

The Story of Jesus

Part 37: What do we do when the world is falling apart? [THUMB: It's the End of the World]

Mark 13:1-32 - [watch online](#)

Summary: We can face unprecedented times with confidence and peace by following Jesus' teachings and trusting in God's control.

[00:00] Main Ideas:

[01:32] Unprecedented times breed unprecedented fear.

[02:32] Jesus offers confidence in the face of overwhelming fear.

[05:18] No matter what is happening, God is in control and his people have a role

[06:52] When the world is falling apart, Jesus Followers are called to think clearly and stay calm.

[08:45] Unprecedented times create unprecedented opportunities for good.

[13:48] When the world is shaken to its core... the King is still on the throne.

[17:51] Following Jesus prepares us to calmly and confidently face anything.

Invitation:

Practice now before the unprecedented becomes precedent.

- Meditate on three words... "Jesus is King"
- Ask: What does that mean for me right now?

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you most in this week's message?
2. If you feel comfortable, use 3 words to describe your feelings during the events of 2020-2021.
3. Read John 14:27. In light of this passage and Jesus' teaching in Mark 13, what is one thing you might do differently thinking back on our "unprecedented times?"
4. In what ways do you think meditating on the phrase, "Jesus is King," could affect your daily life and prepare you for future "unprecedented times?"
5. How can your group pray with you?

Transcript:

ME: The events of March 2020 to February 2021 changed us all in ways we couldn't have imagined.

March 2020: Lockdowns / May 2020: George Floyd / Sept 2020: Santiam Fire / Nov. 2020: Election

Jan 6th 2021: Capitol Riot / Feb 2021: Ice Storm

For many these dates bring back painful memories and feelings of great personal loss.

And we saw so much... Division/anger/frustration/hurt

- Mostly FEAR
- Unprecedented times breed unprecedented fear.

WE: And I don't know about you but it's almost like I'm waiting for the next thing to hit...

- Rumors of other pandemics
- Election / Political upheaval
- WW3

It's pretty much guaranteed something else will happen.

And we have a choice: we can live in fear of it or we can be ready for it

Next time instead of giving into fear, anger, chaos... We can choose to be voices of calm/peace/reason/love.

Jesus actually told us how...

If we had paid more attention to Jesus' teaching our responses would have been very different.

But now we can be ready and it can direct/guide/comfort/empower us when the next unprecedented thing happens.

Jesus offers confidence in the face of overwhelming fear.

GOD: So, after challenging the Temple leaders and condemning what the Temple had come to represent...

- Jesus is leaving the Temple for last time...

But his disciples, mostly backcountry teenagers, are still grappling with their trip into the big city...

V. 1-2 The Temple was the pride of every Jew,

- Architectural wonder initially designed by King David and built by Solomon.
- By Jesus' time, it had been destroyed, rebuilt, and magnificently expanded

The Temple was the focal point of their world... central to Jewish worship and national identity...

- Probably felt like Capitol/Flag/Church all in one

The boys are impressed!

Jesus ... not so much.

- Might look impressive but it's all going to be completely and utterly destroyed.
- Shocking... scary.

It would mean the end of the sacrificial system,

- Without the Temple how would they be able to experience God and live out his laws?
- In their minds if the Temple were destroyed it would signify the end of the world.

After making camp for the night, 4 disciples ask Jesus when this is going to happen and how they would know it was about to happen.

Jesus' answer provides guidance for all of us when it feels like the end of the world.

Debated/Difficult passage...

- Don't have the time to go through each idea
 - Some say Jesus only talking about end of time
 - Some say only talking about fall of Jer. and destruction of temple by Romans in 70 AD
 - Some say both at same time
 - Panes of glass
 - Some say both but divide it up... and then divide it differently. (Where I've landed)
 - Section we'll talk about today is the part that seems to be about the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD
 - Even though there are often immediate and long-range aspects to Biblical prophecy.
 - The immediate future would have been the most relevant for His disciples at the time.
 - Either way the MAIN point is the same.

No matter what is happening, God is in control and his people have a role

So Jesus basically says, WHAT you do in these times is more important than WHEN they happen.

V. 5-8 Don't be deceived and don't panic!

Before the fall of Jer in 70 AD false messiahs convinced people to follow them.

- All were defeated and killed and got their followers killed too.

Jesus warns them, Don't trust everyone who claims to be coming from me.

- Stick to who you know me to be... my kingdom won't come through conquest, rebellion, force.
- Think clearly and evaluate what these imposters are actually saying.

AND- You don't need to panic when you hear about major events and natural disasters

- Those aren't signs that the end is coming.
- That is the way of the world.

Don't freak out thinking every event is the end.

- Be calm and let the story unfold.

When the world is falling apart, JF's are called to think clearly and stay calm.

Now when we are going through unprecedented times it's one thing to watch events take place but when it starts affecting us personally that becomes something else doesn't it?

What about when we get swept up in the story?

Jesus answers that too... he tells the disciples that as the time approaches they will be persecuted, arrested, abused, and put on trial in front of kings and governors.

But even then it's not time to freak out, fight, or flee... it's time to play your role.

V. 9b[But this will be...]-11

Jesus tells them instead of trying to save yourself, instead of fighting... you will have the opportunity to tell about me.

If people will no longer be able to discover, meet, experience God through the Temple in Jerusalem... then something else must take its place...

- The disciples must spread the Good News of Jesus
- Direct access to God through Jesus, experiencing his Kingdom in our lives everyday now and forever.
- That must happen before the Temple is removed.

