



### Luke 19:41-44

#### *Christ's Sorrow Over the Lost*

41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,

42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

43 "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,

44 "and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

There are certain sayings that no Christian should take any pleasure in, one of them is *"I told you so."*

Ok you warned someone that if they followed a certain course of action, it wouldn't result in anything good, quite the opposite, it would produce heartache, or disaster, or loss. But they wouldn't listen, they went ahead with their plans and sure enough, you were right, and they were wrong. But at that point, how could a Christian possibly stand by and gloat? Sure, you were right, but shouldn't our response at that point be sorrow rather than smugness?

Often as a Pastor, people will tell you they are embarking on a course of action that is plainly unbiblical, or more often you they won't tell you, but you find out somehow. And now because you know, you have a duty to warn them, to tell them, "Friend, I know that walking down that particular road seems like a good idea, but at the end of it lies destruction." But then more often than not, they do it anyway, and at that point – you secretly hope you were somehow wrong. Because if you were right, and they do end up in trouble, all you feel is grief, not triumph at having your warning be vindicated.

Now it's bad enough when you warned someone not to subscribe to the Columbia House Record and Tape Club and they did, its worse when you warned someone not to marry an unbeliever, and they did, but the worst of all situations that a Shepherd of Men's souls can find himself in, is when he has diligently warned someone to flee to Christ from the wrath to come, and they have ignored those warnings. What true Pastor would take any satisfaction in saying *"See, I told you that if you didn't believe in Jesus you'd end up hell?"* Please believe me, as you see someone turning away from Christ and the Gospel, all you feel at that point is enormous sorrow.

Sorrow is clearly what Jesus felt as he came into sight of Jerusalem. It must have formed quite a contrast, you have Jesus riding into the city on the Donkey, surrounded by disciples and well-wishers all shouting "Hosanna" and "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!" and yet Jesus himself is weeping. Now there are only two places in the Gospels where Jesus is said to have wept, the first is when He stood before the tomb of his beloved friend Lazarus, and the other is here. That should tell you something about the depth of Christ's sorrow. [OWEN QUOTE?]

You might expect Jesus to be weeping for Himself. After all, as we noted last week, He knows that the crowds that are shouting "Hosanna!" today will be shouting "Crucify Him!" in a few days. Jesus also

knows that he will be betrayed, abandoned by his disciples, humiliated, beaten, scourged, and the crucified, lifted up as a sacrifice bearing the sins of many. He is riding in ultimately to have the Father's wrath poured out upon Him, in the place of the sinners who really deserved it.

But Jesus is not weeping over that ordeal to come, he is weeping because as he sees Jerusalem, he doesn't just see a thriving middle-eastern capital city,

He sees the place where the Father sent his messengers and prophets bearing good news, messages of mercy, only to have them spat upon and mistreated and killed again and again.

He sees the place where John the Baptist, the messenger who came to prepare the way for him, was imprisoned and then executed.

He sees the place where He the Prince of Peace, the Son of the Father, has preached the coming of the Kingdom.

He sees the city that will finally end up rejecting and then crucifying her Messiah.

But more than all that, he sees not the bustling city as it was that day, Jesus sees Jerusalem as it will be in 70 AD. He sees it at the end of the Jewish rebellion that is to come. He sees the Roman Legions encamped around it, the vast earth works that they will throw up to hem the Jews in so that the city itself becomes a death-trap for rebels and citizens alike, he hears the wailing of the starving, and then he sees what will happen when the walls are finally breached, when Titus and the Legions enter the city with orders from the Emperor to kill all the inhabitants except those who will be taken back to Rome to die in the Arena, and to raze the city to the ground.

And of course that all took place. Jerusalem was so totally destroyed, just as Jesus said, that all that was left when the siege and conquest were over from this metropolis was a remnant of the west wall – which is today known as "the wailing wall".

In fact, Christ's words are so prophetic at this point that many liberal bible expositors go to great lengths to say that Christ's prediction couldn't possibly have happened, that it must have been a later insertion – and here they get tied in knots because all of the textual evidence in Luke points to a writing date before the destruction of Jerusalem. But how can that be! It can't because if Jesus knew what was going to happen to Jerusalem, that would mean that he was much more than just a man, and they can't accept that.

