

Series: URGENT!

Text: Luke 21:1-19; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; 1 Peter 3:14-16

Title: "The Future"

Introduction: WELCOME, BMZ! Glad you are with us TODAY as we CONTINUE our SERIES called: "URGENT"! As we MOVE toward EASTER (April 17th), we are using LUKE'S ACCOUNT of the DAYS LEADING UP to the CRUCIFIXION. Jesus KNEW He only had LIMITED TIME LEFT with His Disciples / Followers and it SURE SEEMED LIKE He had things to DO and SAY that were URGENT!

According to LUKE, way back in LUKE 9 (v.51), it says JESUS TURNED RESOLUTELY TOWARD JERUSALEM. JESUS KNEW He WHY He was GOING and WHAT was GOING to HAPPEN there. As Jesus gets CLOSER to JERUSALEM, you can ALMOST FEEL the TENSION BUILDING, and for Jesus, the TIME growing SHORT.

PURPOSE? Well, FIRST it was The PASSOVER FESTIVAL (Important!) ... ***WHY was Jesus going to JERUSALEM? PURPOSE: To DIE on a CROSS to SAVE ALL people THROUGHOUT HISTORY from ETERNAL DEATH DUE to SIN. The WAGES of SIN is DEATH and JESUS was going to JERUSALEM to PAY the PRICE.***

SO FAR, Jesus has ENTERED Jerusalem, CLEARED the TEMPLE, and ANSWERED the JRLs QUESTIONS about His AUTHORITY. When we get to LUKE 21, it's the DISCIPLES turn to ASK QUESTIONS of Jesus...

Here's the SETUP / BRIEFING of the Beginning of LUKE 21 (read on your own). JESUS tells the DISCIPLES that the WOMAN who GAVE TWO COINS at the TEMPLE BOX, GAVE more than the REST.

Then the DISCIPLES were TALKING about the BEAUTY of the TEMPLE. JESUS RESPONDS ... NOT a SINGLE STONE will be LEFT on TOP of ANOTHER.

That DRAWS QUESTIONS from PETER, JAMES, JOHN, and ANDREW (according to Mark / Matthew) on the MT. OF OLIVES. They ASK about TIMING. "*WHEN will ALL this HAPPEN? What SIGN will SHOW US that these things are ABOUT to TAKE PLACE?*"

Now, JESUS RESPONSE is the MOST INTENSE TALK He has with His DISCIPLES about THE FUTURE ... BUT **we MUST REMEMBER a FEW THINGS:** #1 = LUKE'S version is NOT as DETAILED as MATTHEW and MARK'S version (Matt. 24-25 / Mark 13). #2 = LUKE and LUKE'S AUDIENCE were GENTILES, so Luke LEFT OUT many JEWISH ELEMENTS and FOCUSED ON ESSENTIAL TRUTHS to KEEP in MIND. #3 = This was a MESSAGE FOR JEWS BY a JEWISH TEACHER about the FUTURE of the JEWISH Nation ... the FOCUS is on JERUSALEM, JEWS, and the TEMPLE.

THEREFORE, JESUS was NOT talking about HIS COMING for the CHURCH ... We KNOW He can COME for BELIEVERS at ANY TIME without ANY SIGNS (1st Cor. 15 / 1st Thess. 4). One MORE THING: #4 = This MESSAGE from JESUS ALSO points to a PERIOD called "*The TRIBULATION*" when GOD will pour out his WRATH on the WORLD. MANY Bible SCHOLARS believe JESUS will COME in the AIR and take HIS CHURCH to HEAVEN ... BEFORE the TRIBULATION PERIODS (1st Thessalonians 4-5 ... next steps).

Do you KNOW ONE of the REASONS WHY I continue to PREACH HARD about The GOOD NEWS of JESUS and UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER to JESUS? SO, we will SURRENDER and NEVER need to SEE The TRIBULATION / WRATH of GOD.

So, what JESUS SAYS HERE can be USED to HELP US AVOID The TRIBULATION. It is a REMINDER to be PREPARED for the COMING of THE LORD.

