

THE BIG IDEA: Don't miss the Savior while you're looking for a sign.

The Take-Off

Welcome back to Luke! It's been awhile since we were last in our True Story series, and so let's remind ourselves why it's called True Story and how it relates to Luke's gospel.

1:1-4 gives us all we need to know:

- Theophilus hired Luke to interview eyewitnesses
- He did this in order to verify the Jesus stories
- The end result is certainty about them
- In other words, #truestory

To this point, we've worked ourselves right up to the last week of Jesus' life, and so this isn't just the culmination of our series, but the culmination of Jesus' mission here on earth.

Literally, the end of the story was just the beginning, and here in Luke 21, we find Jesus being asked questions about the end of the age.

Some have said that this chapter is one of the most debated passages in the Bible because everyone has an opinion or an interpretation about when Jesus will return.

The goal isn't that we all agree how or when Jesus will return as much as that we all understand that He WILL return.

Here's why that's important: **we don't want to miss the Savior while we're looking for a sign.**

Isn't amazing how we can miss one thing because we're so focused on another?

[IMAGES / Hidden objects]

Sometimes we can get so obsessed with understanding prophecy about the end of time - called eschatology - that we forget about the person it's all about - Jesus.

It's not a puzzle to solve; it's a person to seek.

I heard one preacher say that we need to remember that we're on the welcoming committee, not the planning committee. It's not our job to know every detail.

So many people have swung and missed when it comes to the return of Jesus by predicting specific - wrong - times.

We want to avoid that.

Let's start in Luke 21:5 and work our way through the chapter

1. Point to Jesus in the worst

- Something that can help us understand this chapter is to know that Jesus is talking about events that would happen soon and events that would happen eventually.
- One teacher suggests wearing bifocals as we read it so that we can see up close and far off
- This is the way the kingdom often operates: it's a "now and not yet" kingdom
- Verses 5-24 deal specifically with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and what Jesus was telling them is that when bad things happen, people take advantage of that to prey on other people's panic
- They claim to be Jesus or to know when Jesus is returning (how many have done that??!)
- Jesus said, "Watch out!" In the Greek it means "to take heed"
- Jesus is saying know WHO I AM, especially if you don't know WHERE I AM
- Imagine the worst situation you could be in
- Jesus is saying to know Him so well that even in the worst situations we would POINT others to Him
- v. 8 / make sure you know Who is authentic so that you'll recognize who is fake
- v. 13 (NLT) / so that you can **point to Jesus in the worst** times
- See the opportunity more than the opposition**
- A church full of panic is empty of the hope people need in a crisis
- 2 Peter 3:17-18** / when we grow in our relationship with Jesus, we'll find ourselves pointing others to Him even in times that we don't understand
- Jesus talked about one of those times in the rest of the chapter: times of waiting

2. Look for Jesus in the waiting

- Obviously, we're still waiting for Jesus to return
- The problem is that we don't typically wait well, do we?

- c. We get impatient, or frustrated, or we let our guards down.
- d. **vv. 34-36 (NLT)** / don't let your heart be dulled, don't be caught unaware, WAKE UP!!!
- e. What Jesus is saying is the we need to **look for Him in the waiting**
- f. Remember what the waiting is all about!
- g. **2 Peter 3:9-15a** / **the delay isn't to punish the church, but rather to pursue the lost**
- h. That's great news for any of us here who haven't met and aren't following Jesus
- i. There is time, and while we don't know how much time we do have, we know that we do have right now]

The Landing

[The Bridge Run and running over people]

It's all about Jesus, and it's no different here.

The end times aren't a puzzle to solve; they're a person to seek.

Don't miss the Savior while you're looking for a sign.

As we wrap up, can I just highlight one very important detail in the last verse, Luke 21:38

People kept coming to Jesus every day even after He didn't answer the original question!

They asked "when" and He said "someday" and yet people still flocked to Him.

Getting closer to Jesus is more important than getting answers from Jesus.

Let's pray.