A Look at the End Pt 3

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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.!

As we continue in our study through this chapter of the Gospel of Mark, and we continue to walk verse by verse through it, we're looking at really the third part of verses 1 to 13, looking specifically today at verses 9 to 13.
And just by way of reminder, for some who may not have been with us the last couple of weeks to kind of catch you up just a bit, this is a short break before we get to the events of the crucifixion, the arrest, and the trials of Jesus.
Jesus has been in the temple teaching throughout this last week of His life leading up to the crucifixion. And in Mark 12, it was just one after another of people who came to Him to ask Him questions, to challenge Him, to try to get Him into debate.
And in chapter 13, it's a break from what He has taught in public in chapter 12, and the events of the crucifixion, the arrest, and the betrayal of chapter 14.
[1:53] In chapter 13, He's dealing with questions that relate to the end. He has been teaching His apostles about not only His crucifixion and that prophecy, but about what is to come.

And His apostles are wanting to know more about the end of the age. And so the last couple of weeks, I've given you a few words to write down to understand the progression of thought that Jesus gives.
As they're on the insert in your bulletin, if that helps you to look at with us this morning. First was the word stones. Came from verses 1 and 2, where Jesus says, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.
Judgment will come to the temple. And the second word we looked at was the word searching in verses 3 and 4. As these two sets of brothers pulled Jesus aside privately and asked for more detail.
In God's grace, through the work of the Holy Spirit, this conversation has been preserved for us so that we here in the church can know these things.
[3:14] And the questions relate to when is all of this going to happen? When is the end of the age? What will the signs be that would let us know the end of the age is near?

And that leads to the third word that we looked at last week, and that was the word signs in verses 5 to 13. Jesus begins to walk through some of the specific signs that will take place just before his return.
There are four signs specifically he mentions here in Mark 13. We looked at the first three last Sunday. The first sign was deception.
He says, There's going to be deception.
There's going to be false teachers. And the encouragement Jesus gives is do not be led astray. The second sign was destruction.
[4:22] Verse 7 and 8. And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place. But the end is not yet. Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom.

And his encouragement is do not be alarmed. Don't be shaken when you hear of wars and rumors of wars. These things must take place.
Don't be alarmed. Don't be alarmed. A third sign from verse 8 was disasters. There will be earthquakes in various places.
And there will be famines. These are about the beginning of birth pains. We don't need to be afraid. He's told us to expect these things.

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So the signs that accompany the end of the age will be deception. Do not be led astray.
Destruction. Do not be alarmed. Disasters.
[5:24] Do not be afraid. And then today we look at the fourth sign. And that fourth sign is difficulty.

There's going to be difficulty for the people of God. But as you will see, the encouragement he gives is do not be anxious.
Do not be anxious about these things. Now let me remind you that the way Jesus describes these signs is they're like birth pains.
Labor pains. That when you are pregnant, before you give birth, you're going to have these pains.
And the pains, as we've been looking at the last couple of weeks, will increase in intensity and increase in frequency.
They become more active more often. The first time you feel a labor pain, that's not the end. The end is not then. But you're in that time.
[6:29] And as you get closer and closer to birth, those labor pains get closer and closer together and stronger and stronger. That's the metaphor Jesus uses. So when we think of these signs, these are things that do happen all throughout the church age.

We're in the last days. Ever since Christ was resurrected, we're in the last days. And so these birth pains here in the last days are taking place.
We've seen for years, including our own time, false teachers, destruction of earthquakes and famine. Disaster and we've seen wars and rumors of wars.
These are things that take place during this age, during this church age. Yet, as we get to the end, like labor pains, all of these signs will increase in frequency and increase in intensity.
Now, he is very clear at the end of verse 7, the end is not yet. The first time you hear of a war, a rumor of war, that doesn't mean it's the end.
[7:43] The first time there's a big earthquake, it doesn't mean it's the end. He says at the end of verse 8, these are about the beginning of the birth pains. So all of these signs are going to take place throughout the church age.

And as we get closer and closer to the return of Christ, they're going to get stronger and they're going to become more frequent.
Now, next week, Lord willing, we'll look at verse 14, where there is a very specific and abrupt change.
But, when you see that he's going to make mention of a very specific event yet to take place, the abomination of desolation. We'll look at that next week.
So these signs are continuing and they are increasing and they're going to build to this high point here at the abomination of desolation.
[8:48] desolation and then for the last days of a time known as the tribulation, as verse 19 speaks of. Let's look at this fourth sign, this difficulty that will come upon the people of God.