The Disciples asked about THE SIGNS ... **WATCH for THESE SIGNS:**

Christians LOVE to talk about the END TIMES and FROM the TIME Jesus SAID THESE THINGS, THESE THINGS have been SEEN in EVERY AGE of the CHURCH. From the FIRST CENTURY on, there have been IMPOSTER MESSIAHS and WARS and Religious PERSECUTION. But WHAT we're TOLD is THESE things will **INCREASE** and **INTENSIFY** as JESUS' RETURN gets CLOSER. Our PROBLEM: We have NO IDEA what **INCREASE** and **INTENSIFY** LOOKS LIKE. So, let's LISTEN to JESUS... **LUKE 21:8 =**
⁸ *He replied, "Don't let anyone mislead you, for many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and saying, 'The time has come!' But don't believe them."*¹

Let's THINK about this ... WHO would CLAIM to BE the MESSIAH IF they KNEW they were NOT? WHO would CLAIM the TIME has COME without KNOWING? **Answer:** A LIAR! And WHO is the FATHER of ALL LIES? The Great Deceiver ... SIGN #1 ...

#1 = Religious DECEPTION

In the WORLD (END Times or Not) there will be ONGOING RELIGIOUS DECEPTION and the TARGET AUDIENCE is CHRISTIANS. And MANY will be FOOLED! Satan is The Great DECEIVER who has LED Christ-Followers AWAY from CHRIST and PREVENTED OTHERS from KNOWING Jesus for CENTURIES. HOW? By TWISTING TRUTH / CONFUSION about TRUTH and by BLINDING people's HEARTS.

Paul WARNED Corinth ... **2 CORINTHIANS 11:3-4 =**³ *But I fear that somehow your pure and undivided devotion to Christ will be corrupted, just as Eve was deceived by the cunning ways of the serpent.*⁴ *You happily put up with whatever anyone tells you, even if they preach a different Jesus than the one we preach, or a different kind of Spirit than the one you received, or a different kind of gospel than the one you believed.*² The CHURCH, from its INCEPTION, has HAD its SHARE of FALSE TEACHERS.

Look, when WORLD EVENTS become THREATENING / CONCERNING, People NATURALLY get ON EDGE. And even CHRISTIANS become EASY TARGETS for RELIGIOUS CONS. In EVERY AGE, people CLAIM to BE the MESSIAH and/or DECLARE they KNOW WHEN Jesus will RETURN. It's AMAZING how many FALL for this DESPITE the FACT JESUS said CLEARLY ... NO one KNOWS the DAY or HOUR of His RETURN ... NOT even HIM (Matthew 24:36)! Only our Heavenly Father knows.

Here's what happens: When WORLD EVENTS become THREATENING or seem OUT of CONTROL, people REACH for SOMETHING to CONTROL ("I want to do something. Not just BELIEVE!"). It OFTEN DRIVES people to WANT to HEAR what THEY want to HEAR ... Even if it is NOT GOD'S TRUTH or CHRIST-LIKENESS. Paul warned Timothy

... **2 TIMOTHY 4:3-4 =**³ *For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear.*⁴ *They will reject the truth and chase after myths.*³ People CLAIM CHRISTIANITY who are currently CHASING AFTER MYTHS and WORLDLY OPINIONS and the DIVISIVENESS causes them to REJECT the TRUTH of JESUS and LEADS OTHERS to DO the SAME! Can't ride two horses...

Maybe you've HEARD ME TRY to ENCOURAGE us ... **"Do NOT get DISTRACTED / be DECEIVED. GROW in your FAITH. SHARE it with OTHERS."**

¹ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Lk 21:8). Tyndale House Publishers.

² Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (2 Co 11:3-4). Tyndale House Publishers.

³ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (2 Ti 4:3-4). Tyndale House Publishers.

The ONLY SURE WAY to NOT get CAUGHT UP in a VERY DECEPTIVE WORLD is to KNOW BIBLICAL TRUTH and OBEY what GOD tells us to DO ... What does He tell us?
“Don’t get Distracted. Grow in your FAITH. SHARE it with others.”

It is FOOLISH and HURTFUL to become SO OBSESSED with the AGENDAS of THIS WORLD (Temporal) that it CAUSES us to NEGLECT following JESUS’ COMMANDS or LOSE our WITNESS to the WHOLE WORLD. You cannot WORSHIP (That which you GIVE your TIME and RESOURCES TO!) this WORLD and GOD at the SAME TIME. **CHOOSE!** It is FOOLISH and HURTFUL to become SO OBSESSED with BIBLE PROPHECY it causes us to NEGLECT being ENGAGED in a GREAT WORK (loving ...).

