

## **“A World Undone” – Pr Jim Sprenkle – Pentecost 23 November 16, 2025**

- I. **Luke 21:27-28** – “<sup>27</sup>And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup>Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”
- II. **Our hymn called “Christ Is the World’s Redeemer” says, “Then Christ the cross ascended, to save a world undone.”**
  - a. How we perceive the world influences how confident we are that the end times are near.
    - i. For example, in 2020, we had Covid, a difficult political transition, riots, wildfires... among a long list of other disasters and upheaval around the world... and everyone was pretty sure Jesus was on His way back any second because we perceived the world to be a dumpster fire!
    - ii. Today, we might not be completely at peace with how things are going, but I don’t hear about the end times from people as much.
  - b. I was talking with someone the other day and told them that being a practicing Christian in “a world undone” is hard.
    - i. One minute we are at peace and the world seems right... and the next minute things are unraveling on every side...
    - ii. One minute we are sort of comfortable in our lives, the next we just want to Jesus to come back and make everything new because it’s getting so bad.
    - iii. Obviously, you don’t have to be a Christian to see the contrast of war and peace, natural disasters and favorable conditions, disease and health... or suffering and healing.
  - c. However, being a Christian can make life even tougher.
    - i. We see the way things are going and it takes an emotional toll.
    - ii. Our convictions and beliefs about God’s Word clash with the world’s convictions and beliefs... and some people even want us dead because of our views about God and His will for humanity.
    - iii. Many Christians spend their time fretting and thinking about how the world has turned into such an ugly place.
      1. Not only that, but we know that Christ and the Word of God could be such a blessing to the people who reject them.
      2. Sometimes we feel totally helpless, like, “Is what I’m doing even making a difference?”
  - d. Jesus knows about these things right now... and He experienced them personally back in 1st century Jerusalem.

- i. He is talking to His followers, telling them that their lives are going to be really difficult as the next 30-40 years unfold.
- ii. And in 70AD, some 40 years after Jesus said these words, the temple was destroyed by the Romans.
- iii. Sure enough, the Romans completely overran Jerusalem and left the temple in ruins.
  - 1. When we went to the Holy Land, we took a picture with our group standing beside the temple wall where the Romans had thrown down all the stones – it was a visual reminder of Jesus' words that every stone would be thrown down.

III. **So, as Christians, what are we supposed to do in a world undone?**

- a. Maybe you call to mind a place in the Bible when someone realized that he was “undone”?
  - i. Isaiah was in the presence of God, and he said, “Woe is me! I am ruined,” or in the King James Version it says, “I am undone.” (Isa 6:5)
  - ii. The world is undone because it is sinful... broken... full of sickness and death... not only creation itself but all of humanity is undone – and unworthy to be in the presence of God.
  - iii. It's hard to imagine the evil that can come from the heart of man, as we create new ways to be even more evil than ever before.
- b. So, how do we keep strong in the faith, stay hopeful, and be a light in the darkness of a world undone?
  - i. One way is to keep the words of Jesus close to our hearts... that we are in the last times looking forward to His return.
  - ii. When He comes back, He is going to make everything right...
    - 1. He is going to resurrect and glorify the living and the dead... and He is going to come through on His promise to rescue and redeem His people.
    - 2. No matter how bad it gets out there, no matter how rebellious and broken the world is, it cannot stop God's plans.
- c. A long time ago in Jerusalem the world thought it had taken care of Jesus... and it looked pretty bad, didn't it?
  - i. The very worst in humanity showed itself as He was betrayed, arrested, ripped to shreds and nailed to a cross to die.
    - 1. Can you imagine the despair and hopelessness of Holy Saturday as the disciples sat in the darkness... in the shadow of the Messiah's death and burial?
    - 2. Now consider how that despair was overturned when Jesus rose from the dead in victory and broke through that darkness... “Christ the cross ascended, to save a world undone”... and rose to life to defeat sin, death, and satan for all of us.

3. He lives... He is living right now... and His Word remains living and active.

IV. **As challenging as it may be, we can live in confidence and faith.**

- a. Natural disasters, politics, pandemics, cancer, wars, crime – there is a lot out there to put fear in our hearts.
- b. But what does Jesus say about that in our text?
  - i. “You will be witnesses to them...” and “Not a hair on your head will perish.”
  - ii. Right now He tells you: You are Mine – I have redeemed you.
  - iii. That is true right now – and that is true forever!
  - iv. We can be 100% sure that God, in His providence, is bringing all things toward the fulfillment of His saving plans
- c. I don’t know about you, but every time I hear about another disaster, another big problem, whatever, I look with confidence to the Last Day.
  - i. I just know it is getting closer and closer to the end, and that God is in control.
    - 1. Back in Jesus’ day, the Jewish leadership probably thought they were pretty much in control, but what happened to them?
      - a. The Romans came to Jerusalem and took them away and destroyed the Temple.
    - 2. No doubt the Romans probably thought they were in control too!
      - a. If you hadn’t noticed, the Roman Empire has been gone for a very long time.
  - ii. God is running the show, not humankind... and everything is moving toward His end.

V. **We can confidently stand up** and look trouble right in the eye... knowing that we don’t have to fear.

- a. We don’t have to fear because we have Jesus Christ the victor over sin, death, and the devil on our side.
- b. What does He say? “Not a hair of your head will perish...”?
  - i. So, with confidence we may stand up, just as Jesus says – “straighten up and raise your heads”
- c. Consider that we deserve the exact opposite... what ruler or king gives instructions like that?
  - i. We deserve to hear “Fall flat on your face, and bow your head in shame!”... As we cry out... “Woe is me! I am undone!”
  - ii. No, Jesus tells us to lift up our heads right now to face the future with confidence... filled with faith that He has rescued us... that He won the battle for us... and we are His.

- d. Yes, the world's powers, and sin, and all kinds of things might try to shake our gaze, but we have our eyes fixed... our confidence rests in Jesus... from the beginning to the end...
- e. I truly pray and hope that you will walk away from here with a new perspective – one that looks at the world through confident eyes, knowing that God is in control.
- f. Remember and believe: Jesus is coming to redeem His people!! Amen.