Verse 9, but be on your guard, for they will deliver you over to the councils. Where is this difficulty going to come from?
Where is the persecution against God's people going to come from? Well, in this fourth sign of persecution, of difficulty for God's people, Jesus is going to speak of several different places that this difficulty, this persecution is going to come from.
First, it will come from false religion. Listen, be on your guard, they will deliver you over to councils.
And you will be beaten in synagogues and you will stand before governors and kings.
It's going to come from secular authority as well. Those that lead false religions will come against Christians and also those that lead secular authorities will persecute Christians.
[10:10] And again, this is going to happen throughout the church age and it's going to build to its high point in the time of the tribulation. We know this is coming.

The world will grow increasingly intolerant of Christians. Our message will become increasingly hated.
And if they hate our message, they will hate us. Those who teach false gospels and false religions, they will come against Christians.
And those of the state, those of secular authorities, they will come against Christians. And you say, well, why is this going to happen?
Verse 9, you will stand before governors and kings for my sake. They will hate you because they hate Jesus.

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[11:12] They will despise you because they despise the message of Christ. And what are we to do? Look at the end of verse 9. Bear witness before them.

So let's be clear. Remember, being aligned with Jesus will be costly. Christians will be hated. They will be beaten. And many of them will be turned over for punishment, for imprisonment, or even for death for the name of Christ.
I want us to be clear on this because it's a fair question to say, if that's true, why would anybody want to be a part of that? Why? And it's very interesting because when you look at, and this is particularly on my heart right now because in the summer, you've got not only in our state, but all around our nation, you've got summer camps, which the Lord can use in great ways.
We've got a group leaving tomorrow for our second summer camp of the week, of the summer. We're excited for that and praying for God to do great things in their hearts and their lives.
[12:49] But in far too many places of camp this summer, what people will hear, unfortunately, in many places, is going to be nothing more than a good luck charm Jesus.

You want to be happy? You want to win? Are you sad and depressed? Come be happy.
And too many camps all over the world are going to offer something far different than what Jesus offered.
And so I want to be crystal clear to our children before you go to kids camp, to our middle schoolers before you go to camp tomorrow, to our high schoolers before you go to camp in two weeks, to our college students before you have your conference in July.
I want to be crystal clear here. This is what Christ calls you to. Be ready to give up anything to suffer any loss for His name's sake.
[14:11] This is not an invitation to come and be happy. This is not an invitation to come and have everything your way. This is not an invitation to come and have everybody applaud you and affirm you and talk about how great you are.

So why would anybody follow? Here's why. Because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
And the wages of sin is death. And those left to themselves apart from the grace of God will face an eternal separation from the King of Kings and will endure His judgment.
But Christ rich in mercy but God the Father rich in love poured out demonstrated made known publicly His love for you when Christ His Son went to the cross and God demonstrated His love in this that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.
Why would we endure suffering for Him? Because Christ died for us. Why would we be willing to give up all things? Because Christ died for us. Because He paid the price for our sin.
[15:50] Because He redeemed us. Because He bought us with a price. And He has secured for us our salvation for now and for eternity. therefore we have nothing to fear what can man do to me?

And so if you want a complete gospel invitation it's not about a song playing with people walking an aisle.
A gospel invitation is to hear the words of Jesus who says I am the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through me.
Salvation is coming to Jesus. But it's understanding that while the gift is free to receive and it's received by faith not by your works and not by your merit just understand that for those who are in Christ the world hated Him don't be surprised when the world hates you too.
Now whosoever will come and follow Jesus. And if you say I love my life too much I love my wealth too much I love my security too much then you're going to walk away sad like the rich young ruler but at least you know what you're walking away from.
[17:43] I'd rather you know what you're walking away from than have no idea what you're responding to. Jesus makes it clear persecution is coming and it's going to come from false religion and it's going to come from secular authorities and it's going to happen for His name sake.

It's because you claim the name of Jesus. Yet He says you will be a witness before them and right in the midst of this fourth sign that deals with persecution we'll get more specific in a moment look at verse 10 kind of tucked away in the middle here is verse 10 and the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.
This hasn't been fulfilled yet because the gospel has not been proclaimed to all nations but it will. So understand church that while the birth pains are raging the gospel goes forth.

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The birth pains of persecution does not stop the church. The threats of arresting and torturing and killing Christ's people does not stop the sovereign God from marching on in the truth of the gospel. The gospel goes to all the nations. In the midst of all the drama of the end times events part of the beauty is verse 10 that the gospel goes to all the nations.
[19:37] Matthew 24 recorded the same message from Jesus adds in verse 14 and this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come.

