

# Mark 13:24-27 - The Great Tribulation

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[ 0 : 00 ] I want to start this morning in a way that I don't normally start.! And I want to give you the practicalities of the passage before we look at a passage.! Is that okay? Some of you are like, what?

How dare you? Because there's some things that I've just kind of been playing on my mind and heart for actually the course of this year.

And five things that I just think will probably help us going into next year as well. That I think that when you're studying kind of end time stuff, these kind of things come out. And when we're not, they kind of get buried a little bit.

And I just think they're good for things for us to think about. Not just in light of these four verses, but actually, you know, as we go on and talk about Christmas in a few weeks, which makes me shudder.

And then after Christmas, we'll be looking at some of these things in more detail. And then we're going to be looking at the book of Jonah. Then we're going to be looking at a book of Colossians.

[ 1 : 04 ] That takes us through to the summer. So like five things that have just kind of been in my heart this year and thinking ahead for next year. And they all have to do with living out our Christian faith.

What does it mean to be a Christian? What does it mean to be a follower of Christ? What does it actually mean day by day? And so you might want to call these themes. You might just want to call these practicalities.

I don't really care. But I just think as we look at this text, these things you might be convicted over or challenged over or encouraged over. As we go through this passage, which is only four verses.

All right. So I've put them all up on the screen all at once because some of you will like that and just be able to jot these down. So the first is that I think that the challenge for me and I think the challenge for us is having a shifting focus from temporal to eternal.

Some of you are like nodding like, yeah. Because like I've been thinking about, you know, where obviously with our own election and an American election and other things have been going on this year is, you know, where are the world's priorities?

[ 2 : 20 ] And what are the kingdom's priorities and how different they are? It's kind of like being my meditation all year. And, you know, some of that was going through Nehemiah in the summer. But like where are the world's priorities?

Where do they seem to fall? And I think that we probably will agree that the world's priorities don't fall on the eternal. Right. And yet kingdom priorities definitely do fall on the eternal.

And so one of the things that should mark us as Christians is that where are our priorities as Christians? And the pretty much the driving force behind the world's current priority is is to accumulate wealth, to gain status and material possessions.

And pretty much the driving force behind all of life is is that it seems. But again, the kingdom, the kingdom of God challenges us by by reminding us to invest our time and energy and resources into eternal pursuits like gospel work.

And the question for me and the question for us is to what extent are we living out that priority? The second one is making time for spiritual growth.

[ 3 : 32 ] And again, it's true. Like like it's true of my my own life. And I talked to some of you and like we resonate with this. Even this morning, we resonate with this. That most of our day and most of our week is consumed by busyness.

Isn't it? And, you know, either we're working or we're constantly being distracted by things, just stuff.

And, you know, I was just even saying this morning, like the more people you have in your life, the more distracted life becomes. The more complex life becomes. But thinking about, you know, the return of Jesus and gospel priorities helps us to reorder those priorities, not to do away with those priorities or not to do away with those things.

Like we can't be hermits and live like in an island. I know some of you would love that. That does not what it calls us to. It's still the gospel still calls us to live in those moments, but to reorder and reprioritize those moments.

And so how are we how are we doing those? How how how are we doing about reminding ourselves about the daily practice of prayer and Bible study and meaningful engagement with church community?

[ 4 : 43 ] Then. This we this third one we see all the time prioritizing relationships that we don't see. This is this is like the the way the kingdom, if you like, is prioritizing relationships over self-interest.

Like, again, what we see in the world's priorities is is what the world's priority is, is me. I know not me, but like, you know, me.

How do I say that without saying me? It's the personalization, the self-interest. Right. All the world is really worried about and bothered about is is the continuation and the self-preservation of me.

You know, my own personal advancement, my success is actually sometimes at the expense of relationships. And how committed am I then? And this is a challenge.

How committed I am I about not just reconciling broken relationships, because that's the way of Christ, definitely. But how am I how committed am I to maintaining relationships that are often difficult to maintain?

