



Near-sighted

GROWTH GUIDE DECEMBER 1, 2024

The First Sunday of Advent

Scripture: Luke 21:25-36

AUTHOR

Luke, a Greek, Gentile Christian, and physician, wrote his gospel around A.D. 60, from Rome or possibly Caesarea. He also wrote Acts, which is a sequel to the Gospel of Luke. Luke was a close friend and companion of the apostle Paul and wrote to Theophilus, which means one who loves God. Luke focuses on Jesus' relationships with people. His purpose in writing was to present an accurate account of the life of Jesus and to present Jesus as the perfect human and Savior.

CONTEXT

Earlier in Luke 21, Jesus has been talking to his disciples about the future and now he talks about his return to earth. In verse 24 Jesus tells his disciples that Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles until the period of the Gentiles comes to an end. The period of the Gentiles began with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 BC and the exile of the Jewish people. Israel was then under the control of Gentile rulers. In Jesus' day, Israel was governed by the Roman Empire and a Roman General destroyed the city in AD 70. Jesus said that the domination of God's people by his enemies would continue until God decided to end it. The period of the Gentiles refers not just to the repeated destructions of Jerusalem but also to the persecution of God's people until the end.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Today we light the 1st candle on the Advent Wreath as a reminder of hope. What are you hopeful about this Advent Season? Or what challenges your sense of hope?

2. Read Luke 21:25-36. What kind of signs does Jesus talk about and where will they take place?
3. Read Isaiah 34:4. What will the people see according to the prophet Isaiah?
4. What will be the reaction of the people on earth and the powers of the heavens?
5. What will Jesus' arrival look like?
6. What reaction do you have when you think about the 2nd coming of Christ? Does it make you uneasy or give you hope? Why?
7. Jesus interprets these "signs" of God's in-breaking Kingdom through the Parable of the Fig Tree... how does this help us see the "forest for the trees"? (From Pastor David's sermon notes)
8. It's been over 2000 years since Jesus told his disciples to watch for his return. These words are true today. The Life Application Study Bible says we need to watch and be spiritually fit. How might you work on being spiritually fit?
9. What tasks do you feel that God has given you to do in building his Kingdom?
10. Read Matthew 28:20 and Revelation 21:1-4. In times of suffering we can be encouraged by these 2 promises. What are they and how do they comfort you?

ENCOURAGEMENT

"Heaven and earth will pass away,
but my words will not pass away."

– Jesus

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