

**Matt 24:1-13:** Jesus left the temple & was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, & what will be the sign of your coming & of the close of the age?" & Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' & they will lead many astray. & you will hear of wars & rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, & kingdom against kingdom, & there will be famines & earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation & put you to death, & you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away & betray one another & hate one another. & many false prophets will arise & lead many astray. & because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

**Intro:** In Matthew 24, we've seen Jesus lovingly warn His sheep of future judgment & the destruction of God's temple, & as God's true temple, Jesus always tells the truth & died & rose again so that we might be God's temple & dwell with Him forever. We've surveyed the different major views of how to read & understand Matthew 24. Good Christians disagree on the interpretation of Matthew 24. We all should care because there's nothing more important than getting God's Word right & being ready for the return of Jesus Christ!

**We thought about 2 truths in the big picture of Matthew 24:** 1) **James Edwards:** Mark 13 [Matthew 24] is not primarily [given] to provide a timetable or blueprint for the future so much as to exhort readers to faithful discipleship in the present . . . The premium of discipleship is placed not on predicting the future but on faithfulness in the present, especially in trials, adversity, & suffering. [We, like Jesus' disciples, are concerned with the How?! & the When?! of Christ's return; **But Jesus' concern:** How will you live When all around = calamity!]

2) **James Edwards:** The destruction of the temple & the fall of Jerusalem function as a pre-figurement & a paradigm for Jesus' second coming & the end of this age . . . The disciples, & believers since, want to know the future, but Jesus directs them unflinchingly to the present.

**John MacArthur:** (All the "you's" prophetic "you's") (Psalm 22) Yes, this is an event in David's life. Yes, there was a time in David's life when he was in distress and cried out to God, and this was a very real thing to David, but it goes far beyond David; it has a double fulfillment. In a sense, its limited fulfillment is related to what's happening to David, and its fullest fulfillment is for the future, referring to Christ.

**Raymond Johnson:** Matthew 24, like Mark 13, is telling us that history is heading somewhere. It doesn't have a hidden meaning about unknown future things. It has present meaning for Christian disciples. Which is what we should expect since we have seen time & time again through our study of these Gospels, we see they are concerned not only with teaching us who Jesus is but also with what it means to follow him . . . to follow him in a world when he is not physically present with us. The problem with these chapters is not the content, but how we approach them. We treat this chapter (& chapters like it!), as one pastor noted, as if it is the biblical version of National Treasure with clues for the clever . . . But this text continues to flesh out answers to the questions we have been focused on throughout our study of these Gospels as it shapes our expectations as disciples & prepares us for the hardships we will face while waiting for the "righting of wrongs" at the end of all things. Matthew 24 and Mark 13 brace us for obedience as they call us to vigilance in the time between the times while we are on mission as Jesus' disciples. And it does so by focusing on two themes: the destruction of the temple AND the second coming of Christ.

Jesus warns us that hard times are coming, but keep fighting to trust, obey, & follow Jesus, & you will be saved!

### **1. Jesus Warns: Don't Be Led Astray**

**Matthew 24:4-5:** And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' & they will lead many astray."

a. **Jesus warns: don't be led astray by false Christs:** Jesus loves His disciples & does not want to lose even one!

**Charles Spurgeon:** God thinks of every separate child of His as much as if He had only that one. The multiplicity of His elect does not divide the loaf of His affection. He has an infinite affection for each one, and He will take care of the details of each chosen life.

**b. What Jesus says happens:** There were many false Christs in the disciples' day: **Acts 5:36-37:** (Gamaliel) For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, & a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, & all who followed him were dispersed & came to nothing. After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census & drew away some of the people after him. He too perished . . . .

**Author:** Josephus reported that during the reign of Nero deceivers & false prophets were arrested on a daily basis.  
**What Jesus says happens!**

**There are many false Christs in our day & there will continue to be until Jesus comes back:** Muhammad; the Mormon Jesus, the Jehovah's Witness Jesus, the prosperity gospel Jesus! **What Jesus says happens!**

- **There is only one, true Christ! Acts 4:11-12:** This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. **GOSPEL!**

**Galatians 1:8-9:** But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

## **2. Jesus Warns: Wars And Rumors Of Wars Are Coming**

**Matthew 24:6-7:** And you will hear of wars & rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup> For nation will rise against nation, & kingdom against kingdom . . . .

