

The Beginnings of the Future Tribulation
Matthew 24:1-14; Mark 13:1-13; Luke 21:5-19

Introduction

Since tomorrow is Veterans Day in the United States, I will begin with a very short reminder of the origin and importance of this legal holiday. One hundred years and six years ago tomorrow, on November 11, 1918 at 11 A.M., an armistice went into effect ending the fighting of *The Great War*, now called World War I. The official end of that war would be seven months later when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919. However, the cessation of hostilities in which at least 8 ½ million soldiers were killed, at least 21 million wounded in battle, and the deaths of at least 13 million civilians was of such significance and cause for joy that November 11 quickly became the date in many nations in which to remember and pay tribute to those who had died.

President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11, 1919 to be the first commemoration of *Armistice Day*. Many States quickly adopted November 11 as *Armistice Day*, and by concurrent resolution, Congress did the same on June 4, 1926, and in 1938 it was made a legal holiday. It was to be a day of commemoration, thanksgiving and prayer and observed with parades and ceremonies.

After World War II, which required the greatest military mobilization in American history, and the Korean War concluded with a cease fire, the 1938 law was amended in 1954 to change *Armistice Day* to *Veterans Day* in which all American veterans of all wars would be honored for their service and sacrifice for our nation. Except for a few years from 1971 - 1974 when Congress shifted it to Mondays for business reasons, *Veterans Day* has continued to be observed on November 11 in keeping with its origin in commemorating the end to the fighting in *The Great War*.

There are tragedies in all wars, but World War I was especially tragic starting with its origin in the assassination of the Austrian-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, on June 28, 1914 in Sarajevo. The tragedy expanded quickly as nation after nation made demands on one other and then declared war which then dragged other nations into the conflict because of mutual protection treaties. This would result in the ending of four great imperial dynasties - Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary and Turkey. Tragedy increased throughout the war as development of military weaponry made them more efficient in slaughtering soldiers, sailors and civilians. Perhaps the most tragic aspect of *The Great War* was that it ended with hope that it was the “*war to end all wars*,” but it was only a pause as nations rearmed and raised up a new crop of young men to be sent out to die. Many people shifted, changed or even rejected their theology as a result and western nations became more secular.

Those who pay attention to the Bible know from multiple prophecies that mankind will continue to be at war until the Lord returns and sets up His kingdom, and then at the end of that, there will be one final war before God puts an end to it all by destroying the present heavens and earth while creating new ones. Christians desire peace in the present and will work hard to achieve it, but our hope is in the Lord, not the wisdom of man or human government.

The Setting - Matthew 24:1-2, Mark 13:1-2, Luke 21:5-6

Today I begin a short series on eschatology, the doctrine of last things, as we study Matthew 24-25 and the parallel passages in Mark and Luke. This will be followed by a study of the Book of Revelation. Jesus began His ministry with the message of “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*” (Matthew 3:2). Jesus now continues that same message but with the change of including more details about what would precede the future kingdom. It is still just as certain to come, but Jesus gives warning of future

wars and tribulation that would occur before *The Son of Man* would be seen “*coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory*” (Matt. 24:30).

Matthew 24:1 begins, “*Jesus came out from the temple and was going away . . .*” He would not return there again. He had entered Jerusalem two days before to the cries of the people shouting, “*Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.*” They were acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah, and along with that came expectations that He would throw off Roman rule and reestablish Israel by setting up His own kingdom. They were anticipating that Jesus would now become their king and fulfill all the Old Testament prophecies dealing with the Messiah as conqueror. That upset the religious leaders who regarded Jesus as a threat to their positions and power. They became more upset the next day when He threatened their financial interests by driving out merchants and money changers.

When Jesus entered the Temple Wednesday morning, He was quickly challenged by the Chief Priests and Elders which began a series of challenges that day by the Herodians, then the Sadducees, then a lawyer, and then the Pharisees. They sought to ask Him shrewd questions in an effort to defame Jesus publically so that they could then destroy Him without so much fear of the people. Jesus answered each question pointedly and demonstrated not only His own wisdom and godliness, but also the hypocritical nature of His opponents and their lack of understanding about the things of God.

Jesus ended His public teaching in Matthew 23 with a warning to the people about the ungodly character of the scribes and Pharisees, and then He addressed those ungodly religious leaders directly denouncing them as hypocrites, fools, blind guides, sons of hell, snakes and a brood of vipers while pronouncing upon them a series of woes. The scribes and Pharisees professed and pretended to be godly and pious men, but were in reality the opposite.

