



Introduction: Jesus has just predicted the destruction of the Temple (vv. 5–9), undermining Jewish identity and hope. When these two things are lost, people tend to be fearful and angry. But Jesus encourages us not to be deceived or terrified.

We live in a world deceived by identity and politics, two American idols. Because Americans' identities are so wrapped up in those two issues, they have become fearful and angry. This explains our present world. People are acting like mini terrorists, fighting the Holy Spirit and righteousness, a righteousness the church preaches and presents.

Because we preach and practice this righteousness, believers will endure hardship. Our love for Jesus guarantees it. But endurance in Him leads to abundant and eternal life.

PS – Spurgeon said we should read the Bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other hand. I guess we might substitute 'newspaper' for 'phone' or 'TV.' But I am amazed how the text is so relevant to our times. The Bible is explaining the present world to us and shaping our response to it.

First: A World in Turmoil (vv. 10–11)

Jesus prophesies that nations will rise against nations, and earthquakes, famines, pestilences, terrors, and signs from heaven will occur.

These are not unexpected events. They describe the brokenness of our fallen world under judgment.

Romans 8:22-23 - ...the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves...

Throughout Scripture and history, even in our own lives, we see this is the story of history until Christ returns.

APP: Don't be surprised by global chaos whether it's in governments or nature. It's a sign of our world's brokenness. Jesus isn't caught off guard, and neither should we be.

But Jesus doesn't leave it at the global or national level. He makes it personal to each one of us.

Second: The Church under Pressure (vv. 12–17)

Before the cosmic signs, disciples will face –

- a) Lay their hands on you
- b) Persecute you
- c) Delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons
- d) You will be brought before kings and governors

It is all "*for my name's sake*."

This happened to the disciples. (There won't be time to discuss all of these events in CGs or in the sermon).

- Acts 4 - After healing the lame man at the Temple gate, Peter and John are arrested by the priests, captain of the temple, and Sadducees. They are threatened and ordered not to speak in Jesus' name.
- Acts 5 - The high priest and Sadducees arrest the apostles for their preaching. An angel frees them from prison; they preach again and are rearrested. They are beaten and commanded not to preach Christ.
- Acts 6 - Stephen, one of the seven chosen in Acts 6, is accused of blasphemy. After his powerful sermon, he is stoned to death.
- Acts 8 - After Stephen's death, "a great persecution" arises. Saul (later Paul) ravages the church, dragging men and women to prison. Believers scatter through Judea and Samaria, spreading the gospel.
- Acts 12 - Herod Agrippa I kills James the son of Zebedee with the sword. Peter is arrested and imprisoned, awaiting execution, but an angel delivers him.

- Acts 13 - Jews stir up persecution against Paul and Barnabas. They are driven out of the region.
- Acts 14 - Jews and Gentiles plot to stone Paul and Barnabas. Later, Paul is actually stoned and left for dead, but he survives.
- Acts 16 - Paul and Silas are beaten and jailed after casting out a spirit from a slave girl. God sends an earthquake that frees them, leading to the jailer's conversion.
- Acts 17 - Jews stir up mobs in Thessalonica, forcing Paul and Silas to flee. In Berea, agitators follow and incite trouble.
- Acts 18 - Jews accuse Paul before Gallio, the Roman proconsul. Gallio dismisses the charges, but Sosthenes is beaten.
- Acts 19 - Silversmiths, fearing loss of profit from idol-making, incite a riot against Paul and his companions. The city erupts in confusion until the town clerk restores order.
- Acts 21 - Jews seize Paul in the Temple, accuse him of defiling it, and beat him. Roman soldiers rescue him. Later, a group of Jews bind themselves under oath to kill him, but the plot is exposed.
- Acts 24-26 - Paul is tried before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. He defends himself but remains imprisoned for years.
- Acts 28 - Paul is placed under house arrest in Rome. He continues to preach the gospel boldly and without hindrance.

e) V 13 – “This will be your opportunity to bear witness.”

Jesus regards persecution as part of his redemptive plan. With his cross as the model, it has to be.

