

Willow River Parish: Clear Lake, Deer Park, and Faith Family

Title: Trust God Alone

Lesson: Luke 21:5-19

⁵ Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, ⁶ "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down." ⁷ "Teacher," they asked, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?" ⁸ He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. ⁹ When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away." ¹⁰ Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

¹² "But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. ¹³ And so you will bear testimony to me. ¹⁴ But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. ¹⁵ For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ Everyone will hate you because of me. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ Stand firm, and you will win life.

Friends, today we stand before an important teaching of Jesus. The disciples were admiring the beauty of the magnificent and solid temple of Israel. They were amazed by how beautiful and grand it was. But to them, Jesus spoke a surprising word:

"The days will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."

Jesus' words must have been shocking to the disciples because the temple they saw looked so strong and solid that it seemed impossible for it to ever fall.

The disciples were focused on what they could see with their eyes, but Jesus was teaching His disciples that as time passes, everything wears out, rusts, and collapses—and that the only One in this world who is eternal is God. As time passes, our bodies grow old and sick, the great and majestic temple built by Solomon also fell after 400 years, and even the things that seem so solid and

unshakable to us right now will, as time goes by, eventually wear out, rust, and fall apart.

But, friends, what we must remember is this truth:

Only God is eternal, and only God is the One we can rely on.

For the people of that time, the temple was the place where God's presence dwelled. To them, the temple was the place where they met God; it was the center of their lives. And yet Jesus said that even that temple would fall.

Why?

Because a greater and eternal Temple was coming.

Because Jesus Christ Himself—the true Temple and the eternal Temple—had come.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, it is not a temple made of stone and gold, but the Lord Himself who has become the true Temple that leads us into the presence of God.

So the Scripture says:

“The Temple is Jesus Christ Himself.”

And even more amazing is this:

those of us who believe in Jesus have become temples where the Holy Spirit dwells.

In other words, what we must hold on to now is not the temple as a building that will fall,

but Jesus, the eternal Temple,
and the faith we live out in Him.

(Slide 1) So the most important center of today's sermon can be summarized in this one sentence:

“Trust God alone. Trust Jesus Christ, the true Temple, and trust Him alone.”

Let us look to those around us and encourage one another by reading today's central sentence:

“Trust God alone. Trust Jesus Christ, the true Temple, and trust Him alone.”

Jesus tells His disciples about the troubling things that will come.

Wars and uprisings, earthquakes and famines, the confusion and fear of the world...

But Jesus says,

“Do not be afraid. Do not be terrified when these things happen.”

Why?

Because Jesus, the eternal Temple, is with us.

The One who does not fall even when the world falls,
the One who does not shake even when the world shakes—

He alone is the One we can rely on.

Friends, the times we live in are also full of confusion and constant change.

The news makes us anxious,
the future of our rural communities feels uncertain,
and as our church’s younger generation decreases and our numbers get smaller,
worries arise.

No, you are already worrying—I know that.

But Jesus says to us today: **“Do not look at the world that is falling. Look to Me, the eternal Temple. Trust God alone.”**

This past Wednesday we had our Confirmation class at our church.

Our youth are now in a very important season of laying the foundation of their faith.

During our time together, we learned about God’s creation—
that God is the One who created this world,
the One who made us,
and that we were created in the image of God.

These young people are now learning to know more deeply Jesus Christ, the true Temple, and they are training to place Him at the center of their lives.

They are learning the foundation of faith that enables them to stand in Jesus even when the world shakes.

I ask our whole community to pray for them.

And among those gathered here today, if there are any who have not yet deeply experienced God,

any who become more nervous and fearful not because of God, but because the reality in front of you feels bigger than God when difficult moments come—

I pray that through this message today,

you, too, will encounter Jesus, the true Temple, in a new way.

The world shakes, but the Lord does not shake.

Jesus also says, **“I will give you words and wisdom.”**

This means we do not endure by our own strength.

It means that the Lord, the true Temple, dwells within us,
gives us strength to speak,
gives us wisdom to live by faith,
and shows us the way when we cannot see ahead.

Friends, the moment we believe in Jesus Christ,
we are no longer people who rely on a world that is shaking;
we become people connected to the eternal Temple,
people in whom the presence of God dwells,
people who have become God’s temple through the Holy Spirit.

And so we confess again:

“I will trust God alone. I will hold on to Jesus alone.”

When our health shakes,
when the foundation of our daily lives becomes unstable,
when we worry about the future of the church,
if we trust God alone, God promises:

“Not a hair of your head will perish.”

“By your endurance you will gain your souls.”

Friends, the world falls, but God does not fall. The temple fell, but Jesus did not fall. Our lives may shake, but if we hold on to the Lord, the true Temple, we will not be shaken.

So take this Word deeply into your hearts today: **Trust God alone. Trust Jesus Christ alone. Trust the One who is the true Temple.**

And remember that we who live in Him have become God's temple.

May every one of you, throughout this coming week—
even if the world shakes—
walk in peace and courage,
holding tightly to the Lord, the eternal Temple. In the name of the Lord I bless you.
Amen.