Yet, even with this great condemnation, Jesus’ longs for their repentance and turning to Him as expressed in His lament over Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37-39. He desired to gather them together the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings to protect and guide them to safety, but they were unwilling, with the consequence that their house was being left to them desolate.

With the conclusion of His public teaching, Jesus sat down opposite the Treasury and observed the people. He then gave an important lesson to His disciples by contrasting the false piety of the rich compared to the true piety of the widow who actually did trust God and gave her all in worship of Him.

All this must be kept in mind as we begin our study of Matthew 24 and the parallel passages. “*And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.*” Mark and Luke both add that they were specifically pointing out the wonders of the buildings adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, a reference to the sculptures and artistic decorations given as part of vows of voluntary offerings.

Jesus and the disciples now leave the Temple area, cross the upper end of the Kidron Valley and begin to ascend the Mount of Olives on their way back to Bethany where they had been staying. Alfred Edersheim describes what the scene may have looked like in *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*.

A sudden turn in the road, and the Sacred Building was once more in full view. Just then the western sun was pouring his golden beams on top of the marble cloisters and on the terraced courts, and the glittering on the golden spikes of the roof of the Holy Place. In the setting, even more than in the rising sun, must the vast proportions, the symmetry, and the sparkling sheen of this mass of snowy marble and gold have stood out gloriously. And across the black valley, and up the slopes of Olivet, lay the dark shadows of those gigantic walls built of massive stones, some of them nearly twenty-four feet long . . .

It was probably as they now gazed on all this grandeur and strength, that they broke the silence imposed on them by gloomy thoughts of the near desolateness of that House, which the Lord had predicted. One and another pointed out to Him those massive stones and splendid buildings, or spoke of the rich offerings with which the Temple was adorned. It was but natural that the contrast between this and the predicted desolation should have impressed them.

The Temple was the center of Judaism and the pride of its people. The rabbis, who hated Herod, lauded him for the Temple. They said that *“He who has not seen Herod’s Temple has not seen a beautiful building.”*

The disciples must have been astonished over the Lord’s proclamation only a short time earlier that this house would be left desolate, so as they see it in all its glory, they start pointing it out to the Lord wondering if what Jesus has prophesied could really come true. They must have been shocked over what Jesus said next.

Matthew 24:2, *And He answered and said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down.”* The days of the fulfillment of this prophecy came true less than forty years later.

Roman General Titus and his legions laid siege against Jerusalem and finally breached the walls in August A.D. 70. The troops poured into the Temple area in a wild frenzy. What began as an accidental fire was soon purposely spread to burn everything on the Temple mount and then spread to the city. Wrecking crews destroyed what remained. Josephus records that the pillars supporting the porticos were over 37 feet high and at least 12-15 feet in circumference. But all of these were pushed over and the towers knocked down. The paving stones were ripped up in an effort to gain access to any gold that had melted when the temple burned and any riches that might be stored in the underground chambers. By the time it was all done, not a stone was left in place. Josephus said it was difficult to believe that it had ever been inhabited. The Western Wall where Jews pray today was not part of the temple, but a retaining wall around the mount.

The Questions - Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:3-4; Luke 21:7

The disciples were stunned at what Jesus said and apparently remained silent until Jesus sat down to rest. Mark 13:3-4 records, ³ *As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately,* ⁴ *“Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?”* Luke records the same two questions, but Matthew, who is writing to Jews who would have known Hebrew prophecy, has three questions. *“Tell us when these things will be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”*

These questions must be understood in order to understand Jesus’ answer to them. That begins by pointing out that these were Jewish men that were looking for the Messiah to come and fulfill the prophecies of the Hebrew scriptures. They had certain expectations.

