

Stay Awake!

(Luke 21:5-38)

Introduction

1. [Series] Resonate: Tune into Jesus' frequency to experience the power of the gospel & impact the culture.
2. Are you sleeping through life, ignoring the important alarms, changes & sign posts Jesus gives?
 - a. Do they influence & determine how you engage with life?
 - b. Jesus' final week: (Sun) welcomed into Jerusalem; (Mon) clears the Temple of sin & false worship; (Tue) teaches at the Temple re: the Kingdom of God & His authority; now we arrive at Wed.

General signs that the Kingdom is coming [Luke 21:5-19]

1. [5-7] Jesus foretells the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.
 - a. The Temple became an idol: Originally a tool for worship, it had become the object of worship for those consumed more with man-made religion/rules than genuine worship/relationship with the living God.
 - b. [7] When? What are the signs?
 - i. Not just of the Temple's destruction, but also the Messiah's reign & end of the age (cf. Matt 24:3).
 - ii. Messiah's coming signals the end of man's rule/oppression, judgment for those who reject Jesus, & the full expression of His Kingdom reign over the whole world to the joy/salvation of His people.
 - iii. Jesus already taught that the Kingdom won't be fully expressed until His return (cf. Luke 17:20-37).
2. [8-11] General early warning signs between Jesus' first & second coming.
 - a. [8] Pretenders claiming to be messiah after Jesus (cf. 17:23-24).
 - b. [9-10] Wars & social chaos on an increasingly global scale.
 - c. [11] Escalating natural disasters & cosmological signs.
 - d. [9b] When these occur, the end is not imminent; they are early warning signs (cf. Matt 24:8).
3. [12-13] Even before these signs start, there will be an increase in persecution of Jesus' followers
 - a. [14-15] But this is the opportunity to be a testimony about why we follow Jesus.
 - i. Jesus will provide the wisdom & words to respond at that moment.
 - b. [16-17] Followers may be betrayed by those closest, even put to death, hated for Christ.
 - c. [18] Even in light of harm/suffering/physical death, the real you/eternal you will be unharmed & not perish.
 - i. [19] Those who endure even the worst opposition for Jesus' sake receive real/eternal life.
 - ii. [Doctrine] Perseverance of the saints: The mark of those who genuinely follow Jesus & are saved is that they will endure for Jesus to the end; whether they live or die, Jesus is their King & hope.

Specific signs that the Kingdom is near [Luke 21:20-27]

1. [20-24] Jesus foretells the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - a. [20] Specific sign: When Jerusalem is surrounded, it will be destroyed.
 - i. [21-23] Flee because the fulfillment of Scriptures will be terrible.
 - b. "Desolation": Matt 24:15-22 ties it to the Dan 9:27 event: the "abomination of desolation."
 - i. Jerusalem will be destroyed; the Temple desecrated by a false king who sets up an image of himself in God's holy place of worship.
 - ii. This is not the fall of Jerusalem & Temple's destruction in 70 AD; there were no accompanying disasters or multiple nations at war; that was only a preview of the great destruction to come.
 - iii. [Rev 11:2; 2 Thess 2:4] After 3.5 years of tribulation, Jerusalem will be trampled, and the antichrist will set up an image of himself in the rebuilt Temple, calling the world to worship him.
 - iv. That sacrilege will trigger the final 3.5 years of divine judgment on the earth.

- c. [24] "Time of the Gentiles": An ongoing period when non-Jews who do not love, fear or worship God will reign.
2. [25-28] Final signs
- a. [25] Devastation on a cosmological scale, affecting stars, moon, tides
 - b. [26] Global sense of anxiety & helplessness in response.
 - c. [27] Finally, the Son of Man (cf. Dan 7:13-14) will return in power & glory (cf. Luke 17:24).
 - d. [28] Unlike those who are downcast by the signs, believers look up in anticipation toward our hope in the King & the fulfillment of the Kingdom.

Anticipate the Kingdom's coming [Luke 21:28-38]

How should we respond? How should we live?

1. Watch for the signs
 - a. [29-31] Parable: Just as you can observe trees bearing leaves & know summer is near, observe the signs & know the Kingdom/redemption are near.
 - b. [32] The generation that sees these signs will see the Day of Judgment & Christ's return.
 - c. [33] Point: Though Heaven & earth will fail, Jesus' prophetic words come true, so pay attention to the signs!
 - d. Application: You can objectively observe the signs to see if His words are true; if so, it validates His claim as King, the truth about His coming Kingdom, & redefines the meaning/direction of our lives.

2. Not only watch for the signs, watch yourselves
 - a. [34] "Weighed down": Consumed or overcome, such as by sleep (cf. Luke 9:32)
 - i. Jesus warns against being consumed/overcome by distractions in this life.
 - b. Don't be overcome by sinful behavior/lifestyle
 - i. "Dissipation": The after-effects of drunkenness; headache, vomiting, passed out, hangover.
 - ii. Not just drunkenness, but when your heart & life are sucked into any sinful lifestyle.
 - iii. False beliefs: I deserve it; I just want to have a little fun; it doesn't hurt anybody; Jesus isn't coming back any time soon.
 - iv. Is that you? Are you so intoxicated by sin, you won't hear Jesus' alarms because you're spiritually drunk, asleep, desensitized to Him? You need to change; you need to repent.
 - c. Don't be overcome by cares of this life
 - i. Life's worries/security, or life's comforts/pleasures.
 - ii. How busy are you? Are you distracted by life from Jesus & signs of His return?
 - iii. How do you spend your resources? Focused solely on yourself or Jesus & His return?
 - d. [35] If we are consumed by these things, the Day of Judgment will blindside us; no one can avoid it.
 - i. Application: How must your life change in light of Jesus' return?

3. [36] Instead of being overcome by spiritual sleep of distractions, stay awake at all times! Doing what?
 - a. When you see these signs, pray for strength (key response).
 - b. Pray for strength to flee from the warning signs of judgment
 - c. Pray for endurance to stand before Jesus.
 - i. Endure persecution & seek opportunities for testimony about Christ (cf. Luke 21:12-19).
 - ii. Application: 5-for-5; have 5 spiritual conversations for 5 minutes with unchurched friends every week.
 - d. Don't be afraid to stand before Jesus. If you follow Him, this judgment is not for you; Jesus paid the penalty of your sin at the cross.