The Return of the Lord

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Let me invite you to open your Bible with me once again to Mark chapter 13.

Mark 13, while you're finding Mark 13, let me encourage you to be praying for our children as they prepare to go to kids' camp.
We have had a camp for students, a leadership camp called Church Camp. We've had that. We've had Vacation Bible School. We've had Middle School Camp.
Last week we had High School Camp, and now this week Kids Camp. And so, it just continues to be a very full and exciting summer of ministry, so be praying for them.
Let me also encourage you to be praying for Joey Snodgrass, our youth pastor. He was at high school camp last week and severed his Achilles tendon.
[1:09] I know, yeah. It sounds awful, doesn't it? And so, he'll be having surgery in the morning to repair that. And so, a couple of things.

One is, I want to thank Kashawn and Mary, who serve full-time on our youth staff, because during high school camp, Joey had to come back home. And so, more responsibility fell to them.
We're grateful for both of them and their leadership. It's a great example of why the Lord has brought us the leaders He has. We were well prepared for that. Additionally, we had just a tremendous group of adult sponsors that were there.
And so, youth camp was able to go on without a hitch because of great leaders and great staff and great volunteers. We're very thankful for that. At the same time, just between you and me, we're talking about the finest youth pastor in our state.
We are. And so, to pull him out of camp is a big loss for our students. And so, and a big loss for him. And so, we want to pray for them.
[2:15] But I can tell you, having been down there for a couple of days this week, things were left in great shape and great condition. They had a wonderful week. And I'm really thankful for our students.

One of the good things of when you have as many high school students who are discipled in the Word is while you've still got to have adults there for due diligence, our students take care of themselves.
They're well taught. They are well trained. They are trustworthy. I trust our students completely. And so, they had two great weeks back-to-back of camp.
But it's really hard for Joey because this is a fun part of youth ministry and the summer and all that goes with that. We also have another mission trip next month that he was going to be leading.
We're going to have to make some adjustments on. We'll take care of that. But do be praying for Joey. While you're praying for Joey, I should probably also add you might pray for his wife, Lacey, who now has three babies and a baby to take care of.
[3:19] It's a long recovery. It's a long recovery. I've given him Monday off for surgery. So, I suspect he'll be back here Tuesday.

But, no, I told him last night he didn't have to come to church today if he needed to stay home. And he said something like, I'm going to miss so much coming up. I'll go ahead and be there tomorrow.
And I said, we might need to talk about what, I don't know what you mean by miss so much. And then he showed up. He's not in the service, is he? I hope I won't be talking about him if he was. He's got a sports club, but he's here in jeans today.
He's got jeans on. Like, he's just gone full rebel. So, high school seniors, college freshmen, if you all see him today, ask him, like, what happened to you while you were injured?

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What's going on? Next thing you know, he's going to be preaching sitting down from an iPad or something. Actually, he said he would do that as a joke. He's welcome to. But be praying for Joey. [4:15] I hate that for him. But, you know, as you get older, things happen. So, he's at the ripe old age of 28. The outer man wastes away.

Inner man's renewed day by day. And do be praying for Joey. He does such a phenomenal job with her students and with so much more than that, too. Mark 13, we continue in our study here looking specifically at the events as we've sung about today of the second coming.
Mark 13, verse 24. But in those days after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. And the stars will be falling from heaven and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.
It's been my observation that people love to talk about heaven. They love to sing about heaven. They love to consider heaven.
[5:32] However, when you talk about the things that lead us to heaven, people get a little anxious. For most believers, they're not so much afraid of dying and going to heaven, but they're very concerned about how they'll die.

Even in terms of Scripture in Mark 13, if we were to talk about being in heaven, for most believers, that's something that we would receive joyfully. But when you talk about the events of the second coming and the details of that, people tend to get a little bit anxious.
Christians say they long for the return of Christ. In actuality, many believers live with some fear about it. And I hope that as we're walking through this chapter of the Bible, that it's helping you to understand some important details.
Lord willing, this fall, when we rejoin our Sunday evening service in August, my plan is for us to walk through on Sunday nights, 1 Thessalonians. We'll spend about 13 or 14 Sunday evenings in 1 Thessalonians.
That has so much encouragement in it, including chapters 4 and 5, a number of events that deal with the second coming and the last days.
[6:50] And some detail that's in 1 Thessalonians, not included here in Mark 13. And so, I think that'll be a great follow-up for us after having spent a number of weeks this summer in Mark 13.