And you get to be a part of it. We as a church get to be a part of this. We're a part of God's global work of taking the gospel to all the nations.
And so as I've said for three weeks now in this chapter, I don't want us to be ignorant of the details of the end. They matter. They're here for a reason. It's here for our encouragement.
But while we're learning the details about the end, again, with the understanding that there are good people with great hearts and minds that may disagree on some elements of the timing, let's understand this, that we don't take our eyes off of our responsibility, which is to take the gospel to all the nations.
It's not for us to set dates. It's not for us to know the exact hour. That's the Lord's knowledge. It is for us to do what He's called us to do, and that is to take the gospel to all the nations.
[21:05] So right in the midst of this, how do you and I live verse 10? How do we do that? How do we take the gospel to all nations?

Well, one way we do that is just by sharing the gospel where we live, taking the gospel to your friends, taking the gospel to your family, one of the ways we do this is by living life right where God has you living and dwelling and with your mouth vocally sharing the gospel.
Another way we do this is by going on mission trips around the world for the purpose of evangelism. We've got mission trips we've already done this year, all around the world, others that are coming up in other parts of our nation and as those opportunities come, I want to encourage you to be open and available to go on those trips to share the gospel.
Another way that we can take the gospel of nations is by our faithful, generous giving to the Lord through his church here because every single week as you give financial offerings, a portion of that offering goes not just to meet the needs we have here as a church, but a portion that goes literally all around the world to support missionaries and church planters and Bible training centers and those who are spreading the gospel.
I was on the phone this week with an organization that we support financially that is training up pastors and missionaries and evangelists in a part of the world I've never been to.
[22:52] And yet as my family financially worships through giving, we have a part to play in funding those missionaries and those evangelists who are taking the gospel to all the nations.

As you give, you have a chance to be a part of the same thing. And so we take the gospel nations by doing evangelism where we live, by going on mission trips, by praying for missionaries, by praying for the people to be saved in parts of the world that we don't even step foot on, and by financially supporting those who are physically in parts of the world that we are not taking the gospel to all the nations.
Verse 10 is something we should actively be doing. We are to actively be looking to proclaim the gospel to all the nations.
Even this day, as you give an offering to the Lord, to the church this day, part of what you offer to the Lord financially is going to go in more countries than you could ever even imagine.
Supporting people doing gospel work that will never meet this side of heaven. Through our prayers, through our gifts, we're helping to take the gospel to all the nations.
[24:25] Then verse 11, he gets back to the persecution. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, here's your encouragement, do not be anxious.

just expect this. The persecution comes from false religions, the persecution comes from secular authorities, and it's going to include, verse 11, Christians being brought to trial, and Christians being delivered over, handed over.
But when that happens, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.
Now, I need to say a careful word of clarification here. I don't know if you've heard this or not. I've heard this more times than I care to count.

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From pastors or teachers who say they don't really believe in studying, they just get up, open the Bible, because Mark 13, verse 11 says, God will tell you what to say in that hour.
[25:55] That's shameful. That's shameful for those who are called to teach God's people to so blatantly miss and abuse what Jesus has said and use it as an excuse to be irresponsible with the privilege and responsibility that's been given to them.

This is not a license for pastors to be ill-prepared. This is not a verse to cling to to say, I don't need to study for my final exam because the Lord will just tell me what the answer is.
this is not in any way some kind of covering to say, I don't need to study for my Bible study or for my lesson or for my sermon.
I'll just show up and just trust the Lord will give me words to say. It's not what he's talking about.
He's talking about when you're persecuted for the sake of his name, when you are opposed because of the gospel, then you are arrested and tried and handed over and forced to give an account for yourself.
In that moment, don't be anxious because though you may feel alone from a human perspective, the Lord is with you. The Holy Spirit resides in you.
[27:24] And even if the secular authorities are to deliver you over and press you on who you are and what you believe and why you won't recant in that hour, do not be anxious for the Holy Spirit is with you.