[ 5 : 53 ] How committed am I to being present with people and then discipling those people in their walk with Christ? That's a different priority, isn't it?

Than the world's priority. Fourthly, using time for kingdom purpose. You know, it's said that one of the most common phrases that is to be said in the last decade and a half.

What's that? Fifteen years is I don't have enough time. Like we say all the time, don't we? I just said it. We say all the time. Our lives are governed by time.

I don't have enough time. And oftentimes we wish we did. We wish we did have enough time to do those things that we would like to do or feel like we are called to do.

Nobody has time anymore. The current priorities of the world call us to spend our free time. Free time? Like that's an unbiblical concept completely, but I won't go there today.

[ 6 : 59 ] Doing hobbies and entertainment and self-care. Look, there's nothing wrong with those three things. But obviously the overindulgence of those three things, there's a problem.

How are we spending our time? Being aligned to the kingdom means that I'm allocating time to serve others, to volunteer in ministry, to mentor someone spiritually and look after myself.

And this is where it clashes, number five. And I think we all feel this, Paul. Seeing daily work as a calling. Our days are filled with viewing work as merely a means to an end, oftentimes, aren't they?

Like, I just need an income. My gas bill's gone up. I said, I need to work. And we do need to work. And the Bible has a lot to say about working.

But are we filling our days with merely working as a means to an end, i.e. income or retirement? Or are we living the Christian life, embracing work as a mission field, where God can use us to reflect his character and serve others?

[ 8 : 11 ] Each one of those is a two-hour sermon on its own, with lots and lots of thinking time in between.

And I think it's good for us to think through these things and be challenged by these things and then ask the question, well, how do I do that? And so I hope as we go through these four verses, we're going to be convicted in those five things, enough for us to ask God to help us change.

And if we're honest, we will probably say that we lack in all five of those areas, to some degree. So let's ask God to help us now.

Let's pray. And then we're going to open into Mark chapter 13. Father, thank you for your word.

Thank you, Lord, that you challenge us, Lord. And Lord, you want us to live with kingdom priorities, Lord, according to kingdom timelines, according to the way that you have walked.

Lord, we pray that you would help us to do that. Lord, we want to be not just good stewards, but we want to be good ambassadors of your kingdom. And Lord, so we pray as we look at these things in your word, we pray that these five things might resonate with us, Lord.

[ 9 : 31 ] And as we discover, Lord, that you're coming again is soon and very soon. Lord, we pray that that would motivate us to walk the Christian life, Lord, as it's described in your word.

Lord, we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Okay, so we're in Mark chapter 13. And we have come off the back of this question that the disciples have asked about when the end of time is going to be, right?

Or the end times are going to be. Okay, so that's like verses one to three of Mark chapter 13. The disciples say, hey, Jesus, do you see these bricks? And Jesus says, hey, disciples, do you see these bricks?

Do you know the meaning of these bricks? Do you know that they're going to be brought down?

And the disciples are like, when is that going to happen? And so then Jesus launches into this sermon for the disciples and telling them, let me tell you when these things are going to be.

And so we pick it up in verse 24. And we're just going to hit four verses this morning, but it's going to seem like we're going to hear half the Bible. So I hope you've got your swipecy finger ready or your turny finger ready, whichever one you use, because we're going to be going through some scripture this morning.

[ 10 : 54 ] Okay, so he opens in verse 24. There's one person that's happy about that. And I'm grateful. So we open in verse 24.

And Jesus says, but in those days. Now stop there, because we should ask a question. In what days? Well, he's just been, he's just talked about two significant events.

He's talking about a period of time of great tribulation that comes on the world.

That's the first event. And then the second event that we've talked about is this idea of the abomination of desolation. That's what he's talked about in the previous verses. So he's talking about a period, a period of time of great tribulation that comes on the entire world.

Now, look, this is not just general tribulation. He's clearly talking about the same thing as he was talking about in verse 19.

