



February 27, 2013

## Reflection Questions Mark 13:1-37

1. This chapter brings to the fore a theme that has been running throughout Mark's gospel: Israel's religion is way off track. In the very ways that Israel is supposed to be honoring God, they're opposing Him. In their attempts to preserve the laws of God, they've become disobedient. Are there particular practices or methods of following God that you tend to fixate on in an unhealthy way? How can those methods be kept in check so that they do not become an end in themselves, but instead direct your heart to God?
2. Jesus warns his disciples that the destruction of the Temple will be borne out of a season of suffering. As a result, he challenges them to be vigilant during this difficult time. What suffering have you seen in your life that lasted longer than you expected? What specific challenges did you face in your attempt to remain faithful to God during this time?
3. How does one prepare to remain steadfast? If you know a time of trial is coming your way, and you know it might last for awhile, what practical steps might you take to better prepare yourself for a persevering faith?
4. The fall of the Temple was a massive turning point in the history of Israel and its religious practice. So much of their identities was wrapped up in the Temple that its loss was almost impossible to recover from. The loss of the building meant, for these Jews, the loss of hope. What kinds of things threaten your hope in God? What circumstances might tempt you to despair? Who in your life helps rejuvenate your hope?
5. When Jesus challenges His disciples to "stay awake" (v.37), He isn't telling them to wear themselves out. Instead, He means to be wary of influences that might creep in during times of trial that could pull them away from their belief in God. It's tempting not to compromise our faith during difficult times. What concrete practices do you do, or can you do, in order to help "stay awake?"