This is not a word of license for irresponsibility. This is a word of comfort to the faithful. I remember as a very young child being at a place on occasion where somebody was to get up and lead a Bible study.
And I remember hearing as a young child this man say, I didn't study and prepare anything, and he read that verse and said, so I'm just going to trust the Lord to speak through me.
Now I was very young. I had no idea about eschatology. I had no idea how to do hermeneutics. I had no idea how to understand what was going on in Mark 13. But as a young believer, something told me that's not right.
As I've gotten older, I'm able to understand just how wrong that was. See, following Christ is not some excuse to be unfaithful.
[28:49] faithful. It's your encouragement to be faithful no matter what. So when persecution comes your way, don't be anxious.

the Lord is with you. So the difficulty may come from false religions. The difficulty may come from secular authorities.
Verse 12, the difficulty may get more personal. It may come from family. Look at verse 12. And brother will deliver brother over to death.
And the father his child. And children will rise against parents. And have them put to death.
That's as hard as it gets. You want to give an invitation at youth camp?
[30:00] There's your invitation. Would you be willing to follow Jesus? If your whole family turned on you? Would you be willing to say, if everyone in my life that's near and dear to me forsakes me, and the only one who is true to me is the Lord himself, would you still follow him?

Isn't it astounding the way Jesus clarifies the gospel? He's not trying to draw large crowds. He's not preaching for some emotional response.
He's just cutting it straight. Heaven is coming. But you're not home yet. And while you're passing through, you better be ready to lose it all.
This is so painful. But the gospel divides. Truth from error. God's people.
And God's people. From the world. And then, one other place that persecution will come, and that's just from all of the world.
[31:34] Verse 13, and you will be hated by all. Why? Why? Verse 13, for my name's sake.

The world won't hate you if you don't identify with Christ. They won't hate you if you go silent. They won't oppose you if you cower every time a threat is breathed your way.
The world won't hate you if you claim many roads all lead to salvation. The world won't hate you if you say, you have your truth, I have my truth.
Who of us can say? The world won't hate you if you say, I think the Bible's kind of antiquated and out of date. I think you're right. We kind of need to smarten the Bible up because our culture has finally figured out the truth, what no one else has known before us.

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The world won't hate you if that's how you talk. They'll let you go to church on Sunday. As long as you don't really hold to this.
[32:50] But throughout all of this suffering and all of this persecution and the threats from false religion and the threats from secular authorities and the threats from family and the threats from all the world, those are the signs.

Let me give you one last word. Stone searching signs and then verse 13. Write down the word salvation. The end of verse 13.
But the one who endures to the end will be saved. What a great promise.
The one who endures to the end will be saved. When we speak of the perseverance of the saints, we mean by that two sides of the same coin.
One, that all true believers will endure to the end. And two, that Christ will hold secure all who are true believers. So be faithful whatever persecution comes your way.
[34:04] Again, this is going to happen all throughout history. It will increase in intensity and frequency throughout the time of the tribulation. And that may come soon or that may be far away.

I don't know. It's not for us to know the times. What we can discern are the signs and the signs are to expect persecution and to be ready to be faithful and give up anything for the sake of his name.
And the one who endures to the end will be saved. The faithful will endure. The faithful will endure.
The hope of true believers is the Lord will not lose any who truly belong to him. When you think of salvation, salvation, it's true that salvation comes to you in a moment in time.
Humanly speaking, as we experience it, there's a moment where you believe. There's a moment where your dead life was brought to life. There's a moment when you cross from spiritual death to spiritual life.
[35:25] but understand the evidence that that truly happened is what you believe today. If I were to ask you how you know that you're going to heaven when you die, I'd rather hear you say, I know I'm going to heaven when I die because today I love Jesus who first loved me.

Today I'm trusting in what Christ has done for me. I'd rather hear you say that than point to something that happened 30 years ago if it's had no impact on your life.
if somebody says, I know I'm going to heaven because I made some response to an emotional appeal 30 years ago, but I don't love Jesus today, I don't love his word, I don't love to gather with his people, I don't trust in Christ today, I'm just hoping in some event that happened in the past that's had no impact on my life.
That frightens me because that's not Mark 13. Mark 13 is that the greatest evidence of your salvation is that you're faithful to the end.
But the reason you're faithful to the end is because Christ can't lose his own. That's why you're faithful.
[37:28] John 10, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand.

My father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of my father's hand. Why am I confident I cannot and will not lose my salvation?
Because I'm not stronger than God. The root of my assurance is in his promise to complete his work.
But the evidence that I belong to him is that I endure to the end. 1 Peter 1, we have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
Why am I confident I cannot and will not lose my salvation? Because I am kept by God. I'm kept by God.
[38:55] There's a lot of people who want to attack the doctrine that many people will call once saved, always saved. And the reason they don't like that doctrine is because of people they know who claim to be Christians.

And they say, you're telling me this person walked an aisle when he was 13, doesn't love Jesus, doesn't read his Bible, doesn't go to church, is unfaithful to his spouse, steals from his business, hates people, gossips, lies, never praise, and you're telling me that guy is going to heaven?
My response is, who said I said that? That's not the way that a Christian's depicted in the scripture at all.