[ 11 : 56 ] Right? So, this is a specific tribulation. And it's actually quite clear that there is general tribulation.

Let's not forget that. Right? John chapter 16. In the world, Jesus said, you're going to have tribulation. Right? But what is also clear is that the Bible speaks about a prescribed period of tribulation that is different from tribulation in general.

So, Jeremiah chapter 30, verse 7. Alas, that day is so great, there is none like it. It is a time of distress for Jacob, yet he will be saved out of it.

And actually, this period of time, as we read the Bible, we understand that that period of time is for the breaking of the Jews and then restoring them as the people of God.

That's what that period of time is for. Daniel sees the vision and he heard a man speaking about a time of trouble in Daniel chapter 12, verse 1.

[ 13 : 03 ] Such as never has been since there was a nation until that time. And then we're given the purpose in verse 7 of chapter 12. For the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end.

All these things will be finished. And Daniel 9, Joel 2, Zechariah 13, Revelation 13 speak about the same thing.

There's a period of time that is designated, prescribed, chosen as a period of great tribulation that is different from the general tribulation that we all experience.

This is for the purpose of restoring Israel as God's people. But it's going to happen through brokenness.

It's going to happen through tribulation. And interestingly enough, the one doing the breaking is God himself. So this isn't like accidental tribulation or tribulation that, you know, Israel are bringing on themselves.

[ 14 : 06 ] This is prescribed by God. God is doing the breaking in the hope to restore Israel to himself. So that's the first event, if you like, that Jesus is talking about in those days.

The second one we looked at in some detail last week. And pick it up from verse 14 of Mark 13. Which is this event called the abomination of desolation.

The abomination of desolation within that period of tribulation. He says, when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be.

Let the reader understand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And last week we talked again about that event in detail. Let the one who is on the housetop not go down nor enter his house nor take anything out.

And let the one who is in the field not turn back or take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days. Notice that. Pray that it would not happen in winter.

[15:10] For in those days there will be such tribulation. As has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now and never will be.

And so we're talking about those days. Jesus says in those days. And then he says after that tribulation.

Not just tribulation. After that tribulation. In those days. After that tribulation. So Jesus is speaking very specifically here. Now let's skip ahead two verses to 26.

Because I want to show you the third event. That Jesus is talking about in this little section. Jesus says and then. They will see the son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

And so the issue is that. And here's this is this is a big issue. The issue is that the context forces us to understand the second coming of Jesus. Verse 26.

[16:15] Happening soon after the great tribulation. And the abomination of desolation. And I'll even tell you that Jesus and the Antichrist.

They're around at the same time. And I know that because the Bible says that. So in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. We get this idea that these events.

The great tribulation. The abomination of desolation. And Jesus return. Aren't separated by thousands of years. Because Jesus and the Antichrist. Jesus and this guy who has set himself up in the temple.

The abomination of desolation. Jesus and this guy are around at the same time. It says that. Paul says 2 Thessalonians 2 verse 8. Then the lawless one. So the abomination of desolation guy that we talked about.

Will be revealed. Whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth. And bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. So when Jesus comes back. Antichrist is going to get.

[17:17] Beaten up. For want of a better phrase. So. Paul is. Is. Is. Clear. That there is. An event. Whereby the lawless one.

Will be revealed. Abomination of desolation. And when Jesus returns. He's going to put a stop to that person. So.

Going back to verse 24. Of Mark 13. I know. We haven't kind of got very far. But. I think it's important. To kind of lay up. Some of this groundwork. Where Jesus says. In those days.

After that tribulation. So. Jesus says. That after that time. The third event. Will be accompanied. Then. By other signs. Right. And those other signs.

Are. The sun will be darkened. The moon. Will not give its light. The stars will be falling. From heaven. And the powers in the heavens. Will be shaken.

[18:12] Now. Let me. Let me. Let me give you. Let me give you some things. To think about. There are three main views. That. Three main.

Ways. People have read. That verse. So. There's the hyper literal view. There's a symbolic view. And the literal poetic view.