In each of these occasions, the disciples used the opportunity to share the gospel.

ILL – Charlie Kirk was certainly a divisive figure, wasn't he? And yet, his funeral, though populated with political people, served as a platform for the gospel to 20 million cable

TV and online viewers. And his wife's forgiveness of her husband's assassin, publicly modeled after Jesus' forgiveness of his murderers, was a powerful moment.

ILL - In two weeks, (I'm not sure if in the service or in the lunch afterward), Bill Nelson will show you the video of a young man who was killed and whose body was dug up and paraded through the streets of an African city, all because he was a Christian.

APP: You and I are supposed to interpret life the same way. We are to view persecution as an opportunity to share the gospel, not to riot, destroy things and harm people.

IMP: The cross-shaped pattern of Jesus' own life will shape His followers too. Suffering is not accidental; it is part of discipleship.

The point of this part of the passage is that we are supposed to use persecution to share the gospel. But, behind that, in the way Luke frames his Gospel and Acts, is the understanding that persecution is normal for Christians.

We, as Americans, have not lived in a pluralistic world for long, but technology has created a world in which every religion and point of view can permeate any part of the world. The world in which we live isn't going away. It is only going to get more diverse and the persecution more intense. This is how bad it will get -

ff) v 16 – "You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death."

James and Stephen were martyred in Acts.

How did the apostles die?

1. Peter - Tradition: Crucified upside down in Rome under Nero (ca. AD 64–67).
2. Andrew (Peter's brother) – Tradition" Crucified on an X-shaped cross in Patras (Greece).
3. James the son of Zebedee - Biblical account: Executed by the sword under Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:2).
4. John (brother of James) - Tradition: Only apostle to die a natural death. Reportedly exiled to Patmos (Rev. 1:9), later died in Ephesus (ca. AD 90s).

5. Philip - Tradition: Martyred at Hierapolis in Phrygia (modern Turkey), either by stoning or crucifixion.
6. Bartholomew (Nathaniel) - Tradition: Martyred by flaying and beheading in Armenia.
7. Thomas ("Doubting Thomas") Tradition: Martyred near Madras, India, by spearing.
8. Matthew (Levi, the tax collector) - Tradition: Sword, burned or stoning in Ethiopia or Persia.
9. James the son of Alphaeus ("James the Less") - Tradition: Thrown from the Temple pinnacle in Jerusalem, then beaten to death.
10. Thaddaeus (Judas son of James, also called Lebbaeus) - Tradition: Martyred by arrows or clubbing in Syria or Persia.
11. Simon the Zealot - Tradition: Varied accounts — crucified in Persia, or sawn in half, or martyred in Britain (No consistent historical source).
12. Matthias (replacement for Judas, Acts 1:26) - Tradition: Stoned, then beheaded in Ethiopia or Cappadocia.
13. Judas Iscariot - Biblical account: Died by hanging (Matt. 27:5; Acts 1:18).

g) v 17 - *"You will be hated by all for my name's sake."*

Third: The Comfort and Promises of Jesus

a) Vs 14-15 – Jesus' comfort

I'm of the personal opinion this is Jesus' promise to the disciples, and while the Lord may give us words to say in a moment's notice, it does not mean, for us, that we should not know the gospel and be prepared to explain it.

1 Peter 3:15 - *...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect*

As Christians,

- Faith is not measured by escape from hardship but by perseverance through it.
- Hope means God preserves his people through suffering, not from it.
- Love is following Christ and modeling him

b) V 18 – “But not a hair of your head will perish”

I’ve described all the different ways Luke uses the word, ‘perish’ in his Gospel and Acts at the end of the sermon notes.

Here, it implies that you may be killed (v 16) but you will live forever.

The world can kill you. It can’t take your life.

This is how Jesus explained it to the woman at the well –

John 4:13-14 – Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

Fourth: A Word about Jesus

This entire passage points to Jesus who endured these things before us, saved us by his suffering and presents a model for us.