And so, I hope that you'll be here when we start that back up the second week in August. But as we've seen already in Mark 13, Jesus is walking us through a number of things that will take place in the last days.
He talks about the signs that will take place, these birth pains he calls it. These signs that will be there during all of this church age, but as we get closer and closer to the end, we'll see them increase in intensity and in frequency.
Signs such as wars and rumors of wars. That's been going on the last thousands of years, but it's going to continue and it's going to increase.
Earthquakes and famines, those have been going on for a long, long time. They will continue and they will increase. There's going to be persecution that breaks out against the people of God.
[8:07] That persecution will come from secular authorities. We've looked at that. That persecution will come from false religion. We've looked at that. That persecution will come even from your own family.

And that persecution will come from all over the world. We've looked at that for several weeks in verses 9 to 13. We looked last week at a pivotal event that takes place during the seven-year period known as the tribulation.
Verse 14 refers to it as the abomination of desolation. That terminology comes from the Old Testament, the book of Daniel, where three times Daniel refers to the abomination of desolation. We see Daniel refer to that in one sense in chapter 11 that is fulfilled after the life of Daniel, before the earthly ministry of Jesus in a Seleucid king known as Antiochus Epiphanes.
In the 160s BC when he goes in and defiles and desecrates the temple. But Daniel 9 and Daniel 12 speak of an abomination of desolation that is, as Jesus is speaking, and even in our day, still yet future.

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[9:27] And when that event takes place, verse 14, when the Antichrist breaks his treaty of protection against Israel and seats himself in the temple, and when those things happen, Jesus says, on the day that happens, you must flee.

Mark 13, 14 says, let the reader understand. Let him know how significant this is. And when that event happens in verse 14, it's going to be so dire that if you're on the housetops, you don't go back in, you just run and flee.
If you're working in the field and you've left your coat somewhere, you don't worry about going to pick your coat up, you just run and you flee. And you pray it doesn't happen in the winter, he says, because that's the rainy season.
It makes travel difficult. You pray it doesn't happen on the Sabbath, not because it's wrong to flee on the Sabbath, but because there are obstacles set up that make it difficult to move around on the Sabbath.
You hope that you're not nursing an infant because it's going to be difficult to run and flee to protect yourself if you're having to also hold and take care of an infant.
[10:41] And all of these things are what triggers the back half of the seven-year tribulation known as the Great Tribulation.

And that is when the full wrath of God gets poured out upon this planet. How severe will it be? Well, it's what we looked at last week in verse 19.
That brings us to verse 24.
For in those days, in the days he's just described, up to verse 23, after that tribulation, the sun will be dark and the moon will not give its light.
I want you to make note first of continuing the theme that started in verse 3. Make note first of the signs of the second coming. In chapter 13, verse 3, it was the signs of the end.
[12:02] It was the signs that are pointing toward the end. When you get to verse 24, we're talking about the signs that lead to the actual event. We're no longer just birth pains getting more intense and more frequent.

We're now talking about the actual signs of his return. Now, of that day and hour, no one knows the time. It's not for us to know the time.
It is for us, though, to be aware of what will take place. We don't know when. We do know largely what. In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened.
That's not new to us. That was spoken of in the Old Testament prophet Joel as well. Joel says, The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.
This is going to be something that all the world, who is alive at that time, will see. From the vantage point of humanity on the earth, the sun will appear as dark.
[13:20] We don't know exactly how that's going to happen. It could be something that the Lord does with the sun itself. It could be the effects of earthquakes and volcanoes and ash that spews up that could be so thick in the earth's atmosphere that to look up would hide the sun to where it appears to us to be as though the sun has ceased to shine.

Revelation 6.12, speaking of the sixth seal in Revelation, speaks also of an earthquake and a sun that appears as black. Verse 12, When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, and the full moon became like blood.
This is not just Mark 13. This is in the Old Testament. This is in the Gospels. This is in the book of Revelation. You put them all together to get the full picture, but this is not just one strange, secluded verse.
This is clear Old and New Testament. It says in verse 25, the stars will be falling from heaven.
Some theologians and scholars debate if that is going to be falling stars or shooting stars or meteors.
Here's what I want you to know. The word, the word in the original language here, translated here as stars, is a common word. It's a generic word for things that are in the sky, for bodies in space.
[14:58] And so, we can't be definitive exactly what that will be. It could be shooting stars, falling stars. It could be meteors that come and strike the earth.

Again, Revelation 6.13, The stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale.