This is just about. How you read. Okay. This isn't about theology. It's about how you read. All right. Interestingly. I'll just tell you this now.

To throw a curveball in there. For those of you. Would like that. Been. Been studying Jonah. For our upcoming Jonah series. That starts in March. And. Interesting.

How do you read the book of Jonah? Is it historical? Or is it historical parable? I'll leave that with you. And then get back to Mark. Mark chapter 13. And some of you are like.

[19:08] I don't even know. So. Look. Three main views. About how you would read this verse. The sun being dark. And the moon not giving us light. The stars falling from heaven.

How do you read that? How do you make sense of that? Well look. The hyper literal view. Symbolic view. And then. A literal poetic view. The hyper literal view. Simply says.

That the actual sun. And it's out today. Be cameras. Doesn't feel like it though. Does it? The actual sun will be put out.

And the actual stars will fall and hit the earth. Now look. If you know anything about cosmology. That's laughable. Isn't it? Because look. There are. There are some people. Who hold that view. Mainly because of their theology. Or lack of it. Right? And it helps them frame. What they.

[ 20 : 04 ] How they read. What is happening. And so. For example. This imagery. Helps some people understand. That God's ultimate control. Understand. About God's ultimate control.

Over creation. And the distance. That his creation. Have turned away from him. Is suggested. By the upheaval.

In the cosmology. And so. Jesus returning. Is putting even the sun. And the moon. And the stars. Back. Literally. To the beginning.

Before the day. Before they were formed. And I'll say this view. Is. Is. Is. Is. Not by. Like. Regular. I mean.

The church of looney tunes. Believes it. But there's other. And there's other churches. That believe it. But it's mainly held by skeptics. And it's mainly held by skeptics. Because they now turn around. And go. Can you believe.

[ 21 : 00 ] That. You know. This massive star. That we know. Is being a sun. From bazillions of years. Light years away. Is going to crash into the earth. And the earth. Is going to survive. If you know anything about cosmology.

That's not even possible. And so there's some that read that as a hyper literal way.

And it becomes then just an easy target. The other way is a symbolic view. And so the symbolic view says that the sun doesn't mean the sun and the moon doesn't mean the moon. And the stars don't really mean the stars.

And what it's really talking about is false areas of worship. So the political powers will fall. Religion will fall. And look, there's a couple of examples of how that's used in the Old Testament.

Like would be Micah chapter 3. So in Micah 3, God says, Therefore it shall be as night to you without vision and darkness to you without divination. The sun will go down on the prophets and the day will be black over them.

[ 22 : 00 ] But a problem with that is clearly the context is not talking about the sun stopping. Right? It's talking about revelation that is given by God stopping. Another one would be 2 Samuel chapter 22.

2 Samuel chapter 22. Of how the symbology is used. And look, the symbology is used throughout the Bible. There's no question of that. So David is praising God for being delivered from Saul.

And David says, In my distress I called upon the Lord. We sung this this morning, right? In my distress I called upon the Lord. To my God I called.

And from his temple he heard my voice and my cries. And my cry came to his ears. We don't sing this bit. Then the earth reeled and rocked. And the foundations of the heavens trembled and quaked. Because he was angry.

Smoke went up from his nostrils. And devouring fire from his mouth. Glowing coals flamed forth from him. Now, that's impossible to read literally, isn't it?

[ 23 : 01 ] We know that we're reading it. And as we're reading it, it means that God was really unhappy with Saul. And I don't think there's good enough reason to take the words of Jesus in Mark chapter 13 in the same way.

Because clearly Jesus isn't speaking about lost revelation. Or even, you know, in the same way that David writes, as a response to being delivered.

And while there is symbology in the Old Testament, absolutely. Just because there is symbology, it doesn't mean that there's always symbology. Whenever it's used. Jesus is answering this question again from the disciples about how to know when the temple is going to be destroyed.

And when he is going to come back. And to answer that question, they need to know. It can't be symbolic. There needs to be tangible, identifiable things that they can see in order for that to be true.