Jesus ... LUKE 21:9-11 = ⁹ *And when you hear of wars and insurrections, don’t panic. Yes, these things must take place first, but the end won’t follow immediately.*
¹⁰ *Then he added, “Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.*
¹¹ *There will be great earthquakes, and there will be famines and plagues in many lands, and there will be terrifying things and great miraculous signs from heaven.* ⁴ SIGN #2 ...
#2 = International SUFFERING

A COUPLE things we NEED to HEAR JESUS SAY: #1 = ***“Don’t Panic!”*** Do NOT be WORRIED and UPSET with your CIRCUMSTANCES. Don’t PANIC = Do NOT ACT like you do NOT HAVE a LOVING GOD who is in COMPLETE CONTROL!

#2 = ***“THESE THINGS MUST TAKE PLACE!”*** JESUS says HE PUT them INTO ACTION! Nation WILL go to WAR... There WILL BE earthquakes and famines... There WILL BE Terrifying things... That’s JESUS TALKING. And I CAN’T FIND anywhere in HERE that WE are to STOP or PREVENT what JESUS ORDAINED. We are NOT supposed to WORK to STOP our CIRCUMSTANCES. There is NOTHING we can DO to PREVENT them.

Jesus COMMANDS US to LIVE / LOVE like CHRIST AMIDST CIRCUMSTANCES.

Again – These CIRCUMSTANCES do NOT SIGNAL The END TIMES. Our WORLD CIRCUMSTANCES GIVE us TIME to BE OBEDIENT to JESUS and GO into ALL the World and MAKE DISCIPLES by LOVING ONE ANOTHER as JESUS LOVES US. John 13:34-35 = *“Your LOVE for ONE ANOTHER will PROVE to the WORLD that you are MY DISCIPLES.”*

This is HOW we’re OBEDIENT to GOD in FAITH. We do NOT NEED to UNDERSTAND all our CIRCUMSTANCES. INSTEAD, WE need to TRUST GOD’S PLAN. IF we DO, we will get OPPORTUNITIES to WITNESS to JESUS ... LUKE 21:12 = ¹² *“But before all this occurs, there will be a time of great persecution. You will be dragged into synagogues and prisons, and you will stand trial before kings and governors because you are my followers.”* ⁵ SIGN #3 ...

#3 = Faith PERSECUTION

There has been PERSECUTION for FAITH in The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from the BEGINNING. Why did CAIN kill ABEL? Cain didn’t trust God. Abel did.

JESUS PROMISED we would SUFFER for our FAITH, and it would INCREASE.

But JESUS has a PURPOSE for PERSECUTION ... LUKE 21:13-15 = ¹³ *But this will be your opportunity to tell them about me.* ¹⁴ *So don’t worry in advance about how to answer the charges against you,* ¹⁵ *for I will give you the right words and such wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to reply or refute you!* ⁶

⁴ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Lk 21:9–11). Tyndale House Publishers.
⁵ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Lk 21:12). Tyndale House Publishers.
⁶ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Lk 21:13–15). Tyndale House Publishers.

Times of SUFFERING offer OPPORTUNITIES to WITNESS to our FAITH. Remember WHO JESUS was TALKING TO? Specifically, to Jewish men; Peter, Andrew, James, and John (four fishermen). They would be PERSECUTED for their FAITH. The FIRST TYPE...

- **OFFICIAL**

Official Persecution. Remember what Jesus said? THIS will be your OPPORTUNITY to TELL THEM about ME! Remember PETER and JOHN before the COUNCIL (Acts 4 and AGAIN in 5)? Acts 8 the APOSTLES and BELIEVERS are SCATTERED because of PERSECUTION in Jerusalem ... they SCATTERED and WITNESSED to JESUS!

Peter / James / John / Andrew ... all persecuted with Andrew, Peter, and James KILLED. John was BOILED in OIL and EXILED on the Island of Patmos. We think of MARTYR as DYING for our FAITH. NOPE! The English word "MARTYR" comes from the Greek word "MARTUS" which means "A WITNESS."

Because of OFFICIAL PERSECUTION, God's WITNESSES stood before people of earthly POWER and TOLD of JESUS. God gave them the RIGHT WORDS to SAY because they had STUDIED GOD'S WORD. They were FAITHFUL to CHRIST. Pound of Silver!

