

The Disciplex's Commentary

Answer Outline for the Disciplex

Luke 21

In Luke 21, Jesus continues His teaching in the temple during the week before Passover. He has just warned His listeners concerning the evil practices of the scribes. Scribes were experts in Jewish law, and therefore helped with legal situations. One of their tasks was to serve as executors of estates when someone passed away. Thus, chapter 20 ends with verse 47 where Jesus states, "Beware the scribes...who devour widow's houses...."

21:1-4 – Jesus observes the "poor widow" putting in all she had to give

Application: What is the difference between giving out of "surplus" and giving out of "poverty"?

- *Help the disciple discover the relationship between the last verse of the previous chapter and the first part of this chapter, regarding widows.*
- *This observation by Jesus is capable of providing quite a bit of discussion on giving. Does this verse teach that every person should give all one has? Make sure the discussion stays focused on trusting God for all of one's needs.*

21:5-6 – Jesus instructs His disciples on their observation of the temple's ornate grandeur.

- *There may need to be a discussion on what "votive" gifts are. Help the disciple understand the context in which Jesus' audience point out the grandeur of the temple, and how it was laden with gold.*
- *Show the disciple how their observation about the temple leads into Jesus' discussion concerning the "end times."*

21:7-19 – Jesus' first teaching on far future events

- *Inform the disciple that there are many different interpretations regarding prophecy about the end times immediately preceding the second coming of Christ; that not everyone would agree with the interpretation of "far future" and "near future" events, and that oftentimes the prophecies overlap, so that the differentiation is difficult. Clearly state that this outline is just one person's opinion...the writer's.*
- *Inform the disciple that even Jesus did not know exact dates regarding future events. This is a good place to warn the disciple not to pay attention to anyone who announces they know when Jesus is returning, and that great harm has been done to Christians who listen and pay attention to these deceivers.*
- *Help the disciple find the most important lessons on these end-times prophecies, such as can be found at the end of the outline, and verses 13-19*
- *Let the disciple know that liberal scholars believe that all of these words were composed by the Early Church fathers after the fact; that Jesus couldn't possibly have actually predicted the events of AD 70.*
- *Inform the disciple that many of the events presented here are always happening throughout history, and that almost every generation of Christians have believed that they were living in the end times.*

8 – The warning against false teachers, false prophets, and false messiahs

9 – The warning against wars and rumors of wars

10 – The sign of nation against nation

11 – The sign of worldwide natural disasters

12-13 – The sign of persecution and the opportunity to give testimony about Jesus

14-15 – The instruction on how to prepare for the coming persecution

16-19 – The promise of eternal preservation

- *In this section, emphasize verses 13-19, and that is what he or she should be focusing on.*

21:20-24 – Jesus' first teaching on near future events

20-24 – Teaching on the utter destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants

20-24 – The event came true in AD 70 by the Roman General Titus

24 – The significance of verse 24: "The times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"

- *Inform the disciple that although the writer has labeled these events as "near future," the lessons taught here by Jesus are also applicable to "far future" events.*

21:25-28 – Jesus’ second teaching on far future events

25-26 – The global observation concerning heavenly disturbances

27-28 – The appearance of the Son of Man: an event to be hoped for

- *Emphasize to the disciple that the events described here will be global in nature, so that the whole world will be aware of what is happening.*
- *Even though these global events will cause panic and fear for those who do not have the hope of the second coming, these events should bring great joy and comfort to Christians. Therefore, these events will help determine who is a true believer and who is a nominal Christian.*
- *It is important that the disciple understands how the true Christian is to act if these events were to take place during his or her lifetime...their love for others will be tested. Whereas the rest of the world will descend into chaos and trying to save oneself, the Christian must stand firm by faith and maintain the command to “love your neighbor as yourself.” Living out love for others will be as great a testimony to the world as standing up and giving a defense during persecution.*

21:29-33 – The parable of the fig tree

29-31 – The signs of the appearance of the Son of Man will be obvious to those who are looking

32-33 – The key teaching: Jesus’ words will not pass away (will come true)

- *There may need to be an explanation about verse 32, regarding the words “this generation.” One interpretation is that the word “this” refers to Jesus’ audience as He is giving the prophecy. Therefore, the prophecy applies only to the events that happened in AD 70. Another interpretation is that “this” refers to the generation who will be experiencing the global events immediately prior to His second coming that are described in verse 25. A third interpretation is that “this” can refer to both.*
- *Inform the disciple that everyone believes their interpretation is the correct one! Therefore, the writer’s opinion is that one should not be too dogmatic in their opinion. While the discipler may have an opinion of his or her own, it is best—and most loving—to recognize that there are other interpretations, and those who support other opinions should be respected.*

21:34-36 – Jesus’ instructions on how to prepare for the coming of the Son of Man

34-35 – First, be on your guard

36 – Second, be on the alert by staying in prayer!

- *Emphasize to the disciple that these verses are the key to Jesus’ teaching on the above events. The disciple is to be on guard and stay alert.*
- *Have the disciple read again verse 36. Ask the disciple how he or she plans on being “on guard” and keeping “on the alert.”*
- *If the disciple does not have an effective prayer life at this point, that should be something the discipler should be teaching!*

21:37-38 – Jesus’ instruction on how to be on guard and how to be alert: pray!

- *See if the disciple can fill in the blank without the discipler giving the answer first.*
- *Do not let the disciple get carried away by focusing on future prophecies and raising endless questions that probably have no certain answer. Do not let the disciple dismiss the important lessons at the beginning of the chapter in regard to the widow’s sacrificial giving.*
- *When this chapter is completed, the disciple should walk away with these important principles:*
 1. *Sacrificial giving is an important indicator of one’s trust in God and love for Jesus’ kingdom.*
 2. *Jesus is coming back, and that is a great hope for all true Christians.*
 3. *The true disciple should not fear the future...it is a glorious hope.*
 4. *The disciple needs to be on the alert and be on guard at all times.*
 5. *Prayer is the key to giving, trusting, hoping, having courage and staying alert.*