

LUKE I Lessons for the Last Days Text: Luke 21:5–37

Seven Spiritual Principles For Every Generation

—Bill Turner

- 1. Think Tank Study—‘The Twelve Things Most Likely to Destroy the World’ [SLIDE]**
 - a. If you want to understand HISTORY—If you want to understand The FUTURE...
 - b. How the WORLD BEGAN—How the WORLD WILL END...
 - c. If you want to understand YOURSELF—How to be saved... If there’s Life after Death it is all in the Bible.
 - 2. Jesus is eternal—and His Words are eternal...**
 - a. so when He speaks He can cover past, present and future in the same statement...
 - 3. Mt 24, Lk 21, Mk 13 all record a profound prophesy of Christ given on Mt of Olives overlooking the city of Jerusalem—less than a week before Jesus is crucified.**
 - a. Called the Olivet Discourse: the most misunderstood, most debated chapter of the gospels
- 1) The Destruction of Jerusalem a.d.70 2) The Final Return of Christ 3) The Need to Be Ready
- Some of this chapter applies specifically to them in Jerusalem and the rest is universal
 - But we can learn life lessons from everything Jesus teaches—in any generation...
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I. Seven Spiritual Principles for Every Generation

(1) DON'T BE DECEIVED (v.5–8)

- 1. Jesus spoke the most profound prophesy with an astonishing detail...**
 - a) The Temple in Jerusalem would be so utterly destroyed that not one stone would be left upon another that was not thrown down.
 - b) The Temple area covered an area the size of 35 Football Fields
 - c) Made of Massive Stone blocks—size of Railroad cars—200 tons in weight!
 - d) The Jewish historian Josephus was there when it happened in A.D. 70.
 - e) He wrote that there was so much gold that covered the temple that when it burned the gold ran into the crevasses between the Stone Blocks
 - f) The order was given to tear it all down and they scraped the gold out
- 2. But Then Jesus Said DO NOT BE DECEIVED—WHY?**

Because He Knew What They Didn't Know.

 - a) They Thought it Would Be The End of the World—Jesus Knew the End Was Not Yet
 - b) Jesus will explain that When The End of The World Happens—Everyone will know!
 - c) So Don't Be Deceived by False Teachers and False Messiah's...Who would use this catastrophic event for their own Agenda—The End is Not Yet.
- 3. The Same Thing Happens Today—Every Major News Event is used to promote Someones' Narrative or Agenda...**
 - a) There will always be storms of life and people to take advantage of them
 - b) There will always be Emergencies—and those who want emergency powers
 - c) There will always be unrest—and those false teachers to promote them

Jesus is saying Do Not Be Deceived!

(2) DON'T BE AFRAID (v.9–11)

1. Why would Jesus say—Do Not Be Terrified?

- a) Because every generation experiences wars & rumors of wars—This is not the End
- b) Historian Will Durant wrote: “war is one of the constants of history, and has not diminished with civilization and democracy. In the last 3,421 years of recorded history only 268 years have seen no war.”¹
- c) Each Generation Has it's Wars, Earthquakes, Famines, Plagues and Pandemics...
- d) Even Celestial Events Like Solar Flares, Comets, Meteor Strikes...

→ Do you remember the **Heavens Gate Cult**? they thought the **Hale-Bopp Comet** signaled the end of the world and they all committed suicide

2. Jesus is Saying—Don't Be Deceived by Men... and Don't Be Afraid of these Events...

- a) Don't Be Tossed To and Fro By Every Trending Doctrine or End-Time Theory...
*“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love
and of a sound mind.” (2 Tim 1:7)*

(3) DON'T GIVE UP (v.12–19)

*“The more a society drifts from the truth, the more they will hate those who speak it.”
—George Orwell*

1. A Great Persecution was waged against Christians in the first century

- a) Jews were dragging Christians into courts charging them with blasphemy to imprison them and put them to death
- b) Romans were dragging Christians to courts for refusing to worship the Caesar and the State—sending them to Prison or to the Lions in the Colosseum
- c) Neighbors or Business Competitors would turn Christians in to get rid of them and take their land or businesses.

2. But Christians Were NOT To Use This for Revenge—but for a Testimony...

- a) Paul had persecuted Christians dragging them to prison...
and he instigated the killing of the first Christian martyr Stephen.
- b) But Stephen Stood Boldly and gave a Defense: Not of Himself—but of the Gospel
[I think That was the beginning of the end of Paul as a pharisee...]
- c) And When Paul left Judaism and became a Christian and stood before King Agrippa
—He did Not Defend Himself—He Defended the Gospel!

The Gospel is the only thing that can save your soul for Eternity!

