

The Arrival of God

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LUKE 21:25-36

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Core Competency:

Hope- I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

We have this hope as an anchor for our lives, safe and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain. Jesus has entered there on our behalf as a forerunner, because He has become a high priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 6:19-20)

Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate really matter, so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

❸ LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFE GROUP.

Introduction

For a feature article on the mighty Mississippi River, Michael Parfit rode in a twelve-foot rubber dinghy down the Mississippi from Memphis, Tennessee, to the Gulf of Mexico.

Parfit learned of the incredible power of this giant river. The Mississippi gathers its water from 41 percent of the continental U.S., catching water from Montana to New York. Half a trillion tons of water flow down the Mississippi every year, carrying downstream sixty-three thousand tons of soil a day.

A river this big is a threat to the surrounding countryside. That's why engineers have built levees to pinch the mighty giant and keep it from flooding the farmland and towns nearby. The levees on the lower Mississippi stand, on average, twenty-five feet high and run for 2,203 miles on both sides of the main river and its tributaries.

"As the wall was built over the years," writes Parfit, "people came to live under its protection. They tore down the forest and planted cotton, and the floodplain of the Mississippi became the expanse of farmland known as the Mississippi Delta."

More than eight million people live in the Delta. But at what risk? Parfit flew in a plane over the Mississippi Delta and saw plainly the river's tracks on the land, where it once had flooded the Delta.

"The levee ... cages the giant, or appears to," writes Parfit. "And no one but birds and an occasional light-plane pilot notices the long sweep of the river's indelible script. What the river has written in the mud again and again is simple: 'Someday soon.'"

Someday soon will come another flood. That's what Parfit warned in February of 1993. Someday soon will come another devastating flood like the ones in 1882, 1927, and 1973.

"People in this valley get a sense everything is totally controlled," one engineer told Parfit. "That's a false sense of security. We haven't seen anything yet in this valley as to what this river can do. We're not in control of anything."

"The river," wrote Parfit in February 1993, "moves brown, swift, unpredictable, enormous, always murmuring 'Someday soon—...'"

In February 1993 when his article was published, Parfit could not have imagined how right he would be. Only months after the publication of the article, in the summer of 1993, came one of the worst floods in the history of the Mississippi.

God's Word warns that someday soon, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, Christ will return to the earth, bringing the terrible wrath of God on all who have not prepared their lives for his coming. Nothing can stop him. The wise person gets ready.

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate really matter, so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage:

Read Luke 21:25-36

25 “Then there will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars; and there will be anguish on the earth among nations bewildered by the roaring sea and waves.

26 People will faint from fear and expectation of the things that are coming on the world, because the celestial powers will be shaken.

27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 But when these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is near!”

29 Then He told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.

30 As soon as they put out leaves you can see for yourselves and recognize that summer is already near.

31 In the same way, when you see these things

happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.

32 I assure you: This generation will certainly not pass away until all things take place.

33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away.

34 “Be on your guard, so that your minds are not dulled from carousing, drunkenness, and worries of life, or that day will come on you unexpectedly

35 like a trap. For it will come on all who live on the face of the whole earth.

36 But be alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place and to stand before the Son of Man.”

you also must be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

② DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the following questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with other.

1. Why did Jesus reveal to us these prophecies about the last days?
2. What distinguishes Jesus’ view of the future from the predictions of modern-day seers and astrologers?
3. Jesus wants his disciples to be aware of, but not preoccupied with, "signs." He is more concerned that they know how to live in view of these coming events and troubles. Consider his counsel and warnings (Luke 21:8, 9, 14, 28, 29, 34-36). Which of these especially remind you to be better prepared for Jesus' return?
4. Which one of his promises gives you strong incentive to be well prepared (Luke 21:14-15, 19, 24, 28, 31, 33)?
5. Earthly preoccupation can keep us insensitive to spiritual realities and unprepared "to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:5, 34-36). What aspects of modern living tempt you this way?

Sermon Notes:

③LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFEGROUP.

Do you think any of the counsel and encouragement Jesus gave in 21:5-36 is relevant today? If so, how do you think it should affect a Christian's behavior and attitudes?

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I live life with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away God's money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.