



THE END IS JUST THE BEGINNING

Mark 13:1-37 | Ryan Pfeiffer | March 5, 2023

FOCUS. How does Jesus teach us to STAND FIRM?

- By preparing us for the “Birth Pains”
- By anchoring us in a firm HOPE.

PART ONE. BIRTH PAINS. 7 Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 8 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earth-quakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

There are Braxton Hicks contractions and there are labor contractions.

- BH—> 16weeks. LC—> 40wks.
- False labor contractions... then there are active labor contractions.

What are these BIRTH PAINS- and the difference between BH vs ALC?

DECEPTION	v6	False Messiahs. False hopes/ security.
DISTRESS	v19	(thlipsis) tribulation. Wars, earthquakes, famines, political upheaval
DEATH	v12	Persecution. Polarization. Division. Family/society.
DESOLATION	v14	Acute: Human beings placing themselves on God’s throne over humanity

Abomination/ Desolates: Dan 9:27/ Titus 70AD/ 2 These 2:3 Man of Lawlessness...

(Q) Why does Jesus point to the the birth pains?

1. So we don’t become triumphalists...
2. So we don’t become alarmists... conspiracy junkies... signs hunters.
3. So we are not discouraged... God hasn’t failed / forgotten us.
4. So we see trials as preparation for God’s breakthrough.

1 Peter 4:12 Friends, when life gets really difficult, don’t jump to the conclusion that God isn’t on the job. Instead, be glad that you are in the very thick of what Christ experienced. This is a spiritual refining process, with glory just around the corner.

PART TWO: HOPE. 26 “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 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.

Jesus is holding up the **ONESIE**... I’M COMING BACK IN GLORY!!

Without HOPE... We can’t stand firm...

4 PROMISES Jesus makes so we can stand firm in HOPE. Today/Tomorrow.

Holy Spirit	v11	Guide us, Empower us, Embolden us
Jesus’ Return	v 26	Power and Glory. Public spectacle. For ALL TO SEE.
Gathered	v27	We will ALL be gathered together with Jesus in Glory.
God’s Word	v31	... my words will never pass away.

Q: How does this hope help us stand firm? By focusing us on OUR PURPOSE.

When we don't know our purpose... we are easily deceived/discouraged...

Life is about getting our best life now. THIS IS ALL THERE IS.
Life is about comfort and pleasure. TRIALS TEMPT US TO SELFISHNESS

Life is about heaven. RACK UP THE CREDIT CARDS... WHO CARES.
It's all gonna burn. SO IGNORE THE ENVIRONMENT.

ATHEISTS, ESCAPISTS, CULTISTS.

PURPOSE. v34 It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

We all have immediate purpose, tasks and roles.
But EVERY ONE OF US has ETERNAL PURPOSE.

Assigned tasks... what are those? Jesus is so simple and clear about it.
v10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.

Preach... Literally means to go public announcing goodness of Jesus.

It's about Living our lives WORD, DEED, PRAYER... Revealing Jesus to others.

ALL nations... everywhere God puts us... SEE it as our sphere of influence.

"In times of trials like this we see how God multiplies his grace. It's difficult. We cry a lot. But we see God at work... We have all this harvest. This is the season to sow." — Valeriy Antonyuk, Baptist Union President.

THE SIGNS of this future HOPE OF JESUS RETURN sinking in:

1. **Suffering:** Accept suffering as a part of our witness. Light in darkness.
2. **Future:** Hopefilled about the future. The best is yet to come! attitude.
3. **Victory:** Our victory is in Jesus' return and resurrection. NOT HERE.
4. **God's GIFTS:** Revealing God's GOODNESS.

"Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people... He set it all out before us in Christ, a long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in him, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth." Ephesians 1:7 MSG