say**. That’s why it is important for true Christians to actually know what the Bible says about current cultural things, because the Bible speaks to those issues. **What’s the expectation if we decide to stand then?**

<sup>16</sup>You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. <sup>17</sup>You will be hated by all for my name's sake. <sup>18</sup>But not a hair of your head will perish. <sup>19</sup>By your endurance you will gain your lives.





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Now that was some of the cases for the Apostle and the early church and from time to time in Christian history this has happened. It could even happen more in our day, only God knows, but again there is a **Tinge of hope** in what seems a dark time. Verse 18 says not a hair of your head will perish. **How can a hair not perish if the body is put to death in v.16?** The concept of perishing here refers to an eternal perishing; even one hair of your head won't be wasted as if it meant nothing, **when you stand for Christ ALL of you will be SAVED!**

The reality is that one can lose their life for the sake of the Gospel but that does not go unwasted and unplanned by God AND even in the death of a believer God is glorified. You all remember **Stephen this week**, we can only be so blessed to be remembered that our last breath was a Gospel-centered sermon, that we'd offered a corporate prayer of forgiveness to those killing you, and then fell asleep to wake up to Jesus in your gaze, we should be envious! Friends remember this Truth that a **Cross always precedes the Crown:**

#### **Luke 9:23-25 ESV**

<sup>23</sup> And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his **cross daily** and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?

Your Salvation lies in God's hands no matter what this world threatens. Do not let fear bring you to silence but let the possibility of shining like a light, like our forefathers, help you live even if you are persecuted.

### **3. Don't rely on Man's strength to PROTECT you. (vs. 20-24)**

#### **Jesus Foretells Destruction of Jerusalem**

<sup>20</sup> “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. <sup>21</sup> Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, <sup>22</sup> for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. <sup>23</sup> Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants



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in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. <sup>24</sup>They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the **times of the Gentiles** are fulfilled.

The "times of the Gentiles" began when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, in 586 B.C., and will continue until Jesus Christ returns at the Second Coming (cf. Dan. 2:34-35, 45; Rom. 11:25). Throughout this entire long period of history, including the present, Gentiles have controlled the fate of Jerusalem. Luke's reference to "the times of the Gentiles" is consistent with his interest in Gentiles.

We talked about this awful tragedy of Jerusalem before in Luke 19, look it up, but know according to historical recordings possibly a million people lost their lives and the temple was destroyed.

**BUT here is what that horrific event did, Jerusalem became the lighter fluid, the IGNITOR, to push the church past Palestine and into the other parts of the empire.**

We all have been reading in Acts this week about the people of God moving into the world, just like Joshua moving the Hebrews into the Promise Land and the Church in Acts moving into the Asia. **God's people are to have dominion and share the Glory of God with the world.** We saw in Acts the beginning of persecution in Chp. 7 and the horrifying stoning of Stephen. And what we see is that **God always uses persecution to begin to separate the church from the world.** The stoning of Stephen gave the church the kick in the pants to start moving out of Jerusalem into the rest of the world. **The birth of Missiology coincides with the pangs of persecution.** Evangelism is fueled by the defiance of the unholy. **What makes a Christian tick is the fact that the world makes you a target and in turn we target the world with the truth of the gospel,** the gift of Christ, and we demonstrate the Truth that though they would slay us we will still follow Him.

Jesus warned the first Century Christians don't rely on man, the false Messiahs who make you fearful, get away from them, for their destruction is eminent and unavoidable. Jesus Word will never fail; He has already told us in Luke that Justice will come for all.



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Jerusalem, **represented safety** to ancient Israel, for it held the temple, it was behind impregnable walls, and the prideful Jews, the Scribes, the Pharisees, the rich city dwellers would not leave. **They all died because of their sin of disbelief.** Those that believed in Jesus had fled, they did not trust in the might of man, but in every Word that came from Jesus’ mouth.

In dark days we will be enticed to stay with a softer gospel, perhaps flock to a teacher that preaches a gospel that includes all of what the world offers, free to love who you want, free to do what you want, free to enslave how you see fit, free to kill those not wanted, free to identify as whomever and whatever you need, free to live without working. But even then, we are told that a large government will not keep you safe from His wrath: Revelation 20:7-10, Satan is judged and thrown in to Hell right after that those that fled to him, sought safety with him, succumb to his offers, were throw into Hell with him.

#### **Acts 17:30-31 ESV**

30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

Family the future is not bleak, but it is not all roses. Let me encourage you one more time. Don’t get fooled by false Messiahs, don’t get scared and fail to witness, don’t run to the strength of men (politician, popular leaders, cling to Jesus’ Word that never changes), put your trust in Jesus, heed His warning like the first century church and you will flourish and you will get the satisfaction of getting to be a bright light even in the increasing but not long lived darkness.



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**PRAYER**

**COMMUNION**

**BENEDICTION**

Go in the name of the Father, that graciously restrains His Son so that more will repent and turn to Him.

Go in the name of the Son, that will come again with judgment so fear not temporary earthly persecution.

Go in the name and the power of the HS, that will enable you to share your light, that will give you the words to witness in the dark, and call people to the light.