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That's what's going to happen. Back to Mark 13, And the powers in the heavens will be shaken. So, things are going to be radically different right before the second coming of Christ.
Luke 21 adds, There will be signs in sun and moon and stars and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves.
You're not going to be able to stop these cosmic changes that happen to our planet.
[16:13] Now, earlier in chapter 13, it spoke of, for example, go to verse 8, the signs of the age.

There will be earthquakes. There will be famines. Other gospels speak of pestilence. These are natural disasters. All throughout history, you're going to have these natural disasters.
You're going to have earthquakes. You're going to have volcanoes. You're going to have tornadoes. You're going to have all these birth pains. When you get to verses 24 to 27, we're looking not just at the signs in terms of birth pains.
We're looking at the actual events that immediately precede the return of Christ and the second coming. And in that day, we're no longer talking about natural disasters.
We're talking about unnatural disasters. We understand why there's tornadoes. Meteorologists can study that and help explain that.
[17:22] And we can understand when you've got dry lines and warm air and cool air and when they collide and jet streams. We can understand that. It's natural disasters.

It's part of the world as it is. It's somewhat predictable. We know what causes it.
We can watch it come together. Technology has helped us to become so sophisticated that while we can't pinpoint exactly when it will happen, we can know a week out when conditions are likely to create a tornado and we can watch this storm happen and we can understand if you have just a bit of a background of meteorology and study the weather, we can understand what's happening and why it's happening.
Those are natural disasters. What we see right before the return of Christ is not that. This is unnatural disaster.
This is something that is different than the world has ever seen. This isn't about a hot summer or a dry summer or a particularly snowy winter or a really active spring storm system.
[18:47] It's not that. This is the planet vomiting, so to speak, just spewing.

It's the stars and volcanic ash and darkness. all of this, you look at and you say, we have no precedent for this.
This has never been seen before. This is unusual. This is uncommon. This is once. Unlike the birth pains that we've already studied, these are things that when they're happening, let the reader understand, this is the end.
The return of Christ is at hand. Now, when we study 1 Thessalonians, Lord willing, this fall, there are some details relating to the end of the age that 1 Thessalonians gives us that's not in Mark 13. And I'm fighting a bit the temptation to deal with some of those things now because I'm wanting to stay in the flow of what Mark gives us on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and not lose track with how he's presenting these things.
[20:17] But one of the things that a lot of people say that want, I'm talking about believers, preachers, that want to explain these kinds of things away from a literal reading of the text here is they'll just say, it just all sounds impossible.

to take this at face value and say that you're going to have darkness over the earth and you're going to have things falling from the sky, that all of these signs, and if you take the seals and the bull judgments, if you take all of those things from Revelation and chapter 6 specifically, and you see them as literal things happening, a lot of times people say it can't be that because that just seems impossible.
To which I want to ask you, you do believe Jesus rose again, right? You do believe in a literal flood where only no one and his family was saved.
You do believe that when Jesus tells a man who can't walk to rise and walk, that a man who can't walk rose and walked, right?
You do believe that when Jesus said, Lazarus, come forth, a real man named Lazarus, dead for three days, came to life.
[21:57] You believe this, don't you? And if your answer is, I don't believe that, then you've got real problems.

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If your concern is, we can't take eschatology to mean what it clearly says because we've never seen anything like that, what do you do with Jonah?
What do you do with the parting of the Red Sea? What do you do with Jairus' daughter? Do you believe that nothing is impossible with God or not?
Do you believe that we serve a true, real God who reigns in the heavens and created and brought all things into existence by the decree of his word and his will?
Because if your thought is, I need to take everything about God and everything about Scripture and make it no larger than what I have experienced and what my mind can comprehend, comprehend, my friends, you don't have God.
[23:17] So as I've been trying to say every single week and will continue to, good people with genuine hearts can disagree over some details of eschatology, over some interpretive issues, over some timing, but it can't be because you say that could never happen.

That can't be the lens through which you do your eschatology. Because I've got to tell you, if you don't think God can do the impossible, you have no hope.
None. Our entire faith, our entire faith hinges on the proclamation and declaration that a man died, was laid into the tomb, and on the first day of the week came to life.
And that that same man could then pass through walls and be here and then be there and then right in front of people's eyes as recorded in the book of Acts could ascend up to heaven.
And if you don't, if you're not on board for that, I've just got to ask you, what are you on board with?
So all that to say, good people can disagree over details of eschatology.
[24:44] Absolutely. I've been, I've tried to be very clear on that every single week we've been in this chapter. Good people with good hearts can have disagreements. That's okay. It's not a test of our fellowship.

