

Eschatology, or the end of the world, is something that has always fascinated not just Christians but all of humanity. There's no end to the amount of movies and stories we tell of apocalypse and disaster. Much of the worry around the climate crisis has a kind of eschatological tone. And Christians are interested in the apocalypse as well. The book of Revelation is one that is most often requested to study. Because we want to get answers about what is going to happen at the end.

But we need to be sure that when we read, and when we study eschatology, we are asking the right questions. Because the question isn't just what is going to happen. The question is how are you going to live now because of what's going to happen. You see your eschatology should change how you live. And this is true of all theology. What we believe should affect how we act. And so this morning Jesus is going to finally finish the Olivet discourse. He is going to finish one of his last sermons that has had a lot about eschatology. And he's going to be talking about when he will come again. But what he wants his disciples to get and what we need to be sure that we get is that there should be changes in our lives based on Jesus's return. So this morning we are going to look at three ways that our life should change, because Jesus is coming.

Turn in your Bibles to Luke 21:25-38

**It's our first point is Keep your head up.**

First, we see in verse 25, **"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves,"**

There will be unbelievable things happening in heavens, and with the sun and with the moon.

And everything that is happening is going to lead to incredible distress in the nations.

We talked a little bit about this last week with the earthquakes in the famine in the terrors in the plagues.

Here Jesus points out that there is increased perplexity because of the sea in the waves.

The sea is always symbolic of what is unpredictable and uncontrollable. But here it seems that the sea is getting even more unpredictable.

In verse 26. **"people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world."**

We see that that people are beginning to faint with fear they're worried about what is coming.

They look at everything happening in the world, and it gives some incredible anxiety.

There's a lot of anxiety in our world today.

When people look at the seas and see the oceans tide is rising.

They worry about what that can mean for a country or for the world.

As the climate changes that has lead to incredible anxiety for many people.

It leads to fear about what it could mean.

Some of them really are terrified of what could happen in the world , if our world keeps behaving an unpredictable ways

Jesus very well could be talking about climate change.

I think it's a very real, possibly even likely possibility that Jesus was prophesied and talking about the change that we are now beginning to see the hints of.

Or the less comforting possibility is that what is coming is going to be even worse than what we think could be coming.

But the point is that what is happening in the world in our day today is gonna make us want to drop our heads and hang them in fear and anxiety.

The people are going to be afraid of what is coming because it seems like it's gonna be bad.

We also see verse 26 "**For the powers of the heavens will be shaken.**"

This does not mean Satan and the demonic realm are shaking the gates of heaven.

It does not mean that God's power and sovereign rule is under threat.

This is a common metaphor the prophets use.

Isaiah 11, Daniel 8, Haggai 2, and others use this language of God shaking the heavens.

It almost always refers to the nations on earth being overthrown.

Empires being destroyed.

That is what will happen on the earth.

Verse 27 is our hope

**"And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."**

It is our hope the moment when all seems lost that we will look up and see the son of man, Jesus Christ, coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

This seems to be a reference to Jesus's second coming.

I think this is referring to Jesus, full embodied, glorious, obvious, and public return.

That he will ride across the sky with the power to fix what's wrong.

It will be something that all people will be able to see not just those who are believers.

It will also be filled with glory it will be obvious will be bright and shining in the sky.

This does not sound like the rapture to me.

It does not sound like a secret coming and taking people.

This sounds like Jesus is coming in power and glory to establish His kingdom after a time of incredible suffering.

Jesus will come in a cloud in the heavens with the power to fix the heavens.

The Jesus will come in all of his glory in all of his wonder, and finally things will be able to be made right.

This is a reference to Daniel 7:13-14

**"and behold, with the clouds of heaven  
there came one like a son of man,  
and he came to the Ancient of Days  
and was presented before him.  
And to him was given dominion  
and glory and a kingdom,  
that all peoples, nations, and languages  
should serve him;  
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
which shall not pass away,  
and his kingdom one  
that shall not be destroyed.**

That is what it will be like when Jesus comes.

What a beautiful day it will be.

In Jesus tells us about this, so that inverse 28

**"Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise  
your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."**

When we see these things start to take place.

When we see the end beginning.

When you start to see the last days coming and being fulfilled.

When you turn on the news and see that something terrible is predicted to happen in the climate .

When you turn on the news and you see that World War III has broken out.

When you turn on the news and whatever it is that you could imagine is coming has come.

That is when Jesus commands us to straighten up and raise our heads .

It is those moments when he seems lost.

It's that those moments when things are ended out.

It's in those moments when you are afraid.

That is when Jesus says to stand up straight and to look.

