

Mark Chapter Thirteen – Teaching Notes

Introduction: A key idea in Mark is that Jesus is the servant of God. Today, we hope to discuss Jesus' teaching concerning the future.

Body:

Read Mark 13:1-36

10. Concerning the Future. Jesus responds to an inquiry about the destruction of the Temple. He explains that very difficult times are ahead. Those who are on the Lord's side will suffer much, but God will cut off the terrible times for the sake of His elect. There will be false prophets and religious figures who claim to be the Christ. Several times the reader is urged to be on guard. It should be noted that many scholars think that this pericope points to both the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D. as well as the Tribulation and Second Coming of Christ that is yet to take place. It is not acceptable that Jesus made a mistake and surely one of this magnitude.

Applications –

- **The Lord's house.** Notice in vs. 1-2 that as beautiful as the house of the Lord was, it was destined for destruction because of the sinfulness of people. On one hand, *let's work on making sure the Lord's house is presentable.* The Lord's house ought to look better than our houses. On the other hand, *let's make sure we are pleasing God with our obedience, instead of angering Him with our disobedience.* The most important part of God's house is God. We cannot make the house look so good that God will ignore our sins. In other words, we need to both enhance the sanctuary and enhance our level of loving one another. We need to keep the lawn looking nice and be nice to those in our church community.

- **God's knowing of the future.** Notice in verses like 2, 6, and 12 that God knows the future. He knows how much we can bear (see vs. 20). God knows more about our limitations than we know. He knows that the things of this world will let us down (see vs. 31). Cash, credentials, contacts, and even our character are all subject to let us down. And He knows that His word will last forever (see vs. 31). When the stock market is all over the place, when soldiers lose the war, and when health fails us, we can still look to God's word to be as strong and as reliable as when we first began. We don't know the future. Therefore, *let's work on obeying God like we believe that He knows the future.* Disobedience is the behavior of those who think that God does not know that sin leads to punishment. Obedience is the behavior of those who think that God knows that obedience leads to blessings.

- **Staying on guard.** Notice in verses like 5, 9, and 35-36 the urging to be on guard with endurance. The troubles of this world can come at us so quickly and so unexpectedly that we can be caught off guard. However, we should stay on guard, so we can bring glory to God, instead of giving the devil the joy of seeing us upset. *Let's work on staying on guard.* We can do this by regularly and prayerfully studying and obeying the Bible with the support of other disciples. We can stay on guard by keeping our minds on the things of God and looking at each twist and turn of our lives from a spiritual or biblical point of view. We are not on guard, if we are not studying God's word. Nor are we on guard, if we don't obey basic issues like love one another, give as God has given to us, and doing our best in service. /// And then no matter how

on guard we are, we need endurance. Some troubles will last for a while. *Let's work on having the daily dedication and endurance needed to keep on obeying God's word with confidence that He is working things out for our good.*

- **Deceiving religious people.** Notice in vss. 5-6, 21-23 that there will be some deceptive religious people who will deceive many. *Let's do all that we can to stay true to God, instead of being deceived.* The best way to discern what is of God and what is not is to try every matter by the word of God. This means, we must know God's word well enough and the matter at hand well enough to compare the two to see if they agree or not. When an idea is contrary to God's word, we should reject it. When an idea is in the spirit of God's word, we should receive it. When we don't know if it is in agreement or not, we should seek God's wisdom. We know that loving one another is of God. We know that being anti-social is not of God. We know that worshipping God with enthusiasm is of God. We know that being a bump on the log, when we have been called to praise and worship God is not of God.

- **All kinds of trouble.** Notice in vss. 7-8, 12-13 that some of the coming trouble will be what we call natural disasters. Some of it will be war and international violence. Some of it will take place in our families and close relationships. And there will even be some in the religious organizations. Knowing that trouble can come in any of these areas should move us to make sure our trust is not in the things of this world but in God. Family can change on us. Communal, national, and international affairs can change on us. Even the weather can change on us. And it should be no surprise that religious organizations can change on us. *Let's put our confidence in the Lord.* We should appreciate the good days we have in our lives, but we must keep our trust in the Lord. /// As for the teaching that God will give us what to say, we should treat this is a special situation. We should not take the text and neglect to study for preaching or to prepare for court.

- **Jesus' return.** Notice in vss. 26-27 that Jesus is coming back. We have been talking about this for almost 2,000 years. However, by faith, we believe that we are closer today than we have ever been. The hope of the believer is not in social reform or the miraculous transformation of human kind. Our hope is in the Lord's return and His pressing "reset." The day is coming when the Lord will insure that the wicked will cease from troubling and the weary shall be at rest. *Let's live like we have confidence in the Lord's returning and putting things in order.* This kind of living should be noted for demonstrating love of God, ourselves, and others.

Conclusion: Let's work on being servants of God. God has much for those who obey His will.