But what Christ is seeing are only the temporal consequences of Jerusalem's rejection of Him. They reject the true Messiah when he was sent to them, because they just didn't want the salvation he came bringing with him, they didn't want peace with God and man. They wanted a warlike king who would establish a national kingdom here on earth, and eventually they got sick of waiting for him to appear and decided they would do it themselves, and so they rebelled against the Romans in 66 AD and started a blood bath that eventually took hundreds of thousands of lives.

***Luke 23:27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him.***

***28 But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.***

***29 "For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!'***

***30 "Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"'***

***31 "For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?"***

So what are the applications of this for us:

1) Jesus compassion for the Lost – and even the Reprobate:

There are some who maintain that Jesus only cares for the elect, and that he has nothing but hatred for the reprobate. Therefore they get very angry if you say that Jesus desires that all men should repent and believe and is sorrowful when they don't. But I believe that that is precisely the conclusion that one must draw from verses like these. Jesus weeps precisely because he knows that the vast majority of the citizens of Jerusalem will not believe in Him but will die in their sins. He has freely offered redemption to them, he has sent his disciples to preach, that the kingdom has come near even to cities that he knew they would end up shaking the dust off their shoes towards. While Christ knows full well that most will not come to Him, that does not mean that his heart is not filled with pity towards them. As JC Ryle, who was himself a great Reformed preacher put it:

***"We err greatly if we suppose that Christ cares for none but His own believing people. He cares for all. His heart is wide enough to take an interest in all mankind. His compassion extends to every man, woman, and child on earth. He has a love of 'general pity' for the man who is going on still in wickedness, as well as a love of 'special affection' for the sheep who hear His voice and follow Him. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Hardened sinners are fond of making excuses for their conduct. But they will never be able to say that Christ was not merciful, and was not ready to save."***

But Ryle goes on to apply this truth to the followers of Christ, to you and me:

***"We know but little of true Christianity, if we do not feel a deep concern about the souls of unconverted people. A lazy indifference about the spiritual state of others, may doubtless save us much trouble. To care nothing whether our neighbors are going to heaven or hell, is no doubt the way of the world. But a man of this spirit is very unlike David, who said, "rivers of waters run down my eyes, because men keep not your law." He is very unlike Paul, who said, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart for my brethren." (Psalm 119:136; Rom. 9:2.) Above all, he is very unlike Christ. If Christ felt tenderly about wicked people, the disciples of Christ ought to feel likewise." – J.C. Ryle***

So I would ask you who are Christ's disciples, do you have that same pity and compassion in your hearts towards the Lost? Or is there only indifference? Is there kind of an "O well" or worse. How do you react to the guy whose car is covered in offensive anti-Christian bumper stickers? How do you act towards your own relatives who have heard the gospel and rejected it and are living miserable lives, is there any tendency towards, "I told you so?"

Kids, as you grow up, try to remember this, the Bible ultimately divides people into two groups in this life and only two groups. And what are those groups, the short and the tall? The rich and the poor? The fat and the thin? No!

What do you call people who believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died for our Sins on the Cross and rose again from the Dead? ***Believers!***

What do you call people who don't believe that? ***Unbelievers!***

Those are the two groups. Now one of Jesus' apostles was a man named Thomas, and we call Him Doubting Thomas, because when the other Apostles told him that Jesus had risen from the grave, he said "unless I see him with my own eyes" I won't believe. He doubted. He didn't believe.

But then Jesus appeared to him, "Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

Now do you know people who don't believe that Jesus is God? Who have doubts? Well if you don't now, you'll meet them. Do you think Jesus is going to appear to them like he did Thomas? Probably not. And if they don't believe that Jesus is God do you think they are going to come to church to hear me talk about Jesus? *So who do you think Jesus is going to send to them?* You and you and you...

2) The great danger of refusing to heed the warning of God's messengers.

Jesus came near, that was the special day of visitation, but they rejected him. Think about it Jerusalem had the greatest preacher the world has ever known, who did signs and wonders greater than any the world has ever seen, but they still rejected him.

Wait and see... Wait and see... Felix

*Acts 24:22 But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case."*

*23 So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him.*

*24 And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.*

*25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."*

*26 Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him.*

*27 But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.*

*2 Corinthians 6:1 We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.*

*2 For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*