He says to stand up, straight, means, don't slump over in fear.

I had a wrestling coach that drove me nuts.  
He hated when we were tired and we would bend over and put our hands on our knees.  
He thought it was a sign of weakness, so he always yelled at us to stand up straight.  
I hated it then and thought it was dumb.  
I especially thought so after I learned it actually helps you breathe better.

That is not what Jesus is doing here.  
He is not saying to stand up straight and pretend that it is going to be fine.  
He is not telling you to stop acting like this isn't falling apart.

What he is telling you that you don't have to fall down because you can't believe it.

You don't have to bend over because you feel like you're gonna die in your own pain.

He says to straighten up and look up the rest of the verse.

**"because your redemption is drawing near."**

He says that you can stand up straight because if you look, you will see the cloud coming.

This is what we are to do.

We are to stay straight.

Looking forward to our redemption.

Because we have a hope that even in the darkest of nights Jesus is coming.

Do you look forward to your redemption?

I mean, if you've put your faith in Jesus, then you have already received it.

We have been saved and forgiven of all of our sins, both past present and future.

We are now new creations when we die we will get to be with Christ.

But there's also a sense in which scripture talks about our salvation is being in the future.

It is talking about the final realization of it.

When Jesus has no longer something that you get to look forward to, but someone you get to experience being with.

When eternal life is not something that you get to experience now spiritually, but you get to experience it physically.

When it is the full consummation of everything that Jesus promised to do.

When salvation is no longer something in the future but it is something present now.

That is what he means when he says, look forward to the drawing near.

In Jesus begins by telling them a parable. Still in them short story to give them an illustration of what it means to be ready.

**29 And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30 As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near."**

When the fig tree gets its leaves, it's almost summertime.

I love the season changing.

I love seeing the leaves come in the spring and change colors in the fall.

Jesus uses this as an example.

Verse 31, **"So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near."**

The leaves change to tell us the seasons change,

The world falling apart is a sign God's Kingdom is near.

When Jerusalem gets surrounded by an army,

they should know what Jesus said is coming.

The seas are roaring.

When people are fainting and worrying about the future that is to come.

These kind of sign should not lead to anxiety for followers of Jesus.

They should be a sign to us just like the leaves changing their color.

Our redemption is near.

This should enable us to lift our eyes to him.

It should help us to keep our heads up.

We don't hang our heads in worry about what's happening we look up because we see what is happening in the leading to Jesus.

Then Jesus has something pretty strange,

Verse 32, **Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.**

This generation won't die until these things place.

So how we understand that?

There are a few different different options and good Christian people who hold orthodox theology can disagree here.

It could mean all of this will be fulfilled in the first century before the disciples die.

This generation could refer to the church age.

This generation could refer to Jerusalem falling now but the rest being fulfilled later.

There is also like 12 other views that I'm not gonna go into all of them.

The point is that we don't fully know what Jesus means here.

And so would I like to do and what I recommend is when you don't understand what something means in scripture, go to the next thing that you do understand and then work backwards

Because of the next verse, we see that Jesus promises.

**Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.**

He's declaring that all of these eschatological things will happen.

God will always keep his promises.

That his words are true.

That his words reflect reality.

What Jesus says about the future is a guarantee.  
So Jesus is declaring that everything that he has said is going to come to pass.

If that is true, then what he says about this generation is at least going to mean that this generation will see and understand what Jesus said is true. And I think that is true whether this generation means Jesus' 12 disciples, the generation after him, or our generation here today.

Every single one of those generations is going to see and has the opportunity to see that Jesus will keep his word.

And he keeps his word.

We can keep our heads up.

No matter how bad things we can keep our heads up, trusting not on our own interpretation of eschatology.

Not on our own strength, but trusting in Jesus.

Whose words never fade and whose redemption is coming.

And because we know he is coming, we can hold our heads high

Point 2: **Watch your weight (v. 34-35).**

No, I don't mean your physical weight.

I don't mean that we need to stay in shape or go on diets.

But I do mean and what Jesus makes is that we need to watch what weighs our hearts down.

We need to be weary of the things that keeps us from being able to follow Jesus.

Because these weights keep us from being ready when the day comes.

Verse 34, **"But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap."**

Jesus tells us to watch ourselves.

We are to keep a close watch, and a close eye on our hearts.

We are to be watching this that our hearts are not weighed down.



And what is it Jesus says weighs down our hearts?

It is the cares of this life.

It is living in a careless way.

It is living as if the end is not coming.

It is living as if Jesus is not really God.

It is living as if Jesus is not really going to come back to judge the living and the dead.