So the third way to read it is literally poetic. Or poetic literalism. So that allows the text to maintain its power and drama without requiring any strict literalism or reducing it to mere symbolism.

[ 24 : 20 ] So what that means is that the passage conveys real transformative events, but they exceed human language.

And so the only way to record what is happening is to record it poetically. So the things being described are being interpreted or written down by the use of analogy or poetry, but they're still real events.

There's still something happening. It's not reduced to symbols, and it's not over-egged to literalism. There's a... Take your cake and eat it.

There's kind of both, right? And look, we use this all the time, don't we? We talk about this all the time. What is a shooting star? It's not a shooting star. You knew that, right?

So stars don't just shoot across the... You know that. They're meteors. They're not stars. If there were stars, we'd all be in trouble, like dead trouble, right?

[ 25 : 26 ] So we know that it's not actually a star, it's a meteor, but they look like shooting stars. And look, there have been, in times past, fairly regularly, fairly recently actually, atmospheric conditions that make it seem that the sun has gone out.

All right? So you turn on the news last summer. What was happening in Greece? All those wildfires in Greece. Like it seemed like the sun didn't come up for days. Or the sun was still there, you just couldn't see it.

Right? The fires in California, same deal. It seemed that the sun didn't rise in the morning because it couldn't be seen. And what Jesus is doing in this section is actually drawing from the Old Testament and how they understood things and how they used those, that symbolism or that poetry to say, well, it seems like that is happening.

Let me give you an example. Isaiah 13, verse 10. For the stars of the heaven and their constellations will not give their light. It's just, it's poetic literalism.

The sun will be dark at its rising. And look, we all know that the sun doesn't rise.

[ 26 : 48 ] We know that. Right? If you know anything about cosmology, you know the sun doesn't rise. What, is the Bible wrong then? No, of course not. It's just these guys got this poetic literalism. Right?

And the moon will not shed its light. Well, the moon doesn't have any light. All right? So, do you see what I'm saying? Isaiah isn't making astrological predictions.

The language isn't precise and it's not supposed to be. John sees the same thing in a book of Revelation. In fact, Peter sees the same thing in his famous sermon on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2.

Probably the most famous passage in the Bible, actually, about cosmological disturbances has got nothing to do with the end times. Right?

Just two chapters. Flick to your right. Two chapters. In Mark 15, and I want to say this for those of you who were here last week, Mark 15 is a sample preview trailer idea that we spoke about last week of something's happening in the end times.

[ 27 : 57 ] Mark 15, 33, then about the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. That's clearly literal. It clearly happened.

Real physical darkness at his first coming sets the precedence for real physical darkness at his second coming, but the language is poetic. What happened on the cross in terms of cosmic signs is a trailer for what is next.

2 Peter chapter 3, Peter says this, that the day of the Lord will come like a thief and then the heavens will pass away with a roar and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed since all of these things are thus to be dissolved.

What sort of people are you to be in lives of holiness and godliness? That's what I was saying at the beginning, right at the beginning. Waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn.

And so look, the idea is that Peter is writing to these churches who are facing massive persecution and they're losing everything for the name of Christ and Peter goes, hey, don't worry because it's all going to burn.

[ 29 : 23 ] His whole argument is that it's actually going to happen even if the language is poetic. For it to make sense, it has to be a literal event for it to be comforting, it has to be a literal event even if the language isn't precise.

So this is like how to read our Bibles kind of one-on-one, right? Sometimes we're going to read it literally. Sometimes we're going to read it symbolically. Sometimes we're going to read it poetically but it still might be true.

So there's enough biblical reason to take these verses as actual things that are going to happen even though the language might be using a degree of creativity.

Then lastly, look at the parallel passage to Mark 13 which is in Mark 21. No, Luke 21 because Mark 21 doesn't exist. That would be that would be symbolism right there.

So Luke 21 is the parallel passage to Mark 13 and in there Luke's recording Jesus' words where he says there in verse 25 that there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves.