First, they would have understood prophetic passages such as Zechariah 14 which predicted great tribulation before the Messiah would come. The nation had experienced such tribulation before under Antiochus IV who had slaughtered thousands and desecrated the Temple. They were still under the oppressive hand of Rome. (See: The Return of the Messiah - Zechariah 14)

They would have also understood that an Elijah like forerunner would come to herald the coming of Messiah, and Jesus had already said that had occurred in John the Baptist. (See: Marks of Greatness - Matthew 11:7-15)

The next event they expected was for the Messiah to appear and set up His kingdom. Jesus had made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem only a few days earlier, so now they were looking for the rest of the commonly held beliefs about Messiah’s coming to be fulfilled. Those beliefs included the following:

- *There would be an alliance of the nations to fight against the Messiah with the result that those nations would be destroyed.
- *Following that, Jerusalem would be restored as Jews scattered throughout the world would be gathered back to Israel.
- *Jerusalem would then become the center of the world with all nations subjugated to Israel.
- *Messiah’s kingdom would bring a new and eternal age of peace, righteousness and divine glory.

It is in that context that these disciples now ask Jesus these questions. “*Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming (παρουσία /parousia - appearing) and of the end of the age?*” Again, they believed that Jesus would soon establish His kingdom, so they wanted to know when that would occur and how they would know it was about to happen. Jesus does not deal with the question of when until verse 36 where He tells them that only the heavenly Father knows. The second question has led some people astray because they read too much New Testament theology into a question asked from an old Testament perspective. They were not asking when Jesus would return because they did not understand He was leaving. They only expected one coming and Jesus was already present. Their expanded question then would be “*what will be the sign of Your manifesting Yourself and taking Your place as Messiah and King of Kings.*” Their third question is tied to the second. What is the sign of the consummation of the age? What will indicate the end of the current age of the Gentiles and the beginning of the Messianic age?

Even after Jesus’ resurrection they did not fully understand the spiritual nature of Christ’s present kingdom. The very last question they asked Jesus as He was about to ascend into heaven was, “*Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?*” (Acts 1:6). Their interest is when the kingdom would come and not when the temple would be destroyed. For them, any thought about the destruction of the Temple would have to fit in with the prophecies of tribulation that occurs just prior to Messiah conquering and setting up His kingdom such as Daniel 9:26-27; Ezekiel 37-39; Zachariah 14; and Joel. (See: Commission and Ascension - Acts 1:3-11 and Understanding the Vision - Daniel 9:20-27).

The Scope of Jesus’ Answer

With all this in mind, we can begin to look at the answers Jesus’ gives to these three questions. As already pointed out, Jesus does not answer the first question about when until Matthew 24:36. He begins to answer the second and third questions about the signs of His coming and of the end of the age together because they essentially have the same answer. When Jesus comes as Messiah and King of Kings, it will bring to an end the present age and begin the new one.

Jesus addresses the disciples using the second personal pronouns, *you*, but the scope of Jesus’ answer is prophetic. Jesus is describing things that the disciples themselves would not experience. He is speaking to them the same way the Old Testament prophets frequently spoke to the people of their time with messages concerning the future for people not yet born. An example of this is Zechariah 9:9 in which the prophet tells Zion to rejoice for “*your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey,*” even though that would not occur until Jesus would ride into Jerusalem 500 years later.

Let me quickly give you five reasons why Matthew 24 and its parallel passages should be understood as prophetic of events a long after the time of the apostles. 1) According to Matthew 24:14, the gospel will be preached to all the world, and that did not happen during their lifetimes. 2) Matthew 24:15 speaks of them seeing the “*abomination of desolation*” spoken of by Daniel, and that still has not happened. 3) Matthew 24:21 speaks of a time of tribulation that will be unparalleled in either past or future time. That has not yet occurred. 4) Matthew 24:29 states that the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky. That has not happened yet. And 5) Matthew 24:34 states that the generation that sees the beginning of this will not pass away until all the events take place. The apostles generation passed away a long, long time ago.

Jesus’ answer is about the signs that will occur just prior to His coming (παρουσία /parousia - appearing) as Messiah, the king, which brings about the end of the age. This is not about the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70. Jesus’ message is for those that are alive when the events of the book of Revelation begin to unfold, for Matthew 24 parallels Revelation 6. Both passages display God’s wrath upon sinful man, and the church is not present during any of these events.