Hebrews 12:1c-2 - ...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Psalms 110:1 - The LORD [YHWH] says to my Lord [adoni]: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”

Conclusion:

We are to:

- 1 Expect opposition when living faithfully.
- 2 Remember: persecution is not a sign of God’s absence, but of His active presence in the world.
- 3 Use the moment to share the gospel.

- Jesus' words are both sobering and strengthening.
- The world will shake, believers will be pressured, but those who endure in faith enjoy abundant life while finding eternal life.

So -

- 1 Don't fear what Jesus has prophesied.
- 2 Don't shrink back from personal trials.
- 3 God has promised his salvation to us.
- 4 Fix your eyes on Christ who endured the cross for us.

Hebrews 12:1-2 — *"Let us run with endurance the race set before us, looking to Jesus..."*



CG Questions: Luke 21:10-19

Observation

(What does the text say?)

1. What kinds of events does Jesus list in verses 10–11?
2. According to verses 12–13, what will happen to the disciples before those events?
3. What does Jesus promise to give His disciples when they are brought before rulers (v. 15)?
4. In verse 16, who does Jesus say will betray them?
5. How does verse 18 contrast with verse 16? What tension do you notice?
6. What does Jesus say in verse 19 about endurance?

Interpretation

(What does the text mean?)

7. Why do you think Jesus warns of wars, earthquakes, and famines before talking about persecution?
8. What does Jesus mean by saying, "This will be your opportunity to bear witness" (v. 13)?
9. How should we understand the promise in verse 15 that no one can contradict their words—does it mean conversion, or simply the power of truth?
10. How can verse 16 ("some of you they will put to death") and verse 18 ("not a hair of your head will perish") both be true?
11. What does verse 19 teach about the relationship between endurance and salvation?

Correlation

(How does this fit with the rest of Scripture?)

12. How does Jesus' warning here compare with His promise in Matthew 10:28 ("Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul")?
13. What other passages in the New Testament emphasize endurance in faith (e.g., Hebrews 10:36, James 1:12, Revelation 2:10)?

14. How does the use of the Greek word *apollymi* ("perish") elsewhere in Luke help us understand its use in verse 18?
15. What Old Testament passages echo the idea that God preserves His people even in suffering (e.g., Psalm 91, Daniel 3)?

Application
(How does this text speak to our lives?)

16. What fears about the future feel most real to you when you hear about wars, disasters, or persecution?
17. How might we prepare ourselves spiritually so that trials become "an opportunity to bear witness" instead of a cause for panic?
18. What does it look like for you personally to trust God's promise that "not a hair of your head will perish"?
19. Where in your life right now are you facing trials for your faith?
20. What steps can you take to patiently endure this hardship?



Mon, Sept 29th. Read Lk 21:10-11, Jn 14:1 & 1 John 2:15-17. Jesus has forewarned us about an unsafe world. His words are not meant to scare you but to prepare and steady you. This fallen world will constantly disappoint you and often hurt you. And any heart trouble you experience can reveal your true love. Are you shaking when the world quakes? Use your heart trouble to make life adjustments. Trust Jesus and look forward to his coming kingdom more than you trust this present world to make you happy.

Tues, Sept. 30th. Read Lk 21:12-13 & Phil 2:12-16. In these verses, Jesus turns persecution upside down. Instead of being the end of your influence, opposition becomes the stage for a powerful testimony. The pressure of the world becomes a pulpit for the gospel. What the enemy intends for harm, God uses for witness. When persecuted, don't complain. That's a worldly response. Instead, thank God and use that darkness to share the gospel.

Wed, Oct 1st. Read Luke 21:14-15 & 2 Cor 12:1-10. Sometimes it's hard to know what to say, especially in the spur of the moment. But Jesus frees us from the anxiety of speaking in difficult times. He promises His Spirit will supply wisdom and words. Our task is faithfulness; speak the truth in love. His task is effectiveness. Witness is not about human eloquence but divine provision. Your weakness gives his grace the opportunity to shine. So, go ahead and confess your lack of wisdom. That's where he steps in with all you need. Trust him, not you. That's the place of strength and wisdom.

