

The title for today's message is: **"The End Is Near**

Jesus said: **"At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen

Today, we're going to learn about true terror and great joy, you know, bad news, and good news.

For example: You're lost and all alone in the forest at night, and you hear something coming from the woods around you.

You don't know what it is and you can't see anything because it's very dark. Again you hear the noise, so you walk toward the noise and as you do, terror of the unknown sets in.

That's right you're frightened, because you know it could be a bear or something worse. There's true terror in the dark.

Now the opposite is true also. Same situation, you hear the noise but this time you hear someone calling out your name, great joy comes to your heart, you have been found and saved.

Such descriptions describe our Lord's return on the Last Day. But sadly, for many when the Lord returns, there will only be true terror.

Yes my friends, the end is near! Now, Mark begins our text for today saying: **"But in those days, following that distress."**

Meaning in the last days, after seeing and distressing over the signs that He had just told His disciples about, that there will be a sign even greater than the others.

Jesus also tells them that even before this, their ministry and their preaching wouldn't be easy. That they too would be taken and beaten for it.

He said they were going to be called to task by different people. And that they would even be rejected by their own families.

And if that wasn't bad enough, He describes to His disciples, the upcoming destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

Jesus looks even beyond the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, when He says:...'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

And for the un-believer, this will strike terror in their hearts when they see such things happen, as they wonder what's going to happen next.

Jesus goes on to say: **"At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory."**

Jesus urged His disciples to look for these signs, and to realize that the Son of Man is going to return, and that He hasn't forsaken them.

Jesus then shows the disciples the signs that will be as clear as the changing of the seasons.

Jesus said: **"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near."**

The disciples knew the signs of the season very well, they knew when the trees would bud, summer was near, and when the leaves fall, winter is near.

Jesus continues: **"Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door."**

Now, these words were spoken over 2,000 years ago; so today were much, much closer to the day of our Lord's return.

And here in today's text, were told just how Jesus is going to return in order that we who believe may be prepared.

Now, the day and hour we don't know, non the less, were told to be prepared. Luke tells us in chapter 21: **"Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."**

And Jesus said in Matthew chapter 24: **"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come"**

If we see any signs at all, this one is the most significant. That when the Gospel is finally preached to all mankind, all nations.

We then will know the end time is very near. And there's no doubt, the signs have increased over the years. But we must not be fooled by these signs.

And remember, because you and I have held steadfast to the Word of God, we will certainly face great joy.

Even though, just as the disciples, we too will face very stressful times. For the disciples, it was Jesus going to Jerusalem to die.

This was very hard for the disciples, because they knew Jesus had not committed any crime that would cause Him to be crucified.

But, Jesus told His disciples that they would soon see this happen with their own eyes.

Then the good news, Jesus told His disciples: **"At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory."**

Now, this is something the disciples will be able to see, that is, when Jesus ascends into heaven in His glory after His resurrection.

He also made it clear that His ascension wasn't the end, that the end time is yet to come.

Jesus tells the disciples and you and I, that He will return with great glory to judge us, and to take those who believe to heaven with Him for eternity.

Jesus said: **"And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens."**

What a joyous picture of that day, to have all the believers all together in one place before the Judge, the Son of Man.

Jesus went on to say: **"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."**

Here Jesus was expressing just how powerful and lasting His Word is, that it will out last even heaven and the earth.

Now Jesus gives yet another promise. He said: **"I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened."**

You know, today, some people take this verse and say there's a mistake, because they say the generation of the disciples, is certainly gone.

Yet, these things haven't happened, therefore Jesus made a mistake. But, the Lord doesn't make mistakes, or allow errors in the Bible.

So what does all this mean to us today? It, means you and I are going to face Judgment Day, because we live in a world that is filled with sin.

No one will escape Judgment Day. And on that day there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many there will be in true terror.

But there will be great joy and rejoicing for those who have held fast to the Word of God.

That's all of God's Word, not just a few parts of it, or even most of it, but all of it. And equally important, is to believe in it.

Sadly, were all guilty of standing steadfast in only most of God's Word. We seem to find it easy to ignore those words, that might condemn us.

We act as though some parts of scripture were never written, or if we admit they have been written, we believe they were written for someone else.

No matter what the world tries to teach, and no matter what we ignore or try to explain away, nothing and no one can change the truths of God's Word.

Why? As the writer of the Hebrews said in chapter 4: **"for the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart"**.

The Bible isn't just an old, dusty book. No! The Bible, is living and active and able to change our hearts, from hearts of stone to hearts of flesh.

So, when we hear Jesus say; that there will be some things in the world that will frighten and scare us, we can believe it.

And when Jesus says that these things in the world will cause us much pain and stress, we can believe it.

Something else we can believe, and that is when Jesus tells us that we believers, have the Word of God on our side, yes, we can believe it.

Look, God's Word will defend us when we come face to face with Him on the day of judgment, as He lead us all the way into heaven.

This is what the Scriptures reminds us of, today and every day, that there's nothing new under the Son.

John wrote in 1 John chapter 5: **"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life"**.

What a blessing! What great joy! What an amazing miracle to no longer sit in the darkness, but to sit in God's light and know that heaven is our home.

Yes, Judgment Day is near. The Righteous Judge is near right at the door and He's ready to come through.

And those who didn't stay firm in the word, will see the skies turn to darkness, as they kneel down and beg for forgiveness, but it will be too late.

Were reminded of the words of Paul to the Philippians in chapter 4: **"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near"**.

He encourages all believers in Him, to be happy in this worldly life, because there are enough sad people in the world, who don't find any joy in living.

Remember, you and I as believers, are to rejoice in the Lord always. Because the Lord is at the door, the time is truly near.

Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.