

# THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Doing Life In the Last Days  
Mark 13:1-13



## SYNOPSIS

Mark 13:1-13 focuses on Jesus' teachings concerning the end times. Pastor Frank breaks down this chapter into five key themes: Destruction, Deception, Disaster, Distress, and Declaration. The sermon emphasizes the speaker's belief that these signs are increasingly evident in the present day, indicating that we are living in the "last days."

## QUESTIONS

1. What does the phrase "the last days" refer to in this sermon, and what signs indicate we are currently in this period?
2. Jesus prophesied the destruction of the temple. How was this fulfilled, and why is it a significant event in understanding the "last days"?

3. What forms of deception does the sermon highlight as being prevalent in the "last days," and how can believers guard against them?

4. The sermon mentions increasing wars and natural disasters as signs of the "last days." How are these events to be understood in the context of Jesus' teachings, and what should be the believer's response to them?

5. What kind of distress and persecution does the sermon say believers will face in the "last days," and what encouragement is offered to those who experience it?

6. According to the sermon, what is the significance of the Gospel being preached to all nations before the end comes, and how is this currently being facilitated?

7. What are the different perspectives on the timing of the rapture in relation to the Great Tribulation presented in the sermon, and what does the speaker emphasize as the more important focus for believers?

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## ANSWER KEY

1. The "last days," according to this sermon's interpretation of Mark 13, began with Jesus' first coming and extend until his return. The sermon identifies several signs indicative of this period: the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (fulfilled in 70 AD), the ongoing presence of deception by those claiming to be Christ or distorting the Gospel, increasing wars and natural disasters, and growing distress and persecution faced by believers. The speaker suggests that the intensification of these events signifies we are approaching the end of this period.
2. Jesus' prophecy of the temple's destruction was fulfilled in 70 AD when the Roman army besieged Jerusalem, culminating in the temple's burning and the dismantling of its very stones. This event is significant because it marked a major historical fulfillment of Jesus' words, lending credence to his other prophecies about the future and the end times. It serves as a concrete example of the destruction Jesus foretold as part of the events leading up to the later stages of the "last days."
3. The sermon points to several forms of deception: individuals falsely claiming to be Christ, groups misrepresenting Christian doctrine (specifically mentioning Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses), and the "social gospel," which prioritizes societal betterment over individual salvation through Jesus. To guard against these deceptions, believers are urged to be watchful, to critically evaluate teachings against the core tenets of the Gospel, and to ensure that social actions are rooted in and point towards a relationship with Jesus Christ, rather than being seen as a path to salvation in themselves.
4. Jesus described wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, and famines as the "beginning of birth pains." This suggests that while these events are indicative of the period leading to the end times, they are not necessarily the final sign themselves. The believer's response should not be one of alarm or panic, but rather an understanding that these things "must happen." However, the increasing frequency and intensity of these disasters are seen as a sign that the end is approaching more rapidly.
5. The sermon states that believers will face various forms of distress, including being handed over to local councils, flogged, and brought before governors and kings because of their faith. It also highlights the tragic reality of betrayal within families and widespread hatred towards Christians. The encouragement offered is the promise of the Holy Spirit's help in speaking during trials and the assurance that those who stand firm to the end will be saved. The sermon also points to the alarming statistic of increasing Christian martyrdom in recent times as evidence of this ongoing distress.
6. The sermon emphasizes that the Gospel must be preached to all nations as a prerequisite for the end times. It suggests that technological advancements like the internet and smartphones, along with the efforts of organizations like Wycliffe Bible Translators, are playing a crucial role in fulfilling this prophecy by making the Gospel accessible to people in every language. The nearing completion of Bible translations into every language is seen as a significant sign that the return of Jesus is drawing closer.
7. The sermon acknowledges different views on when the rapture (the catching up of believers to meet the Lord) will occur in relation to the Great Tribulation (a period of intense suffering). Some believe it will happen before, others in the middle, and some at the end. While acknowledging verses that suggest believers will be kept from God's wrath, the speaker stresses that the exact timing should not be the primary focus. Instead, believers should concentrate on ensuring their own surrender to Jesus and actively sharing their faith with others.