But the reason you disagree can't be because you say, well, I don't think that's ever happened before. That can't happen. We're talking about the God who created the heavens and the earth.
I mean, do you believe in an eternal state or not? Do you believe that Christ was born of a virgin or not? Do you believe that Christ was truly God and truly man?
And so what you end up seeing is a lot of times people want to take the sovereign authority and power of God and strip it down to where what God would do is no greater than what you've seen and what your mind can fully comprehend.
I just want you to know that's not who our God is. The signs of the second coming. The sun is darkened.
[26:00] The moon will not give its light. The stars will be falling from heaven and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. This planet is going to be changed.

And you can't change that politically. You can't change that with policy. You can't change that with technology. That is going to happen.
Second, we've seen the signs of the second coming. Let's look at the sight of the second coming. The sight of the second coming.
Verse 26. And then, so this, the first thing is going to happen. Verse 24, verse 25. Those details take place and then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.
At the end of the tribulation that Jesus has already spoken of, verse 19. At the end of that, after these signs have taken place, then you see the Son of Man, that's Jesus, coming in clouds with great power and glory.
[27:24] This is the sight of the second coming. This is the grand finale. If you go to a fireworks show this time of year, you see all these fireworks going off and everybody waits for the grand finale.

And if you have to ask yourself, was that the grand finale? You went to a bad fireworks show. You should know. Because by comparison, everything else is small.
There's one big sign. One big sight. When you go to a fireworks show, it may last five minutes or 45 minutes and you got oohs and ahs and wows and oh, look at that.
And it's all building and building and building and building and building and building and building and building until finally, you have the grand finale and everybody at that show should know there it is.
that's what everything was pointing to. That's the sight of the second coming. Then, after these signs in verse 25, verse 26, then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power

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and glory.
[28:42] The reference to clouds here I take is not necessarily the clouds that we'll look up and see after church today. I think it's the Shekinah glory clouds of God.

I think it's a reference to the Lord coming in His Shekinah glory and the clouds that depict His sovereignty and His power.
Now, when Jesus says you're going to see the Son of Man coming on the clouds, that's coming from the Old Testament Daniel 7. people in Jesus' day understood that if you say you're coming on the clouds of glory, you're making a claim to be God.
I want to stay just in Mark because I want to keep you in the train of thought that Mark had here. So go to chapter 14.
Let's pick this up here in verse 60. This is Jesus as He's being interrogated before His crucifixion.
And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, have you no answer to make?
[30:06] What is it that these men testify against you? But He remained silent and made no answer. Again, the high priest asked Him, are you the Christ, the Son of the blessed?

And Jesus said, verse 62, I am. And you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven.
Jesus is telling those who are putting Him on trial, this will not be the last time the world deals with me. I will come again. I will come in power.
I will be coming on the clouds. Now, the question is, how did people understand that? What in their world, in their time, in their understanding, if somebody said, I'm coming on the clouds with power, what would that mean to them?
Verse 63, the high priest tore his garments and said, what further witnesses do we need? You have heard his blasphemy.
[31:22] They understood that when Jesus said, you will see me coming on the clouds of glory, he was saying, I am God.

His own opponents understood clearly that was his claim. It doesn't mean they believed him, but they understood clearly what he was claiming and who he was claiming to be.
So much so, they said, you've heard his blasphemy. He says, he's coming in power with the clouds, with the glory of heaven.
That's the sight of his coming. He will come and all the world will see it. Third, let's look at the salvation of the second coming.
The salvation of the second coming, verse 27. And then, so let's back up here. You've got the signs, these cosmic signs, the sun, the moon, the stars, no planet is going to feel like it's falling apart.
[32:39] It's not falling apart. God is still in control. But the whole planet is going to feel like it's coming completely undone. For those who are alive in those days, it's going to seem like the whole planet is coming unraveled.