The Scriptures are clear that while the church will and does suffer much at the hands of wicked men and Satan's wrath, it will not suffer under God's wrath. Paul states this in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and 5:9, *"and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come" . . . "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."* John records in Revelation 3:10 the Lord's promise to the church at Philadelphia, *"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."*

Our belief is that according to 1 Thessalonians 4:17, the church will be *"caught up"* (raptured) to be with Christ prior to the outpouring of God's wrath upon sinful man during the Tribulation period. This is not an escape from persecution, for Jesus said that in this world we will have tribulation. Believers of every age can expect to be persecuted by unbelievers. The estimate is that there were more Christian martyrs during the 20th century than the combined total of all previous centuries. The doctrine of a pre-tribulational rapture is not about escape from persecution. It is about escape from God's wrath according to His promises. We, along with Peter (1 Peter 4:13) and Paul (Philippians 3:10), set our minds to rejoice to be partakers of the sufferings of Christ in the present.

We believe this doctrine because the weight of Scriptures indicates it. *It is given as a source of comfort to believers (1 Thess. 4:13-18). *As already noted, the church is exempt from the wrath of God. *The church is absent from Revelation 6-18 which details God's wrath on sinful man. *There are no instructions to the church about how to endure and conduct itself during this tribulation. *Jesus told us He was preparing a place for us to dwell in with Him in heaven (John 14). *It allows for a non-glorified human population on earth during the Millennium. All of this means that the next eschatological event we expect to occur is the rapture followed by these signs Jesus lists.

The Early Signs of End of the Age - Matthew 24:4-14; Mark 13:5-13; Luke 21:8-19

What are these signs? Jesus details them starting in Matthew 24:4. I will look at each of them individually and comment on them. Again, these events occur at the beginning of Daniel's 70th week, the time of Jacob's troubles, the start of God's wrath as seen in Revelation 6. These are not events that precede the Rapture, but occur after it. All but the last of these are very general events that have always been around, but they will increase just before the end.

First, ⁴ *And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you."* ⁵ *"For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many."* Luke 21:8 adds they claim, *"the time is near,"* and the warning, *"Do not follow them."*

Don't be misled. There have always been those who falsely claimed to be Christ and those who claim the end is near even though the signs have not yet come. It was true in the first century and it is true now. Wikipedia maintains a list of messiah claimants with eleven in their list currently still alive. However, as the tribulation period begins, this will become even more intense as the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is removed (2 Thessalonians 2:7) and people seek after such deception (2 Timothy 3:1-8). Stay away from and do not follow those who make such claims.

Second, ⁶ *"You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end."* ⁷ *"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom . . ."* There have always been wars. Someone tallied over 300 wars in just Europe alone from 1700 - 2000. But it will get even worse as the tribulation period begins.

The first seal broken in Revelation 6:1-2 releases the first horseman riding a white horse who went forth to conquer. His bow and crown represent multiple ways nations can be conquered including war, threat of war and economics. That is exactly what the anti-Christ is expected to do as he begins his rise to power. The second seal broken in Revelation 6:3-4 releases the second horseman riding a red horse who went out to take peace from the earth that men should slay one another. These are horsemen of war and the anarchy that goes with it, but neither of these bring the end.

Third and fourth, verse 7 continues, “. . . *and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.*”⁸ “*But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.*” Luke 21:11 adds “*plagues*” to the list.

Famine, plagues and earthquakes are and always have been common being recorded throughout history. Famine can have many causes, and war is one of them as crops are either not planted, tended or harvested and also destroyed or stolen if harvested. War is also accompanied by plagues as basic sanitation practices are lost and diseases spread quickly. Revelation 6:5-8 describes the breaking of the third and fourth seals and of two more horsemen that ride forth. The third is famine signified by the excessive price for wheat and barley. The fourth horseman brings death through various means including violence, starvation, pestilence and wild beasts.

I have seen articles in which the writer tries to make much about the frequency of earthquakes in our own time, but some of that is simply better recording equipment to track even small earthquakes all around the world. However, still early in the Tribulation period at the breaking of the sixth seal in Revelation 6:12 there occurs a great earthquake, and all through the rest of Revelation there are horrible earthquakes that make anything recorded in our own times insignificant.

But Jesus states that all these are just the beginning of birth pangs (24:8). Birth pangs start off slow and build in frequency and intensity. So it is during the tribulation. All these things - deceivers, war, famine and earthquakes build to unprecedented levels at the beginning of the Tribulation.

Fifth,⁹ “*Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.*” Mark and Luke add specifics of being delivered to synagogues and courts, prisons and floggings

There will be severe persecution against those that become Christians during the tribulation. Most of those whose souls are saved during this time profess Christ at the forfeit of their physical lives. At the breaking of the fifth seal in Revelation 6:9-11, John sees “*under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:*”¹⁰ *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*¹¹ *And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled.*”

Mark 13:10-11 and Luke 21:12-14 also add in connection with the persecution that they would “*stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them.*” In addition, they were not to worry about defending themselves, for the Holy Spirit would give them what to say with “*wisdom which none of [their] opponents will be able to resist or refute.*” Those are encouraging words to give confidence.