Which, as we see in Acts 8, all happened... the Church was persecuted and spread all over the known world sharing the GN...

Must have seemed overwhelming for teenage peasants to think they would be standing before governors and kings...

- But Jesus promises they don't have to worry b/c the HS will speak through them
- And use them to expand his kingdom to everyone everywhere.

Unprecedented times create unprecedented opportunities for good.

- To offer love, peace, the good news of Jesus.

Think about how we felt during those challenging months in 2020 and 2021

- The fear, the uncertainty, the division.
- Now imagine if, instead of being driven by fear, we (as JF's as a community) had embraced the love, peace, and direction Jesus offers.
- How different might our responses have been?

But Jesus still hasn't really answered the disciples' question... when will it happen and how will they know it's going to happen...

He first tells them what to look for... **V. 14**

Some believe this is talking about the future where there's a rebuilt temple and the Anti-christ goes into it and defiles it in some way.

But what it seems like Jesus is alluding to is an event in 169 BC

Leader of part of what was Alexander the Great's Empire... Antiochus IV

- Set up idols to Greek gods in Temple
- Sacrificed pigs on the altar to honor Zeus

Which is referred to in Daniel as the "abomination of desolation"

So most likely Jesus is saying when you see something like that happening again... and you'll know it when you see it... get out of Jerusalem and run!

- We don't know what the specific abomination was... don't have detailed records from a defeated and slaughtered people.

- But Jesus tells his disciples when you see it.. Get out b/c what follows is going to be some of the worst suffering imaginable.

Historical events.

- Romans besieged the city
- Infighting among the leaders
- Stories of murder and cannibalism to survive
- Romans finally got through and burned the city to the ground and plundered the temple and then completely destroyed it
- Slaughtered and enslaved the people
- And took the plundered gold back to Rome and used it to help fund the building of the Colosseum.

And Jesus tells them even then people will try to deceive you... try to tell you they are the Messiah who will restore everything... don't believe them.

- The Messiah has already come
- And all of this will actually prove it...

B/c here is what is actually happening when all of this goes down...

This is the key... this is why we can face unprecedented times with unprecedented confidence.

V. 23-25 Sun darkened/Stars falling- Sounds like the end of the world doesn't it?

It is the end of the world as THEY know it.

In the Jewish Scriptures this type of language is used to describe the fall of kingdoms and empires.

- To describe a complete change to the world order.
- The lights are going out in the current centers of power and something new is coming to replace it.

What is coming? A new era. A new world. A new kingdom and King.

V. 26-27 What the prophet Daniel foretold... **Daniel 7:13-14**

The Son of Man will take his throne and create a new people for himself... a new nation.

The Temple will no longer be the focus of the people of God... the Son of Man will be their identity.

The Temple isn't needed any more... people don't need to reach out to God... he has already come to them

- As the man Jesus
- Who has all the glory and power

Jesus has been enthroned/vindicated... showing he is who he said he is and will do what he said he will do.

So when the world seems to be ending, when everything seems to be falling apart...

- We can stay calm, we can play our role b/c we know we belong to the true king of the universe who will rule for eternity.

When the world is shaken to its core... the King is still on the throne.

Ok but the disciples also asked when will all this happen?

V. 28-29 "his return"- Greek has no word there... so the word could either be HE is near or IT is near...

- Within context and Greek wording "IT is near" seems to be a better choice.

Ok When will IT happen... when will the Temple fall?

V. 30-31 It will happen in your lifetime... 70AD.

Jesus: What I'm saying is more sure than even heaven and earth... this is what WILL happen. Trust it.

YOU: So if this all already happened what does this really mean for us?

When it seems our world is ending... we can do what everyone else is doing...

- Give in to fear/worry
- Look out for ourselves... hoard the toilet paper.
- Find someone to blame/fight

Or we can choose to trust... No matter what is happening, God is in control and his people have a role

- We can experience peace/confidence in the face of any unprecedented event
- And we can be a beacon/a pillar of calm/peace/confidence...

Instead of figuring out how to get out of it we can find our role in it.

We can show those around us there is a King who is greater than anything that can happen to us.

So how... what do we do while we wait for the world to fall apart... again?

Practice now before the unprecedented becomes precedent.

Confession: This is one of my biggest regrets of that unprecedented year...

- I feel like I didn't prepare people to be able to get past the fear/anger, to think clearly, to see their role for doing good.
- When the world fell apart we, as individuals and as a community, hadn't developed the instinct to calmly trust our King and look for our role.

But we can learn from our mistakes... and practice with small things now... before big things come

One simple tool... Meditate on three words... "Jesus is King"

- Write on hand, note, tattoo

Ask: What does that mean for me right now?

- Not JF... do a mental experiment... What COULD it mean for you if this is true?

When kids are being nuts, stuck in traffic, election doesn't go the way you want, work sucks, etc.

- What does Jesus being King mean to you in that moment?
- What feelings/actions/thoughts are created by what those words mean?

WE: If Jesus is King... what is there to worry about?

If Jesus is already King what is there to fight/argue about?

If Jesus is King then we can have a role in his kingdom

If Jesus is King, no matter what happens everything will be ok one day

- True justice will be done

And even our worst enemy, death has already been defeated and will ultimately be destroyed forever.

We are free to love and follow our King calmly and confidently

- Seeing reality clearly and understanding our role in bringing Jesus' love to every situation.

Following Jesus prepares us to calmly and confidently face anything.