Verse 26, and then the son of man will come. Verse 27, and then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.
This is the salvation of the second coming. I believe the church is going to be taken before these events. I believe you're going to have a seven-year period known as the tribulation.
The midpoint of that, the Antichrist breaks his tree with Israel, known as the abomination of desolation, bringing into us to the great tribulation. Toward the end of that seven years, what you're going to have are these cosmic signs where the sun, the moon, the stars, all of the universe begins to be shaken.
The heavens are shaken. And then, in power, in glory, on the Shekinah clouds of glory, Christ will return. And what is he coming to do? He's coming to bring judgment to those who have rejected, and he brings his salvation to those who are alive, those who remain.
[34:15] He will send his angels out and gather his elect from the four winds, from all over the world. Even during the tribulation, you will have, while there's mass persecution and mass judgment, there will also be mass revival.

revival. And as the Lord returns from all over the globe, Jesus says, the Son of Man, that's him, will come and I will gather my elect.
Who are the elect? In verse 27, he's already told us back in verse 20, for the sake of the elect whom he chose.

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When Christ returns in power and glory, he's going to gather to himself those who are alive. These are believers converted during the tribulation, surviving the threats and persecution of the Antichrist. So we're at the end of the seven-year tribulation. these are people who were saved after the start of the tribulation, were not put to death during it, and when Christ returns, he will gather his elect, and the elect in verse 27, or the elect in verse 20, those whom he chose.
[35:48] His people. the ones who no one can take them out of his hand. The ones who he cannot and will not let go.

You can read Zechariah 12 and Zechariah 13 of your Old Testament to see more detail of that. but he's coming to rescue, he's coming to rule, and he's coming to reign.
He is coming to destroy his enemies, and he's coming to bring salvation, ultimate deliverance to his people, his elect, from the four winds, from the ends of the earth, those whom he chose.
That leads us to a fourth and final thing I want to show you, and that is the sovereign of the second coming. The sovereign of the second coming. Turn with me to the end of your Bible, Revelation 19. Revelation 19.
[37:25] Jesus' first coming was humble, largely overlooked, born in Bethlehem. An announcement went to just a few.

some lowly shepherds among them. But the second coming, no one will miss it. Verse 11, then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, by the way, when he leads into Jerusalem to begin his passion week, he's on a donkey.
No longer is he riding a mere donkey. This is a horse of white. This is the connotation of spotless, unblemished, absolute holiness.
holiness. And that's interesting because in the ancient world, kings rode on a white horse after a military conquest.
Here, Christ is returning from heaven pictured on a white horse. Remember, the nations of the world have gathered to come against him, and he rides a horse of victory before the battle even starts.
[38:53] That's how secure and guaranteed his victory is. The one sitting on and it's called faithful and true, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

in Christ's first coming he comes in humility and the world judged him. Christ is arrested and he goes through his trials.
They bring him before Annas, the former high priest. They bring him before Caiaphas. They bring him before the Sanhedrin. They bring him before Pilate. They take him before Herod.
They take him again before Pilate. Six different times Christ in his first coming is on trial by the world. In his second coming he comes in absolute power and he judges the world.
You can read Zechariah 14 for more details on that. Verse 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire and on his head are many diadems and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.
[40:07] The diadems are crowns in his first coming when he is paying the price for our sin he will wear a crown of thorns. At his return no crown of thorns.

This is a crown of victory. This is no longer a crown of bearing the weight and the curse of our sin. Genesis 3 part of the curse of our sin is the ground will bear thorns and thistles and so Christ at his crucifixion will wear a crown of thorns will wear of thorns painful though it would be incredibly incredibly painful the spikes from these jagged date palms could be as long as eight inches crammed into his skull.
It's not only a crown of mocking and a crown of torture it's also Christ identifying on his brow with the curse of sin because he's paying the price for our sin but at his return there's no crown of thorns that's been taken care of now he returns with a diadem the victor's crown the one who is king of kings and lord of lords.
Verse 13 he is clothed in a robe dipped in blood this isn't the blood of the cross of his first coming this is the blood of judgment by which he is called the word of God and the armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen white and pure were following him on white horses.
By the way do you notice as we're coming with him in glory for this final battle this final war it does not describe those of us who return with Christ as having a weapon.
[42:03] You don't need it. Christ will destroy and put away all of his enemies in a moment. When we get to 1 Thessalonians this fall there will be some helpful distinctions that some of the differences between when we rise to meet him in the air and when we descend with him at the

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second coming.

I believe these to be two separate events. We'll see in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 5 the difference between rising to meet him in the air and descending with him. But I want you to notice in Mark 13 where Christ is talking about his second coming we see it pictured here in Revelation 19 where we return with him.
Verse 15 from his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
And the second coming every eye will see. No one will miss this. those who are remaining on the earth at the time of his second coming will be two categories those who oppose him and those who have trusted him.
And those who oppose him will be instantly defeated and await judgment. those who are his Jesus words in Mark 13 his elect whom he chose he will gather from the four winds from all over the planet north, south, east, west he'll have people that have believed in him that have survived the events of the tribulation and he will gather them for himself.
[44:10] now here's a really important question how do we respond to this?