Thurs, Oct 2nd. Read Luke 21:16-17 & Ro 8:35-39. Living for Jesus may cost you relationships, your reputation, even your life. Yet the call to endure is not rooted in despair but love. His love is the only constant love in the world. No betrayal, no hurt, no loss can sever Christ's bond with you. Your feelings may be hurt, even your life may be killed but his love will sustain you. He can promise this because he endured it. The Father's love kept him and now his love will keep you. It is the love that conquers heartache and even death.

Fri, Oct 3rd. Read Luke 21:18-19 & James 1:12. One paradox of the Christian life is that some will die for Christ, yet they will be saved, in the truest and most eternal sense. Death cannot undo the eternal life given in Christ. It's a matter of seeing life and time clearly. This life will end somehow, sometime. But Jesus promises abundant and eternal life. The call is crystal clear. There is no room for equivocation. Endure in faith. The finish line is worth the pain of the race.

Note: The Greek word in 21:18 is ἀπόλλυμι (*apollymi*) and it can mean:

- *to destroy, ruin, kill*
- *to lose*
- *to perish, be lost*

In this verse, it is in the middle/passive future tense, meaning *"to perish, be destroyed, be lost."*

It appears Jesus is saying that even amid wars, persecutions, and cosmic upheaval, not even the smallest part of you (*not a hair*) will ultimately be destroyed or lost. Our physical lives may be taken but our eternal wellbeing is secured in Christ.

Here's how Luke uses the word in other places.

1. Luke 5:37 – *"And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed (ἀπολοῦνται)." Here it means ruined or destroyed.*
2. Luke 8:24 – *"And they went and woke him, saying, 'Master, Master, we are perishing (ἀπολλύμεθα)!' Here, it means physical death.*
3. Luke 9:24 – *"For whoever would save his life will lose it (ἀπολέσει), but whoever loses (ἀπολέσῃ) his life for my sake will save it." Here it speaks to something eternal*
4. Luke 11:51 – *"from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished (ἀπώλετο)..." Here it refers to physical death*
5. Luke 13:3, 5 – *"...unless you repent, you will all likewise perish (ἀπολῆσθε)." Here it speaks to eternal ruin or judgement.*

6. Luke 15:4, 6, 8, 24, 32 – In the parables of the lost sheep, coin, and son, ἀπόλλυμι is used repeatedly for what is lost (*apōlō/os*). Here, it's not so much destroyed but gone astray.
7. Luke 17:27, 29 – *"...the flood came and destroyed (ἀπώλεσεν) them all... fire and sulfur rained... and destroyed (ἀπώλεσεν) them all."* Here it refers to divine wrath.
8. Luke 19:10 – *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost (ἀπολωλός)."* Here it refers to someone estranged but not yet entirely lost or destroyed.
9. Luke 20:16 – *"He will come and destroy (ἀπολέσει) those tenants..."* I'm not sure what it means here.

Luke 21:18 – *"But not a hair of your head will perish (ἀπόληται)."* Here it implies ultimate perseverance.

Luke also wrote Acts and here's how he uses it there -

- Acts 5:37 – Judas of Galilee "perished (ἀπώλετο)" and his followers scattered.
- Acts 8:20 – Peter to Simon Magus: "May your silver perish (ἀπόλειαν) with you!"
- Acts 25:16 – Festus says it's not Roman custom to "give up (ἀπολέσθαι)" a man without a trial.

This is a summary of Luke's use of the word -

- Physical death / ruin – Luke 8:24; 11:51; 17:27, 29.
- Eternal judgment – Luke 13:3, 5; 20:16.
- Lost / estranged – Luke 15:4ff; 19:10.
- Promise of preservation – Luke 21:18

Luke appears to be versatile in his use of ἀπόλλυμι. When he uses it, it can mean die, be destroyed, be ruined, be lost, or be estranged. As is true with many words, the context determines whether it's everyday destruction, lostness in relationship, or final judgment. In our text today it means ultimate destruction. *The world can kill you. It can't take your life.*