[ 30 : 43 ] People fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. So notice that the signs in the sun and the moon and the stars will be evident to those who are alive at a time so they have to be real events of some kind.

That's the added bit that Luke adds and this passage and the passages I've quoted they are literal events even though they have poetry. So then verse 26 back in Mark 13 then after those things just pause there let me just say this one thing don't worry about the signs and the sun and the moon and the stars they're not they're not the sign like let me see if I can put this in perspective the Christian life is like Tuesdays you know Tuesdays right they're not Mondays Mondays Mondays are terrible aren't they but the Christian life isn't a Monday it's a Tuesday it's not a Wednesday because Wednesday you can see Friday and there's some hope

Christianity is a Tuesday it's just meh it's just Tuesday and I think it's true for those of you who have been Christians for a while you could probably I know I can I could probably count on my one hand those times where I can recount God moving miraculously supernaturally extraordinarily in 30 years of being a Christian and the danger is is that we turn to verse whatever that was verse 25 and our whole lives become about chasing signs and this that and the other and actually the call of God is just that it's just to Tuesdays it's just to keep going faithfully praying reading your Bible sharing your faith keep being faithful walking with God it's not in the signs yes Jesus is coming back what are you doing right and the moment that we spend our lives like looking up and we're looking for this you know we're looking for that sign and that sign and oh look there's a horoscope thing and all of that that's just absolutely men in black not real right the call of God isn't it the call of God is actually to the mundanity of life it's to it's just to walking out

Tuesday every single day being faithful to whatever God places in front of us so don't come away from this going off verse 25 there's going to be the sun's going to go out the moon's going to be dark and the stars are going to fall from heaven and then get on the you know get on the YouTube don't get on YouTube or don't get on forum right and all of that junk like you're going to waste your life and you're not going to live out the priorities of the kingdom all right enough said that was just me I don't know why I said that so verse 26 and then after those things they will see the son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory now look some people teach that this event has already happened all right but this can't be in view when Jesus is teaching this mainly because Jesus uses the term son of man and he's using the term son of man in the context of his second coming now some of you if you don't know your Bibles you'll go well so what but the point is is that he's referring to Daniel chapter 7 and we don't have time to go into

Daniel chapter 7 this morning but in Daniel chapter 7 we get this picture of the son of man arrayed in glory and it is called the son of man and he goes to the ancient of days and it's this picture of of the heavenly realm and what he is doing and so when Jesus says oh they will see the son of man he's not just using that term just kind of like oh what can I what can I call myself when you see Jesus coming back no that doesn't really work the lamb of God no that doesn't work either he's using the son of man right it's a specific phrase and it's a specific quote from Daniel chapter 7 about the coming again of Jesus which is Daniel chapter 7 and again if you know Daniel chapter 7 there's no way the return of Jesus can be a secret symbolic returning no way Daniel 7 sees Jesus clothed in majesty dressed in priestly authority he's holding creation in his care and he's judging his enemies by the word of his mouth and when when Daniel and then later

[ 35 : 59 ] John sees him they fall on their faces as though they were dead right Matthew 25 Matthew 26 crystal clear that when Jesus comes back every eye is going to see him and Jesus said exactly that same thing in Acts chapter 1 when they had come together we're told Luke says when they came together that's the disciples they asked him Lord will you at this time restore the kingdom

to Israel like it seems like the same question that we're answering now right and so Jesus said to him it's not for you to know the times or the seasons of the father is fixed by his own authority like I think that should be stamped across every end times internet forum in the entire world it's not for you to know it's not for you to know but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you why so that you can be witnesses!