**a. What Jesus says happens:** There were wars & rumors of wars & nations rising against nation & kingdom against kingdom in the disciples' day: Fears of war with Roman Emperor Caligula in 40 AD when he attempted to raise a statue of himself in the temple of Jerusalem. The Annals of Tacitus: (14-68 AD, Roman historian) describes this period with words like "disturbances in Germany," "commotions in Africa," "commotions in Thrace," "Insurrections in Gaul," "the war in Britain," & "the war in Armenia." And in 66 AD, a revolt by Jewish zealots led to war with Rome! **What Jesus says happens!**

**b. And there are wars & rumors of wars & nations rising against nations & kingdoms against kingdoms in our day as well & there will be until Jesus returns:** In the past, Revolutionary War; Civil War; WWI; WW2; Vietnam; Korean War; Today: War in Ukraine; War in Sudan; War in Israel!

In a book review called "The Bloodiest Century," Francis Sempa reviews the book, *The War of the World, Twentieth-Century Conflict and the Descent of the West*. He writes: The optimists among us who believe in the inevitable progress of man, either forget or ignore the fact that the twentieth century was the bloodiest, most destructive century in human history. The century's two world wars resulted in the deaths of at least 60 million people. The Russian Civil War of 1917-21 killed another 5-6 million. Between them, the tyrannical regimes of Hitler, Stalin, & Mao killed at least another 60 million of their own citizens. Many millions more were killed in dozens of other, smaller conflicts. **What Jesus says happens!**

Jesus warns us that hard times are coming, but keep fighting to trust, obey, & follow Jesus, & you will be saved!

## **3. Jesus Warns: Famines And Earthquakes Are Coming**

**Matthew 24:7-8:** And there will be famines & earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup> All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

**a. What Jesus says happens: Pastor:** The famine described in Acts 11:28 occurred in the year 44 AD. Three other famines occurred during the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius (41-54 AD). The Roman historian Tacitus & Suetonius both mention the prevalence of famines in this period of history (in particular the widespread famine in Rome in 51 AD). Earthquakes were also common (Acts 16:26). There were recorded earthquakes in Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Apamea, Campania, & Rome. The cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, & Colossae were devastated by a quake in the year 60 AD. In 58 AD Seneca (philosopher) wrote: "How often have the cities of Asia & Achaea fallen with one fatal shock! How many cities have been swallowed up in Syria! How many in Macedonia! How often has Paphos become a ruin. News has often been brought to us of the demolition of whole cities at once." **What Jesus says happens!**

**b. And there are famines & earthquakes today & there will be until Jesus returns:** Famines: Indian famine from 1896-1902: 19 million dead; Soviet famine from 1932-1933: 10 million dead; Great Chinese famine from 1958-1961: 15-43 million dead; North Korean famine from 1994-1998: 3 million dead

**Today (Christian Aid Org):** Soaring food prices driven by the war in Ukraine, persistent drought and other extreme weather events . . . have escalated extreme hunger worldwide. Today, nearly 45 million people in 37 countries are at risk of starvation. Due to a lack of adequate nutrition, 22 million children are suffering from wasting — severe weight loss that can lead to death if not treated. This number is equal to the combined populations of New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Phoenix, and Philadelphia. A humanitarian catastrophe is unfolding in the Horn of Africa: Across Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, nearly 4.9 million girls and boys are acutely malnourished in drought-affected areas and need urgent care. "When the children are hungry, they will start crying, asking for food and will not stop." (Says, Hawa, a mother in Somalia) In Somalia alone, about 6.7 million people will likely face acute food insecurity, and experts predict famine in two districts . . . where at least 300,000 people are already living with "catastrophic" levels of food insecurity. **What Jesus says happens!**

**Earthquakes:** March 2011, off the coast of Japan: Over 20,000 dead; May 2008, Eastern Sichuan China: Over 87,000 dead; December 2004 off the coast of Sumatra: Over 227,500 dead; Philly! **What Jesus says happens!**

**c. V. 8: All these are but the beginning of the birth pains:** This is prophetic language for great pain & suffering & the suffering before God's great deliverance & salvation (Isa, Jer, Hosea) **Isaiah 13:8:** They will be dismayed: pangs and agony will seize them; they will be in anguish like a woman in labor.