Sixth,¹⁰ “*At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.*”¹¹ “*Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.*”¹² “*Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold.*”¹³ “*But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.*” Mark and Luke both specifically add that the betrayal will include family, relatives and friends.

The persecution will be physical, mental and emotional, and it will take its toll in both apostasy and treachery. Open hatred is bad enough, but betrayal is worse because of the broken trust from an unexpected source. That is especially true when it is someone with whom you have been close such as family and friends. Fear will cause people to turn away from things they even know are right and true. They want to avoid suffering and they do not want to be the outcast.

Apostasy will also be rampant due to the deceit of the many false teachers that will arise, and because most people will be ignorant of the Scriptures, they will be easy to lead astray. Even worse will be the increase in lawlessness - the abandoning of God’s moral standards - which will entice others into selfishness expressed in every way imaginable. That selfishness will cause their love to grow cold since love requires being thoughtful and giving toward others. In 36 years of pastoral ministry, I have seen that

happen in many people as they turn away from Christ, from friends and even family in the pursuit of their selfish desires to do what they want to do.

Yet even in that environment, God will have His remnant. The Holy Spirit continues His ministry in the true believer so that they are able to resist the many temptations and pressures and still hold fast to their faith. They will endure to the end whether that end comes through martyrdom or living to the end of the tribulation. Their souls are secure in the Lord.

Seventh, Luke 21:11 adds that *“there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.”* This corresponds to the breaking of the sixth seal in Revelation 6:12-13 in which the sun is darkened, the moon becomes like blood, stars fall from the sky and the sky is split apart as a scroll. The signs in the heavens become even more pronounced as the events in Revelation unfold.

Eighth,¹⁴ *“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”* This is not a reference to completing the task of world missions so that Jesus will return as is claimed by some as a means of promoting missionary endeavors. We strive to proclaim the gospel to every nation because of our love for Christ and His command to do so. However, Christ’s return is not dependent on us.

Revelation records several supernaturally empowered witnesses. In Revelation 7 there are 144,000 Jewish witness, 12,000 from each tribe, that are sealed as God’s bond-servants. In Revelation 11 there are two witness who will have supernatural power to witness for 3 ½ years (1,260 days) before they are killed by the beast. Then they are raised from the dead 3 ½ days later while the world is watching, which *“terrified many who then gave glory to the God of heaven”* (vs. 13). In Revelation 14:6-7, God sends an angel *“flying in the mid-heaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of water.’”*

God will accomplish the task of making sure the gospel is preached throughout the whole world to every nation. It is after this that *“the end will come,”* which we will look at next week.

What is the point? God has revealed many aspects of a future that He has already determined. What will you do with that knowledge? It should be both comfort and encouragement to the Christian in serving Him faithfully while awaiting His return. It should be a warning to the non-Christian to get right with God before it’s too late. Whether these passages are frightening to you or not will be dependent upon three factors. 1) Your understanding of them. 2) Your trust in God to do what He says He will do. 3) Your own relationship with the Lord. If you are fearful, talk with myself or any of our church leaders and let us help you make sure you have a right relationship with Jesus Christ so that you can have His peace in any circumstance you may face in the future.

Introduction

The Great War _____

Armistice Day _____

Tragedies _____

Mankind can expect to have continual _____ until the Lord returns and sets up His kingdom

The Setting - Matthew 24:1-2, Mark 13:1-2, Luke 21:5-6

Jesus began ministry with “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,*” but the kingdom was now _____

Jesus had entered the Temple on Monday to the cries of the people proclaiming Him to be the _____

Jesus spent Wednesday answering various religious leaders and _____ with warnings and woes

Jesus’ lamented their unwillingness to receive Him, their house was left to them _____

Jesus left the Temple, went up the Mount of _____ and the disciples remark on the Temple’s beauty

Jesus responds that the _____ would be completely torn down - and it was in 70 AD

The Questions - Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:3-4; Luke 21:7

The questions must be understood as coming from Jewish men with _____ of the Messiah

There would be tribulation _____ His return (Zechariah 14, etc.).