3. Hardships Can Make You BITTER or Make You BETTER...

- a) Don't Give Up and Don't Sell Out to the Shallow Praise of Men
- b) What you do in Life—Echoes Into Eternity
- c) Be faithful unto death and He will give you the crown of Life (**Rev. 2:10**)

¹ Will Duran, The Lessons of History, 1968, p.81

(4) ALWAYS HEED THE WARNINGS OF CHRIST (v.20–24)

1. This prophecy came to pass exactly as Jesus said it would...

when Jerusalem was Destroyed by the Roman Army in A.D. 70

- a) It was such a devastating destruction that it was a shock to the conscience
- b) The Jewish Historian Josephus Was There and he wrote of the destruction...
- c) Over 1 million people died — and 97,000 captives were taken to work as slaves

“I cannot but think that it was because God had doomed this city to destruction, as a polluted city, and was resolved to purge his sanctuary by fire, that he cut off these its great defenders...”²

2. Those That Heeded the Warnings from Christ Left the City and Survived

- a) NERO was Emperor / General VESPASIAN Led the Attack and Surrounded the City
- b) But then NERO Committed Suicide, the Next Emperor was Assassinated and the Next Overthrown...
- c) So VESPASIAN Led His Army Back to Rome / Restored Order & Became Emperor
- d) Then Sent His Son TITUS back to Jerusalem to Finish the Job. [Arch of Titus, Rome]
- e) During That Time Was a Grace Period—a Second Chance for anyone to leave...
- f) Josephus records that the Christians left the City and were safe
- g) Eusebius records that not a single Christian was killed during the destruction because they Heeded the Warning of Christ and Got Out!

But many stayed... People swollen from starvation “roamed like phantoms through the market-places and collapsed wherever their doom overtook them.” But there was no lamenting or wailing, because famine had strangled their emotions. Jerusalem could not bury all the bodies, so they were flung over the wall.

“for those who were just going to die looked upon those who were gone to their rest before them with dry eyes and open mouths. A deep silence, also, and a kind of deadly night had seized upon the city ... And every one of them died with their eyes fixed upon the Temple’ (Josephus, The Jewish Wars, 5:12:3). [Cited by Barclay, Matthew; and R. Kent Hughes, Luke Vol.2]

3. Those Who Heed the warnings of Christ will be saved (Matt 24:16–28 ESV)

- a) He is instructing those in Jerusalem and the surrounding areas to get out
- b) Don’t Be Deceived By Fake News or False Messiah’s or False Prophets!
- c) When the End Comes Everyone Will Know! —From the East to the West!

(5) ALWAYS BE READY FOR THE FINAL RETURN OF CHRIST (v.25–28)

1. Jesus switches from the Destruction of Jerusalem—to the End of World...

- a) But NOT to COMPARE the Two Events—But to CONTRAST them...

2. When the Final Return of Christ Happens—Everyone will know!

- a) NO Emergency alert on your phone—All the World Will See! (Lk 17:22–24)

3. But The End Will Come Like a Thief in the Night... (Matthew 24:29–31)

- a) This is not some local event just pertaining to Jerusalem...
- b) ALL the nations of earth will mourn...
- c) ALL will see Him return in the Clouds with Power and great glory
- d) He will send His Angels with the Sound of a Trumpet
- e) He Will Gather His People

² Josephus, The Jewish Wars VI, 2,1; VI,4,5; IV,5,3

4. This is Why Jesus Warns Us To Be Ready!

- a) Matt 24:36:⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.
- b) History is not just a random series of incomprehensible events—
History is moving toward an Apex Event—The Final Return of Christ—
—He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and End!

(6) TRUST THE ETERNAL WORD OF GOD—NOT THE ERRATIC OPINIONS OF MEN (v.29–33)

1. Jesus is eternal—so His words are eternal...

- a) He Knows the End from the Beginning...
- b) so When He Speaks—His Words Cross Eons of Time—Past, Present and Future.

2. **“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away”**

- a) “His words have passed into law, they have passed into doctrines, they have passed into proverbs, they have passed into consolations, but they have never ‘passed away.’ What human teacher ever dared to claim an eternity for his words?”³

3. God’s word is the only thing certain—in an uncertain world

- a) Those who listened and obeyed were saved from the destruction

(7) STAY FOCUSED (v.34–36)

1. In the Military they call it — ‘Mission Creep’.

- a) When the mission has slogged on for so long, we forget what the mission was for
- b) Over time people get distracted and forget what is important...

2. It is Easy to Become distracted—Because we live in an information age

- a) Like a DDOS Attack on a Computer Server—it is bombarded with so many hits of information it finally cripples the server and brings it to it’s knees
- b) We are Bombarded with constant information everyday...

3. Watch and Be Ready... Be Sober and Alert...

Keep Your Mind Clear and in the Right Place

CONCLUSION:

1. Don’t Be Deceived and Don’t Let the Darkness Overcome Your Heart (1 Peter 4:7-8a; 11b)

2. No one knows the time of the end... Not even the angels know...

3. The best way to be ready for that day is to be ready everyday (v.37) The last verse of this chapter is insightful...

Jesus spent His last days teaching the people in the Temple...

and spent His nights on the Mt of Olives under the stars with God.

He gained strength for the day from His quiet time with God

³ Maclean, G. F. Cambridge Bible for Schools, p.149, 1893.