I don't think you're going to be here if you're a believer for those events one of two things I believe the church will either be lifted or you're going to have passed away anyway before any of that happens and you're going to already be in glory with him.
We're going to see it one way or another because either people are going to be alive when the events of the second coming happen or if you're with him in glory which I believe every Christian in this room will be at that time you'll see it from the top coming down.
The first time you fly in an airplane and you get up high above everything you look down and you say I never knew it looked like this. you've not seen anything yet because on that day we will return with him coming down from heaven Christ on the clouds of his Shekinah glory coming in triumph and victory.
But it does lead us to this question that we need to close with this morning and that is what do we do now? what's our response now?
[46:02] Well the Bible gives us some help here to think about what we should do now. The Bible tells us that we are to live in a way that is a life of holiness and godliness waiting and hastening the coming of the day of the Lord because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn.

That is 2 Peter 3 11 and 12. Here's the question of 2 Peter 3 11. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved things you read about in Mark 13.
Here's the question. What sort of people ought you to be? There's the question. So pre-mill, all-mill, post-mill, dispensational pre-mill, historic pre-mill, we could keep getting more and more nuance if we want.
Everybody come together here. if I could speak to the whole world for a moment that's a believer I would say whatever your eschatology is here's a question for all of us.
Since these things are going to be dissolved, since the end is coming, what sort of people ought you to be? We can all agree, all of these different categories and camps agree Christ is returning.
[47:48] And because he's returning, the question is what sort of people ought you to be? Well, it tells us live lives of holiness and godliness.

In other words, because you know how the end is coming, today live godly, holy lives.
A number of us love to take care of our lawns. In fact, a friend of mine at Falls Creek, I ran into him last week and he said, he said, Michael, he said, a lot of times in the summer you post pictures of your lawn.
I haven't seen any pictures of your lawn this summer. I said, it's because it's 25 straight days without rain. If you want to see what hay looks like, just look it up.
Well, here's the deal. no matter how much rain we get or not, no matter how much I fertilize or not, I know that October, November is coming.
[49:09] I know that grass is going to go dormant. The question is, what should I do in the growing season knowing what's coming?

Should I just not mow? Should I just not weed eat? Should I just not edge? God forbid. Don't do it. Some of you do that. Don't do that.

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Your neighbors call the city and it gets really ugly. You say, yeah, but it's just going to die anyway. Yeah, so are you. So you make the most of today.
That's the point. all of this, all of this is going to be remade. But the response is not to throw up your hand and say, well, who cares?
The response is to say, knowing the time is short, let's make the most of today. Not in a worldly materialistic way, 2 Peter 3, 12, verse 11 says, but in lives of holiness and godliness.
[50:27] In other words, in the mind of God, there's a direct correlation between those who recognize that Christ is coming again and the power with which they live their lives today.

We're not discouraged. We're not defeated. we're not frightened. We understand what's coming and because we know what's coming, we live lives of holiness and godliness for the glory of Jesus Christ knowing that no matter what man may do to me, when I die, I'll be with the Lord and one day he will come again in power and every eye will see him and he will reign and he will rule and this will be a place where righteousness dwells.
How ought you to live in light of these things? Lives of holiness, lives of godliness, living today, today, with the end in mind.
Lord, we thank you for your word and pray that it would bring us encouragement, pray that it would bring us power, pray that it would bring us hope. We recognize you have given us this information about your return, Lord Jesus, because you want us to live a certain way today.
You've told us about the end, not so that we would be fatalistic or frightened, but instead so that we would be set free to live lives of godliness and holiness.
[52:29] We thank you that you're in control. We thank you that you are sovereign. We thank you that because you have, through the work of your spirit, preserved your scripture for us, we don't have to be shaken, because we are held secure by the one who holds and upholds all things together.

It's in your name that we pray. Amen. If you're looking for a Sunday school class, go right out here to our welcome center, it'll help you with that.
If you're looking for handouts for the seminars that start next week, we've got those available right out here at this lobby at the Ministry Connection. Remember, next Sunday, still service at nine, you guys come in here at nine, and then adults, you'll go to one of your seminars at ten thirty.
Alright? God bless you. You're dismissed. Thank you.
Thank you.

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