1 PETER 3:14-16 = ¹⁴ But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don't worry or be afraid of their threats. ¹⁵ Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. ¹⁶ But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.⁷

Not just OFFICIAL PERSECUTION, but it gets PERSONAL ... LUKE 21:16-19 = ¹⁶ Even those closest to you—your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends—will betray you. They will even kill some of you. ¹⁷ And everyone will hate you because you are my followers. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish! ¹⁹ By standing firm, you will win your souls.⁸ Write this down ...

- **PERSONAL**

I don't know IF you've NOTICED, but if you PLACE your FAITH in JESUS (unconditional surrender), you will have FAMILY and FRIENDS TURN on YOU. During the TRIBULATION, this will become EVEN MORE EVIDENT! Family will TURN FAMILY members in, and they'll DIE. Remember who Jesus is talking to ... Apostles.

Hopefully, you do NOT have that WORRY TODAY, but your FAMILY MEMBERS and "FRIENDS" can MAKE LIFE MISERABLE for a BELIEVER. Jesus INVITES us to COURAGE ... MATTHEW 10:28 = ²⁸ "Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell."⁹ Is Jesus saying NOT to be AFRAID to DIE? NO. He wants us NOT to be AFRAID to LIVE for HIM ... Christ-Like in an UNCHRISTLIKE world! There is ONLY ONE Who HOLDS your ETERNITY. It's JESUS.

Remember, the SIGNS Jesus DESCRIBED here are NOT SIGNS of Him RETURNING SOON. These have been going ON for CENTURIES. But The END TIMES are UPON ALL of US ... John 14 ... "I will come and get you and take you to where I am." We will ALL DIE. According to Jesus, that moment is our END TIME. Do NOT be DECIEVED. Do NOT be AFRAID. Do NOT WORRY. Trust Jesus for your Eternity. URGENT! Let's Pray!

⁷ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (1 Pe 3:14-16). Tyndale House Publishers.
⁸ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Lk 21:16-19). Tyndale House Publishers.
⁹ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Mt 10:28). Tyndale House Publishers.

Next Steps: *Memorize 1 Peter 3:15*
Read Luke 21 and 1 Thessalonians 4-5
Invite someone to Worship with you for Easter (April 17)

Hosting (Closing)

HEY, it has been a GREAT DAY here at BMZ... Glad you've been here with us!
 In a moment, we are going to RECEIVE the OFFERING so please take this time to finish COMPLETING any information

- Or NEXT STEPS on your CONNECTION CARD (**FULLY FILLED OUT!!**)
- AND when our ushers come around to RECEIVE our OFFERING
- You can drop that card in the offering basket.

IF you are a First-Time Guest with us today

• We are so glad you joined us ... And we have a GIFT for you.
 It's this book "**UNSHAKABLE**" and it's at the BACK TABLE / By the DOORS...

- all you need to do is **HIT "SEND"** your COMPLETED Connection Card

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As our ushers GET READY to come forward

- I just want to remind you ... STEWARDSHIP is DISCIPLESHIP ... we RECEIVE an OFFERING EVERY Sunday BECAUSE it's BIBLICAL ... AND it HELPS us GROW in our FAITH!
- STEWARDSHIP VERSE ... PHILIPPIANS 2:13 = ¹³ *For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.* ¹⁰
- FIRST of our EARNINGS go back to the ONE who Blessed us in the first place! That's why WE/I do Automated Giving! I get paid ... the TITHE comes OUT FIRST!
- God's plan for BUILDING His Church was through TITHING and GIVING of the FOLLOWERS ... Share the GOOD NEWS! To REFRESH OTHERS!
- As Developing Followers of Jesus Christ, WE need to KNOW what the BIBLE says about GIVING ... NOT just what we THINK it should say.
- **MONEY is a HEART ISSUE.** And GOD wants what is BEST for your HEART! Listen, if GOD LOVES US so much that HE is willing to GIVE UP His OWN SON FOR US, WHY would GOD LEAD us ASTRAY in FINANCES?! USHERS ...
- Next Week: **Jesus ... (Palm Sunday) I'm COMING BACK!**

"Truth without Grace is Fundamentalism (Brutality). Grace without Truth is Sentimentalism (Hypocrisy)."
Special thanks to Warren Wiersbe, Nelson Searcy, and R.A. Pegram for outlines and ideas for this worship series.