

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #81

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 21:5-19

Sermon Date: Apr 22, 2007

Is It Really Worth It?

Did you realize that the widow's coins in last week's passage were going into the temple treasury just a few decades before the temple was going to be completely destroyed? So, was it really worth it?

Have you read the story of Stephen, who led the early church's deacon board? He boldly advanced the cause of Christ shortly after the resurrection, and then was the first to be martyred. Then the rest of the disciples were scattered and persecuted. So, was it really worth it?

Or how about the church these days? There are so many people either not coming anymore or just sitting in pews, and having no real relationship with God, let alone one another. Then there are all the abuse scandals, denominational rifts, church splits, and so on. So, is it really worth it?

Jesus says yes, it is worth it. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) For, the storyline is set – God wins! "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." (1 Cor 15:58) So with that confidence, let's open God's Word together, being in dialogue with Jesus as we go, and gaining courage to stand firm in Him.

These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>. Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact studieditor@southshorebaptist.com

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Bible Study:

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the chart below to note your observations and any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>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.”</p> <p>⁷ “Teacher,” they asked, “when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?”</p> <p>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 revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away.”</p> <p>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.</p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>¹² “But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. ¹³ This will result in your being witnesses to them. 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, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ All men will hate you because of me. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By standing firm you will gain life.</p>	

2. This sermon is referred to as the “Olivet Discourse” (it occurred on the Mount of Olives). Read the other gospel accounts of this first part of the sermon, and note a few key observations below.

Matthew 24:1-14

Mark 13:1-13

3. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

4. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Look Closely:

5. In Luke 21:8-19, Jesus tells his followers about a pattern or sequence of circumstances that will occur, and gives them guidance for handling themselves in response. Note the parts of this pattern below next to the corresponding verse numbers.

<u>Circumstance</u>	<u>Appropriate Response</u>
8 <i>False prophets come Claim to be Christ Say end is near</i>	8 <i>Watch out – don't be fooled Don't follow them</i>
9	9
12	13
15-18	14, 19

6. Experiencing and responding to difficult circumstances tests our character and refines our faith.

a. How did the disciples later experience the pattern Jesus described to them (v 12-17)? How well did they respond? (e.g. Acts 4:1-22)

b. How did Jesus experience aspects of this pattern? How did he respond?

c. In what ways have you personally experienced aspects of this pattern? How well have you responded?

7. There is debate about what period of time Jesus is referring to in this discourse. We see the Luke 21 pattern in the first century church, and we see it in our lives today. But what does the Word say? Review the three gospel accounts again (pages 2-3) and decide what period you think Jesus is talking about. To what extent was Jesus referring to the lives of the disciples who he addressed first hand? How about to our lives today – was Jesus speaking to us about life in the 21st century? Or perhaps he was only addressing the end times period, when he will be returning? What do you conclude and why?

8. What do you see as the main point of Luke 21:5-19?

9. How would you like to apply what you have learned from this passage and your study of it? How might it affect your daily life this week?

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE:

10. The disciples ask Jesus several questions at the beginning of the Luke 21 dialogue. Jesus himself was the master of asking great questions – ones that tend to open hearts and minds. How about you – do you like finding the right question and asking it at the right time? Would you like to use this skill, or to improve your question-asking skills, by getting involved in a team-effort to write these Bible studies? Well, here's your chance.

As we approach the end of this study series in Luke, we are considering whether to continue writing these studies as a long-term ministry of the church. We need your help in this. First, we need your feedback on the studies. Second, to continue the studies, we'd need to assemble a team of church members interested in serving as study writers and editors. So here are two questions for you:

a. Would you like to see this study series continue in future years? Why? What impact have they had?*

b. Would you be willing to participate in a team effort to write future studies aligned with upcoming sermon series?

We would provide some training and would work as a team, so we are looking for church members who (1) have a heart to help others grow, (2) have some relevant skills such as thinking of good questions, writing, or editing, (3) have a teachable spirit and want to grow (writing studies is a great way to get deeper into God's Word!), and (4) are willing to commit time to this ongoing work. And keep in mind that the same Spirit that guides us in what to say when we witness will be guiding our team as we write each study.

"For I will give you words and wisdom ..." (Luke 21:15)

So, are you interested in helping with this ministry work?*

* Please email your answers to studieditor@southshorebaptist.com or mail to Matt Dorn 1615 Commercial Street, Weymouth, MA 02189.