These are the things that hold us back from being able to follow Jesus.

There are many that this is true about.

There are many even who claim to be Christians.

Those who claim to follow Jesus.

But the way that they live is weighed down and distracted by everything else going around.

To be clear, Jesus is not calling for all of us to live in a monastic community.

Jesus isn't saying that we need to spend 100% of our time in prayer

He isn't saying don't get a job or don't plant flowers this year.

Or don't get really invested in how your grandkids are doing in their sports or in their activities.

What he is saying is, don't allow those things to weigh you down.

He is referring to the cares of this life.

And by the cares of this life, he means the things in this life that will not be in the next life or in the life to come.

There will be joy and flowers and family and community in the life to come.

But it won't be drunkenness and wickedness or sinfulness.

It is like the parable of the sower in Luke 8.

There are seeds that grow in the thorns.

But the cares and riches of life choke them and they can't produce fruit.

To be weighed down is to be consumed with the things of this life that don't please Jesus and that will not last.

Jesus tells us to not be weighed down.  
Otherwise we are going to be trapped by His return.  
We need to not be weighed down so that we are ready and prepared.  
So we are not embarrassed, and how Jesus finds us.  
Like a deer getting caught in a trap.

Jesus wants us to be ready for that day.  
To be living as if we expect Jesus to return.  
Our heads should be lifted up and looking forward to it, and not surprised  
when it finds us.  
The return of Jesus is not something that we stumble into, but something  
that we run towards.  
Don't be weighed down by it means that we should try to live today as if  
we expect that day to come.

And we should be living in a way that honors Jesus.  
We should be living in a way that proclaims the gospel.  
We should be living in a way that lives out with the scriptures call us too.

But Christian don't do that.  
There are many who might call themselves Christians or call themselves  
followers of Jesus, but they are very weighed with the world.

Those who are weighed down by politics and constantly consume it.  
And every negative new story.  
Every candidate that loses or says or does something terrible.  
Or every next law that passes is the apocalypse,  
And it sends them to spiral of anger and hate.  
Because their hearts are weighed down by the cares of this life.

This is in contrast to the person who is engaged in politics, and read all the  
same things, but does so out of worship and devotion, to Jesus.  
Out of pursuit of righteousness injustice.  
And they do so prayerfully in worship.

And every time, and instead of it destroying them when negative things happen, they trust that God is in control.  
Because they're not weighed down by the cares of this life.

You can also think of someone who is weighed down by social media or consumerism.

Their every moment is spent chasing their next hit of dopamine.

Or longing to be entertained every second.

Always looking for another show to binge.

Another book to read.

Another new experience to have.

And yet no matter how much they get it doesn't fill their hearts.

Because their heart is weighed down with the cares of this life.

Compared to somebody who enjoys new things seeks entertainment, not their own good, but out of worship to God.

And who doesn't let the cares of this life keep them from serving the people in front of them or for looking out for others.

Also pictured somebody who is weighed down with the cares of riches.

They are constantly worrying and thinking about money.

How can they get more money.

How can they protect the money that they do have.

How can they squeeze every dollar for all that it is worth.

And no matter how much they get it's never enough.

It never satisfies.

And it never makes them feel safe enough.

Because their hearts are weighed down.

Compare that to the individual who gives their riches away.

Who is thankful for what God provides and who stewards it not for themselves but for the kingdom of God, and for the poor among them.

This is what I mean when I say weighed down.

Those are not the only things that can weigh us down there many more. Each of us need to examine our own hearts to see if they are weighed down

You see how often some of these are good things that hold us back we don't consume them rightly.

We can let these things be weights on our ankles that keep us from being able to walk after Jesus.

Or these can be things that we walk with Jesus and worship him with.

We have to examine to see if there are weights or not.

Because verse 35, **"For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth."**

Everyone is going to face Jesus is return .

Even though we are not Christians.

One day, every day will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is the only God.

No matter what religion they followed on earth.

No matter how strident an atheist that they were

One day everyone will have to acknowledge Jesus.

One day, all of us will have to stand his throne and judgment.

And so because that day is coming, live like it now.

### **Point 3: Stay prayerfully awake**

We need to stay prayerfully awake.

This is kind of on the other side of which Jesus just said.

Instead of being drunk on the sins in the cares of this world,  
we need to stay sober.

We need to keep our wits.

We need to pay attention.

And the way that we can do that is through prayer.

We stay awake through prayer because prayers admitting that you can't do it on your own.

One of the prerequisites of praying is you have to stop trying to do something and you could ask Jesus to help you.

With young children, there's a lot of times in my house where they're getting very frustrated.