These times are the beginning of the end! The end of the temple & the end of the Old Covenant era & the end of the world: **Acts 2:17:** in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh . . .

#### **4. Jesus Warns: Followers Of Jesus Will Face Persecution, Hatred, And Death**

**Matthew 24:9:** Then they will deliver you up to tribulation & put you to death, & you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake.

**a. What Jesus says happens: Persecution, death, & hatred: Acts 4:1-3:** they [Peter & John] were teaching the people & proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. & they arrested them & put them in custody  
- **Acts 5:40-42:** when they had called in the apostles, they beat them & charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing . . .  
- **Acts 7:58:** Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him.  
- **Acts 12:1-3:** About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword, & when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. [All of Jesus' 12 disciples were killed except for one.] **What Jesus says happens!**

**b. And Christians are persecuted & hated today & will be persecuted & hated until Jesus comes back:**  
**2 Timothy 3:12:** Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted . . .

- **News Article:** A small group met Friday, Dec. 30, 2022, at Layton Avenue Baptist Church in Milwaukee to remember the life and ministry of Kathy Gariety. Along with two other International Mission Board (IMB) medical workers, Bill Koehn & Dr. Martha Myers, Kathy was killed 20 years ago when a Yemeni man slipped into the Baptist Hospital in Jibla, Yemen. He said he killed them “because they were preaching Christianity in a Muslim country” & “to get closer to God.”

- **Ligonier:** Astonishingly, though, it has been the 20<sup>th</sup> century, along with the first decade & a half of the 21<sup>st</sup>, that has seen the greatest increase in persecution. According to ministries such as Open Doors & Voice of the Martyrs, more Christians have been killed for their faith in the last century than in all other ages combined.

Speak out vocally against abortion, homosexuality, & delight in women being a wives & mothers – you will be hated! (Place kicker, Kansas City Chiefs) **What Jesus says happens!**

**c. For My name’s sake:** We do it all for Jesus! Jesus is worthy to suffer & die for! He’s worthy to be hated for!

Jesus warns us that hard times are coming, but keep fighting to trust, obey, & follow Jesus, & you will be saved!

### **5. Jesus Warns: Many Apparent Followers Of Jesus Will Fall Away, Betray, & Hate**

**Matthew 24:10:** And then many will fall away & betray one another & hate one another.

**a. What Jesus says happens: Judas; 1 Timothy 1:19-20:** holding faith & a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, among whom are Hymenaeus & Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

- **Matthew 7:21-23:** Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' **What Jesus says happens!**

**b. And many will fall away & betray & hate others until Jesus returns:** Whole churches are falling away; Individ

### **6. Jesus Warns: Many False Prophets Will Arise And Lead Many Astray**

**Matthew 24:11:** And many false prophets will arise & lead many astray.

See point #1! This happened! This is happening! This will continue to happen! **What Jesus says happens!**

Jesus warns us that hard times are coming, but keep fighting to trust, obey, & follow Jesus, & you will be saved!

### **7. Jesus Warns: Lawlessness Will Increase And The Love Of Many Will Grow Cold**

**Matthew 24:12:** And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

See point #5! This happened & is happening, & will continue to happen! (Law & love) **What Jesus says happens!**

**Jesus warns church in Ephesus: Rev. 2:4:** I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first

**1 Cor. 13:1-8:** If I speak in the tongues of men & of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. & if I have prophetic powers, & understand all mysteries & all knowledge, & if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, & if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient & kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

## **8. Jesus Encourages: The One Who Endures To The End Shall Be Saved**

**Matthew 24:13:** But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

**a. We must & will endure to be saved:** We must keep trusting Jesus, obeying Jesus, & following Jesus! Keep repenting!

**1) We must endure to the end: 1 Cor. 15:1-2:** Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, & by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you – unless you believed in vain.

**2) We will endure to the end: Jer. 32:39-41:** I will give them one heart & one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good & the good of their children after them. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. & I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good, & I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart & all my soul - **Phil. 1:6:** I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ

**b. Endurance is a community project:** Think of the images the New Testament uses for the church: A Building (Ephesians 2:21); A Body (Romans 12:4-5); A Flock (1 Peter 5:2); A Family (1 Timothy 3:15)

**Acts 2:42-47:** And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

**1) They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (the Word of God): 2 Tim. 3:16-17:** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

**2) They devoted themselves to fellowship/community: V. 46:** And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes . . . .

- **Large gatherings: Heb. 10:24-25:** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

- **Small gatherings: They lived life together in intentional relationships:** They broke bread together; I hope & pray we'll eat together; I hope and pray we'll do activities together; I hope and pray we'll seek to meet with one another with the purpose of helping one another grow in Christ.

- **They loved each other & helped provide for those in need: V. 45:** And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. [They loved to the point of sacrificing for one another.]

- **1 John 4:19-21:** We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> If anyone says, "I love God," & hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. <sup>21</sup> And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

**3) They told others about Jesus: V. 47:** the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

- **Matt 28:18-20:** Jesus came & said to them, "All authority in heaven & on earth has been given to me. Go therefore & make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. & behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

**4) They prayed: V. 42:** They devoted themselves to the prayers. [Private; Family; Church; Noon; Directory]

**5) They praised God: Vs. 46-47:** they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God  
**- 1 Corinthians 10:31:** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

**We want God to be our greatest joy & treasure & happiness above all other joys! & we will endure!**

**Hymn:** I have decided to follow Jesus; I have decided to follow Jesus;  
I have decided to follow Jesus; No turning back, no turning back.  
- Though none go with me, still I will follow; Though none go with me, still I will follow;  
Though none go with me, still I will follow; No turning back, no turning back.

Those who endure to the end will be saved! Those who keep following Jesus! Those who never turn back, but keep following & keep believing & keep repenting of sin & keep believing in Him! They, & only they, will be saved! Are you trusting in Christ alone by grace alone through faith alone according to the Bible alone for the glory of God alone?

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**Jesus Christ Endured To The End; But Was Not Saved And Did Descend; To Bear God's Wrath And Life Extend; To Those Who Trust Him As Their Friend!**

When He died all His work was done; He nailed perfection under the sun; Endured to the end as second to none;  
And put the devil on the run; Conquered the grave to evil stun; He's heaven's glory – God the Son; And all because  
His work is done; You can endure – new life's begun!  
He endured to the end for His sinful bride; She is the Church for whom He died; Though she's gone astray quite  
wide; Against Him sinned and fought and lied; For Her “Forsaken!” He has cried! He suffered death for all her  
pride; Wrath and love in kiss collide; For her in wrath He's cast outside; Then rose to make her joy abide; To give  
her beauty from His side; She's the lover He has eyed; And calls her to endure though tried; To go the distance He's  
the guide; And all she needs He has supplied; In Him she must and will abide; For she will never leave His side;  
And though she'll sin, and He will chide; He does this so His love's applied; In Him all pleasure He'll provide; His  
Gospel news will spread worldwide!

Enduring to the end can't be done alone; We need each other God has shown; To go astray we all are prone; So when  
in sin & self we roam; We need our friends who won't condone; The evil seed of sin we've sown; Our good friends  
love & help dethrone; The sinful pride we've often known; So let us love as Christ has shown; For He is our rejected  
Stone; Who gave His life & did atone; By faith we are His flesh & bone; With patient care let's not postpone; But  
love church family as our own; In Christ we know his love unknown; So we can love with Him alone!

May we be together with deep affection; Love in all our imperfection; Only here is sure protection; We meet on  
day of resurrection; Spur on to love and new direction; Confirm our calling and election; Bear with weakness and  
rejection; Humbly give and take correction; Submit to others with no objection; Serve each other with affection;  
Bear with others' imperfection; Since our Christ Who is perfection; Died for sinners' insurrection; Rose alive in  
resurrection; Now we love from deep reflection; On that cross of His rejection!

Christ Jesus Did It! He Will Save!  
Endured Unto The End He's Brave  
And Died And Rose Up Out That Grave  
For God So Loved The World He Gave  
His Only Son To Face The Wave  
Of All His Wrath For Sin Deprave

By Faith Alone All Sins Forgave  
In Christ We Are God's Righteous Slave  
All Christ's Words Will Happen They've  
Been Fixed Forever Like God Gave  
To Warn And Love And Sinners Save  
So We'll Endure And God We'll Crave!