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It doesn't mean you can lose your salvation. That doesn't even make sense. John 10 makes clear you can't be snatched out of his hand.
John 10 27, I have given you eternal life. If you lose it, it wasn't eternal. The problem is not in the doctrine. The problem is in the abuse of saying that we want to call people converted who have never given us any reason to believe they belong to Jesus.
[40:25] if you are truly in Christ, you will endure. Why? Because Christ won't let you go. I believe in the doctrine of eternal security with all of my heart.

With all of my heart. But I place zero confidence confidence in people's appeal to emotional games who never give evidence that they love Jesus.
If your confidence is in something you've done rather than the finished work of Christ, your confidence is in the wrong place.
the one who endures to the end will be saved. You will persevere. And the reason you will persevere is because Christ won't let you go.
Do I believe in eternal security? With all of my heart. With all of my heart. Do I believe once you're saved, you're always saved?
[41:46] Yes, though I would describe it differently because of the way that's been mistaught and abused. But if I can define it by meaning, do I believe true Christians will always be Christians unable to lose their salvation?

Yes. Do I think that people follow Jesus artificially for the wrong reasons, are never converted, and in the end walk away to prove and demonstrate they weren't true believers?
Yes, because I believe 1 John 2 that says the exact same words of that. They went out from us because they were not of us. But true believers, they will endure to the end.
Now, I told you the last two weeks, 1 Thessalonians 4 and chapter 5 both say that one of the reasons why you talk about the end times is to encourage the church. What's the encouragement for us here?
Here's the encouragement. Don't be alarmed. Don't be anxious. Don't be afraid. Don't be led astray. Keep your eyes on Jesus. And you can know this, that if you truly are in Christ, you will endure no matter what.
[43:01] You'll endure no matter what. Be prepared to meet the Lord. Expect persecution and hatred.

Refuse to take your eyes off the mission. And take the gospel wherever you go. And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, you do your part to take the gospel to all the nations.
And when there's earthquakes and hurricanes and famines and tornadoes, you do your part to take the gospel to the neighborhoods and the nations. And when there's persecution, and they come after you, don't worry about what you'll say.
The Holy Spirit's with you. He will lead you. He will comfort you. He will guide you. He will be enough. And even if you have to give up everything, if you're truly in Christ, you will endure because he cannot and will not let you go.
So, God, for those who are truly in Christ, going to college next year for the first time, and somebody has scared you to talk about how many people go to college and lose their faith and how many people go to the university and end up punting their beliefs, I've got good news for you.
[44:55] If you are truly in Christ, you will endure to the end. How do I know? Because the Holy Spirit cannot let you go. people. But church, make sure you're believing today.

Make sure that you love Jesus, that you love his word, that you love his people. Those aren't things that get you saved, those are the evidences of one who has been brought to life.
So be encouraged because the world can do a lot of things to you. But one thing the world cannot do is separate you from the love of God, which is yours in Christ Jesus.
This is why. Even when the signs of the times are around us, we are bold, courageous, focused, and completely steadfast in following him because he's worthy of everything.
Now, if you've come to the place in your life where you realize this world's a dead-end street, and you've tried things on your own and nothing is satisfied, you acknowledge that you're a sinner, and you wonder, would God forgive me?
[46:39] Could God love me? Would God rescue me? I've got the greatest news I could ever give to you, and that is this, that those who call upon the name of the Lord, they shall be saved.

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that this day, if you in your heart would confess that you're a sinner, acknowledge your need, and turn to the Lord Jesus, and simply in a prayer in your heart to the Lord, say, Lord, I believe in you, I believe that you died, I believe you were raised back to life, I believe that you're coming again, and I trust in you, and you alone for my salvation.
then the gift of everlasting life is yours, not by your works, but by his.
No smoke, no haze, no manipulative music in the background, just the words of Jesus.
would you be willing to lose it all for his namesake, to know that he will keep you, no matter what, to the very end.
[48:17] God, and whosoever will, come, believe, repent, and follow.

Lord, we thank you for your word today, and pray that it would give us wisdom, and help, and guidance. We thank you, Lord, for your grace.
May you, in your kindness, continue to draw sinners to yourself, that they would believe, and may we endure to the end, cling to you, and you alone.
we ask it in the priceless name of Jesus. Amen. Love you, church family. Happy Father's Day to all the fathers who were there.
Hope you have a great afternoon. God bless you. You're dismissed. God bless you.
[49:39] God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

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