Because they're trying to do things on their own and they can't.

So the tears come in the anger comes and the yelling comes and soon we have a full meltdown.

And often times I come and say, "you don't have to do it this way."

If you would just ask me, I will help you.

But you have to ask.

Sometimes that's how God is with us too.

We do things on our own.

We make a mess so we get in trouble.

And we find ourselves in a big blubbering mess.

And God is just waiting there saying hey, I can help if you ask.

We need to pray we need to ask.

Specifically, we should be praying that God gives us strength to escape what is to come.

There's a lot of things that are to come eschatologically.

Jesus has painted a picture of a lot of terrible things that will befall the world.

And what he tells us to do is to pray that God will help us.

To pray that God will give us the strength that we will need to get through it.

Not that we have to make our own plans.

Not that we have to be strong enough to endure it.

Not that we will have faith and not be filled with anxiety.

But that God will give us the strength so that we can escape.

And I think this is true not just about that whenever that will be,  
but that's also true for us.

There will be things that we will need to escape.  
It's a we should pray for strength.

We also were to pray that we have the strength to stand before the son of man .

Because when Jesus returns, and all of his power and all of his glory.

When God stops, holding back his hand.

When God steps out from behind the curtain to let us see him in his fullness.

Everyone will fall on their face.

When God opens up the book of our lives, and starts reading.

When God starts going through the list of all the things that you have ever done.

And some of us have done some things.

When God starts going through the list of everything that we have sent the things under your breath.

Even the things that as soon as you said,  
you immediately, then said oh, I didn't mean that.

God will read all of those.

And God reads all things that you have ever thought.

All those fleeting lusts and angry thoughts.

God will read all of those.

Most people, if any random person opened up a book that had half of those things we would all want to melt on the floor.

But God tells us to pray for the strength to stand on that day.

And you're gonna have to pray for strength.

Because there's only one way you'll be able to stand and that's the gospel .

The way to stand will not be a kind of brazen arrogance that says I don't regret anything that I've done you can't tell me I'm wrong God.

The only way to stand and stand tall is not because of what you have done.

It's not to say oh God, would you turn to page 23 I want you to see what I did on that mission strip.

Oh, God if you turn to page 68 you're gonna see how much money I gave away to others.

Oh God, if you turn to page 413 you're gonna see all that time I spent volunteering with a nonprofit even though nobody saw.

The way you'll be able to stand I know it says that I have done  
but if you flip to the beginning you will see what Jesus has done.

Because our hope is not in what we have accomplished.

Our hope is not on the good that we have done.

Our hope is what Jesus has done on our behalf.

Our hope is that Jesus died in our place.

Our hope is that the blood of Jesus wipes all of those pages out, so they are blank.

Our hope is that Jesus has already forgiven all of our sins.

Our hope is that we can stand on that day, because Jesus will be standing beside us.

Our hope is on that day before Jesus, he will not have a face of disappointment, but that he will have a smile, and be happy to see us.

And we need to pray for the strength on that day.

If you are not a Christian.

If you are not a follower of Jesus, I invite you to pray.

I invite you to pray and ask him to give you strength.

I invite you to embrace the message of Jesus.

Invite you to embrace the idea that you need saving.

That you cannot do it on your own.

That you are broken and a sinner, but that Jesus loves you and Jesus cares for you and Jesus died to save you.

To accept the eternal life in the gift that Jesus offers you.

Pray like a child and ask Jesus for help and salvation.

Because He will give it to you.  
And if you do that, then you can stand. And Jesus will embrace you and welcome you into eternal life.

If you are already a Christian, we need to pray to.  
Because you never outgrow the gospel.  
We were saved by grace.  
We grow not in our own strength, but by grace.  
And you will endure whatever is to come, by grace.  
So pray for more grace.  
Pray and ask for help.

When you study eschatology and what is to come.  
It should lead you to pray.  
It should lead you to pray and ask that Jesus would help you endure.  
That He would show us the grace we need.

Ultimately, our eschatology should change how we live.  
It should change the way that we watch the news because we keep our heads up.  
Should keep us from being down by the distractions in the cares of this life.  
It should lead us to praying for when those days come.  
Then whenever they find us, they will find us standing with Jesus.

I don't know everything about eschatology.  
One day I'll preach the revelation, but not yet.  
I don't know all the intricacies of what Jesus meant.  
And you probably don't either.  
But we do know is how much should changes.  
And what we do know is what he's asking us to live like today because Jesus is coming.  
My hope and prayer that our study of eschatology changes that we live not just what we know. And that it makes us hold onto the gospel tighter.