

share the Gospel. It is your duty. If you love the Lord, let others see it in your life and hear it from your lips.

3. Take Heed to Keep Your **Devotion** (v.11-13)

a. Depend on the Lord during persecution

- 1) During persecution, we need a close walk with the Lord.
- 2) Jesus said the world will lead Christians away and deliver them up to authorities (v.11). It's already happening! Jesus added, "Don't premeditate what you will say." The Holy Spirit will give you the right words to say.
- 3) Unbelievers will hate you if you are a witnessing Christian.
 - a) Jesus said that brothers will turn on brothers, fathers will turn on sons, and children will turn on parents and have them put to death (v.12).
 - b) We live in dark days. Hatred for Christianity is increasing (v.13).

b. Stay true to the Lord to the end

- 1) Enduring such trials does **NOT** save one's soul, nor does remaining faithful to Christ to keep salvation. We are saved by faith in Christ and kept secure by His grace.
- 2) John Walvoord states, "This is not a reference to salvation from sin, but rather the deliverance of survivors at the end of the age."
- 3) Thomas Constable adds, "our ultimate salvation does not depend on enduring persecution faithfully but on God's faithfulness to His promises to keep us secure (2 Tim. 2:13; cf. John 10:27-28; Rom. 8:31-39; et al.)."

Conclusion: I believe we are in the last days! Christ could come back today. The tribulation could begin tomorrow. **Take heed** – consider carefully what Jesus said! **Take heed** to avoid deception. Don't be deceived by false Christs or by frightful signs. **Take heed** to fulfil your duty by maintaining your testimony and proclaiming the Gospel. **Take heed** to keep your devotion to Christ. Depend on the Lord during persecution and stay close to Him every day. Press on!

If you are not ready for Christ's return, now is the time to prepare. If Christ has not saved you, repent and believe on Him today. If you are not walking close to the Lord, confess and forsake your sin and begin.

Song: Lord, I'm Coming Home **253**

The Tribulation is Coming

11 March 2018 AM – Mark 13:1-13 – Mr17 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Mark 13, Matthew 24 and Luke 21 are parallel passages that record Jesus' answer to His disciples about the coming Tribulation. Taking the Bible literally, we believe the Futurist View which sees much of this section as yet future.

However, futurists do not all agree on the interpretation of verses 5-13 which we will be examining this morning. Some, like Thomas Ice, believe these verses describe the first half of the Tribulation depicted in Revelation 6:1-8. Others like John Walvoord believe they describe the Church age prior to the Tribulation.

Because the first half of the 7-year Tribulation will be relatively peaceful until the Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel after 3 ½ years, I tend to agree with Walvoord that our text today describes the days before the Tribulation. Both of these Futurist persuasions come out the same in the end.

We find the words "**take heed**" four times in this chapter. They come from the Greek word "blepo" which means to see, to discern; to turn the thoughts or direct the mind to a thing, to consider, contemplate, to look at, to weigh carefully, examine. **Thus, this command means that we must consider carefully Jesus' words.**

Transition: In Mark 13:5-13, Jesus told His disciples that they must take heed to three things. These commands also apply to us.

1. Take Heed to Avoid **Deception** (v.5-8)

Jesus identified two things that will cause deception

a. Many will claim to be Christ

- 1) We are seeing this happen in our world today.
- 2) Here are a **few** of those who claim to be Christ today.
 - a) Inri Cristo (Brazil)
 - b) Moses Hlongwane (South Africa)
 - c) Vissarion (Siberia)
 - d) Jesus of Kitwe (Zambia)
 - e) Jesus Matayoshi, (Japan)
 - f) A.J. Miller (Australia)
 - g) Apollo Quiboloy (Philippians)

- h) Jose Luis de Jesus Miranda (FL, USA)
- i) Wayne Bent (NM, USA)
- j) Sergey Anatolyevitch Torop (Russia)
- 3) Jesus Himself is coming again, but His first appearance will be in the air at the Rapture (1Th 4:16-17).
- 4) He will not come all the way to earth until His Revelation at the end of the Tribulation (Re 1:7; 19:11-16).

b. Jesus gave signs that are like pre-birth pains

- 1) Note carefully the signs that Jesus mentioned (v.7-8).
- 2) It is true that similar events will take place during the Seal Judgments in the Tribulation, but what else did Jesus say? He said these are the *beginning of sorrows*.
 - a) This term literally means beginning of birthing pains. Every mother will testify that before childbirth there are birthing pains or contractions. For some mothers they are brief and not too painful. For many mothers they are long and miserably painful.
 - b) In other words, the signs Jesus listed are preparatory pains. They come before the Tribulation begins.
- 3) Are we seeing any such signs today? Yes! Wars, rumours of wars (threats from North Korea, China and Russia), nation against nation, earthquakes, famines, and troubles abound. Jesus could come today and the Tribulation could start tomorrow!

📖 *Take heed to avoid deception! Know your Bible well.*

2. Take Heed to Fulfil Your Duty (v.9-10)

Christians have two duties to fulfil

a. Maintain a good testimony

- 1) Jesus said, "*Take heed to yourselves*." Consider carefully yourself. The devil wants to ruin your life and your testimony.
- 2) Down through the ages, millions of Christians have stood before judges, religious leaders, rulers and kings because of their faith in Christ. Jesus said it would happen. It is still happening today.
 - a) Religious liberties are eroding.
 - b) Christians are being condemned for obeying the

Bible.

- c) Children are being taken from Christian parents who rear their children according to the Bible.
- d) According to the religious magazine ***Christianity Today***, the top 10 nations where it is most dangerous and difficult to practice the Christian faith are: North Korea, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, and Eritrea.
- e) Another source claims that **every month** 255 Christians are killed, 104 are abducted, 160 are detained or imprisoned and 66 churches are attacked.
- f) I realize that these statistics may include some who are not truly biblical Christians, but persecution today is real.
- 3) Jesus said we must take **heed to maintain a good testimony before persecutors**. It is our duty! Is your faith and relationship with Christ worth dying for? Does your testimony at work, at school, before your neighbours, in public and before your children glorify Christ as it should?

b. Proclaim the gospel to all

- 1) When the Lord returned to heaven, He commanded that His followers share the Good News. (Mark 16:15) "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*." That is our Christian duty!
- 2) Here are some ways you can share the Gospel.
 - a) Talk openly about Christ in everyday conversations. Study your Bible and pray daily so that you are overflowing with genuine things to talk about.
 - b) Pass out tracts to sales people, clerks, people you meet, and to delivery people.
 - c) Let me teach you how to knock on doors and pass out tracts. It is not popular, but it does get the Gospel out.
 - d) If you use Facebook or other such media, include links to our church website.
- 3) Jesus said, "*Take heed to yourself*". I cannot force you to