There would be an Elijah _____ first - Jesus said it was John the Baptist

The Messiah would appear and fulfill the Hebrew prophecies _____ the Jewish kingdom

They want to know _____ Messiah would establish His kingdom

They want to know the _____ that Messiah would now take His place as _____

They wanted to know the signs of the _____ of the current age and _____ of the Messianic age

After Jesus resurrection they were still looking for the _____ to be restored - Acts 1:6

The Scope of Jesus’ Answer

Jesus addresses them, but is speaking _____ as did the prophets - example: Zechariah 9:9

Evidence: Matthew 24 details many things that _____ happen in their lifetimes, & still have not happened

Jesus’ answer is for those alive at the beginning of the events of _____ : Matt. 24 parallels Rev. 6

The church will suffer persecution, but _____ God’s wrath (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9, Rev. 3:10)

The church will be caught up (_____) prior to the Tribulation period due to the Scriptures indicating it

The Early Signs of End of the Age - Matthew 24:4-14; Mark 13:5-13; Luke 21:8-19

1) False _____ - Many have made this claim in the past & present, and more to come in the future

2) _____ & Rumors of War - Corresponds to 1st & 2nd Seal, Revelation 6:1-4, the first two horsemen

3) & 4) Famine, _____ & Earthquakes - Correspond to 3rd, 4th & 6th Seals, Revelation 6:5-8, 12

These are only the _____ of birth pangs - they become more severe and frequent

5) _____ of Believers - Corresponds to 5th Seal, Revelation 6:9-11

This gives opportunity to witness to governors and kings - and the Holy Spirit will direct the defense

6) _____, Betrayal and Hatred - hatred is bad, but betrayal by family & friends is worse

Apostasy due to _____ (avoid suffering or being an outcast) and being lead astray by false teachers

_____ increases selfishness, enticements to sin, and love that grows cold and can become hatred

God still preserves a _____ that will resist temptation and hold fast to their faith

7) Terrors and Great Signs from _____ - corresponds to the 6th Seal, Revelation 6:12-13

Sun darkened, moon becomes like blood, stars fall, sky _____ apart as a scroll

8) _____ Gospel Proclamation - Supernaturally empowered witnesses - Revelation 7, 11, 14

These are the _____ signs after which the end will come

God has revealed aspects of a future already _____ - how will you respond to that knowledge?

That will depend on 1) Your understanding of them, 2) Your trust in God, 3) Your _____ with Jesus

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. **Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch.

Older Children - Do one or more of the following: 1) Count how many times references are made to the widow. 2) Discuss with your parents how her example demonstrates true piety.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is the origin and purpose of *Veterans Day*? What are some of the reasons *The Great War* is so tragic? When does the Bible say war will cease? What was Jesus' message at the start of His ministry? What is His message at the end of His earthly ministry? What is the significance of how the people responded when Jesus entered Jerusalem on Monday? What did Jesus do on Tuesday that upset the chief priests so much? Who did Jesus have conflict on Wednesday? What was the reaction of His antagonists to their failures to entrap Him? How did Jesus conclude His public teaching? What was Jesus' lament over Jerusalem? What was Herod's temple like that the disciples would make such comments about it? When did Jesus' prophecy about the Temple's destruction take place? Why must the disciples background and expectations be understood in order to understand their questions? What were the common expectations of Messiah when He came? What did the disciples expect Jesus to do next? What was the point about their question concerning the signs of His coming? Explain. Explain how Jesus' answers to them were prophetic. How do we know Jesus was not telling them about the coming destruction of Herod's Temple? The church will suffer persecution, but will it suffer God's wrath? Why or why not? Upon whom is God's wrath poured out in Revelation? What are the major reasons for believing in a pre-tribulational rapture? Are their other views that are Biblically stronger? Explain. Compare Matthew 24:4-14 with Revelation 6:1-17 and write down your observations of what correlates between them. Can you name any of those who have falsely claimed to be Christ either historically or in the present? Mankind is constantly at war somewhere in the world. How then is this a sign? Famines, plagues and earthquakes are common experiences. How then are these signs? Persecution of believers has occurred since the first century (and before). How then is this a sign? What confidence can a believer have if placed in front of an official to give a defense of their faith? While will there be an increase in apostasy in the future? When will the gospel be preached to the whole world? What signs will there be in the heavens?