



Small Group Guide:

[When the World Feels Like It Is Falling Apart || Pastor Mark Lee](#)

Based on Matthew 24:1-14

Overview

In this message, we explored Jesus' final sermon in the book of Matthew, known as the Olivet Discourse. Rather than using the end times to scare or confuse us, Jesus intended to prepare and steady his followers. This guide will help your group wrestle with what Jesus actually said, what it means for daily life, and where our trust ultimately belongs.

Key Takeaways

- Jesus described signs of the end times not to frighten his followers but to prepare them and give them a framework for understanding the world around them.
- The signs Jesus described, including wars, famines, earthquakes, false teachers, and persecution, should be evaluated for both increasing intensity and increasing frequency, like birth pains before delivery.
- The Bible is intentionally unclear about the exact timing of Jesus' return, which suggests that the most important question is not when he is coming but who we are trusting in while we wait.
- When the world feels like it is falling apart, it may actually be falling into place according to God's sovereign plan.
- The gospel will be proclaimed to every nation and people group before the end comes, which means global mission is directly connected to the return of Christ.

Discussion Questions

Getting Into the Text

1. Read Matthew 24:1-14 together as a group. What stands out to you most in Jesus' response to his disciples' questions? What surprises you, if anything?
2. The disciples asked Jesus two questions in verse 3: when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming? Jesus answered both questions without giving a specific date. Why do you think Jesus responded that way? What does that tell us about what he values most?
3. Jesus described the signs of the end times as "birth pains" in verse 8. What does that image communicate about the nature of these events? How does understanding them as birth pains change the way you might respond to troubling news?

Going Deeper

4. Pastor Mark made the observation that previous generations may have talked too much about the end times, while this generation tends not to talk about them at all. Which tendency do you think is more dangerous, and why?

5. Pastor Mark raised the idea that when things feel like they are falling apart, they may actually be falling into place. Do you find that idea comforting or frustrating? What would it take for you to genuinely believe it in a difficult moment?
6. In verse 36, Jesus says that no one knows the day or the hour of his return, not even the angels, and not even the Son in his humanity. How should that reality shape the way Christians engage with end times speculation, political predictions, or cultural fear?
7. Pastor Mark used the image of a child lost in a store who suddenly hears their father's voice. Even though nothing about the situation changed, everything changed because the child knew who was coming. How does knowing who is coming for us change the way we live in uncertain times?

Connecting to Life

8. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. What emotions does this passage stir in you? Does the promise of being "caught up" feel real and personal to you, or does it feel distant and abstract? What might help make it more real?
9. Matthew 24:14 says the gospel will be preached to the whole world before the end comes. How does this connect the mission of the church to the return of Christ? Does this change the way you think about evangelism or global missions?
10. Verse 13 says that the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. What does standing firm look like practically in your current season of life? What is making it hardest for you to stand firm right now?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to practice individually or as a group before your next meeting.

Monitor Without Obsessing Pay attention to the news this week, but rather than responding with fear or despair, practice asking the question: how does this remind me that God is sovereign and that Jesus is returning? Journal your observations.

Anchor in the Who Identify one area of your life where you are more focused on the "when" or the "why" than on the "who." Spend time in prayer this week surrendering that area to Christ and asking him to deepen your trust in his person rather than your understanding of his timing.

Invest in the Mission Since Matthew 24:14 connects the spread of the gospel to the return of Christ, take one concrete step this week toward global or local mission. This could mean praying for an unreached people group, giving toward a missions effort, or simply sharing your faith with someone in your life.

Read and Reflect Read Matthew 24:29-44 on your own this week. Write down any questions it raises for you and bring them to your next small group meeting.

Closing Prayer Focus

Close your time together by praying through these three areas:

- Pray for the courage to stand firm in a world that feels increasingly unstable.
- Pray for the global mission of the church and for unreached people groups who have not yet heard the name of Jesus.
- Pray for a deeper trust in who Jesus is rather than anxiety over when or how things will unfold.