like literally so you can live out a Christian life what should we be doing as we're waiting for this time that's what Jesus is answering the question he's saying well look you should be living out the Christian life and I accept that it's going to be hard for you so let me give you some power and the Holy Spirit comes that's what he's saying right but that's not the point of why I'm quoting this is verse 8 you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth things as they were looking on he was lifted up now just just get this scene he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight and while they were gazing into heaven as he went behold two men stood by in white robes and said men of Galilee why are you standing looking into heaven this Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven and so the point is that when Jesus returns everyone is going to know about it it's going to be public it's going to be visible it's going to be in Jesus words with great power and glory it's going to be accompanied by literal cosmic signs whatever they are that can't be mistaken and then verse 27 so again now after those things he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven so there is a view and since we're going through different views right now there is a view that these angels are human messengers and the gathering of the elect is the result of the gospel being preached there are many reasons to reject that view but one is found in mark 8 where

Jesus is again speaking about his return and he says this whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation of him will the son of man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his father with the definite article with the holy angels and so this time Jesus says that they aren't just angels but are holy angels and they are the holy angels in mark chapter 13 Jesus tells us what else these angels are going to do because they're not just going to go out and gather the elect by gathering the elect they're also going to do something else Matthew 13 verse 41 the son of man and again look he's using that language the son of man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all lawbreakers so one role of these angels is to gather the elect but it seems also that they're going to gather those who aren't and in Matthew 16 he says that once they have gathered all the elect and non-elect they will stand trial so verse 27 the son of man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his father and then he will repay each person according to what he has done this is the same thing that Jesus talked about in Matthew chapter 25 the parable of the sheep and the goats when the son of man comes in glory and all the angels with him then he will sit on his glorious throne before him will be gathered all nations and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and then judgment takes place and so the point is that the body of scripture seems to point to actual angels who go and gather all in at the end of time when Jesus returns rather than human messengers who are sent to proclaim the gospel now look next week because time has gone next week we're going to talk about Israel bring your rocks just in case but look let me just leave you with these five thoughts again what kind of Christian am I if we believe that

Jesus is coming back you can run away or and then be chased marvelous thing look do we have a shifting focus from temporary to eternal are we making time for spiritual growth are we prioritizing relationships over self interest are we using time for kingdom purposes are we seeing daily work as a calling this is the thing when Jesus starts to unpack it and says what kind of life you should be living when Peter unpacks it and says what kind of life should you be living those five things for me resonate in the time that we're living right now and so again let's turn to the Lord and ask him to help us to do those things this week but growingly and increasingly as we think about these things Father thank you for your word Lord we want to confess Lord that there is much that we don't understand there is much that confuses us

[ 42 : 38 ] Lord and we're thankful Lord that our salvation isn't dependent upon us having these things figured out and so Lord we pray that you would continue to help us to understand them Lord but more importantly I think help us to live and be honest about our own lives in the light of your return Lord we would all kind of agree Lord that having a head knowledge about these things and

quoting multiple verses doesn't make us a better Christian it doesn't actually make us walk with you more closely Lord but we desire it Lord we desire for your word to transform our mind to the degree that our lives are changed Lord and our lives right now are preparing for the kingdom that is to come and so Lord we would agree with you when you said well you're going to need some help

Lord we agree we agree that we need help to live out the Christian life Lord and so we pray fill us with your spirit just as you promised Lord that we would be able to tread out these things Lord that kingdom priorities would become our priorities Lord kingdom schedules would become our schedules kingdom budget lines would become our budget lines Lord we pray Lord that you would help us to be a people Lord that actually knows this stuff but also lives it out Lord so help us in it we pray Lord help us now to raise our voices to you and worship you and praise you Lord thank you that you're coming back Lord thank you that you're coming back to fix all of this mess Lord and we pray that as we turn on the news this week as we enter the office this week Lord we pray for opportunity Lord to speak about not about signs in the stars and falling this that and the other and cosmology and some of that nonsense that people talk about

Lord we pray Lord that the center of our conversation would be you and your cross and your love and your mercy for people so Lord we thank you Lord that you're coming back Lord thank you that you're coming back to finally redeem us Lord help us to be a vessel for your character Lord but also a mouthpiece for your gospel Lord we ask these things in Jesus name Amen Amen Amen