



Rockbridge Church Small Groups Lesson 13

Mark 13 – Real Jesus (Read Mark 13)

Questions:

1. What do you see in Mark 13 that helps you know what Jesus is like?
2. In what ways do you see Jesus hard at work, on a mission, with a purpose, loving people?
3. What one thing about Jesus stands out to you in this chapter? (What about Jesus astonishes you, amazes you, challenges you or comforts you?)
4. In Mark 13, who encounters Jesus, and how do they respond to Him?
5. How are you responding to the Jesus you encountered in Mark 13?
6. What was most instructive, and what did you appreciate most from Sunday's sermon?

Check out the additional notes on **Be on the Alert** on the next page

Be on the Alert

"Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come. It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. Therefore, be on the alert — for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning — in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep.

What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

(Matthew 13:33-37)

Does it sound like Jesus wants you to be alert?!! Just a day or two later, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus again told His disciples (3 times!) to keep watch (*Mark 14:34,37-38*).

Alert, noun and adjective

1. Vigilantly attentive; watchful
2. Mentally responsive and perceptive; quick to notice dangers, or coming events
3. A condition or time of heightened watchfulness or preparation for action

Idiom: *"be on the alert"* — watchful and prepared for danger, emergency or opportunity; having a wide-awake mindset; being attentive, vigilant

Antonyms: asleep, distracted, unaware, unknowing, inattentive, unheeding, complacent, casual

Why does Jesus sound such a clear, urgent and repeated warning to us? One reason is this: Jesus knew and experienced the very real conflict with Satan. Jesus told His disciples that Satan is a liar and murderer; that he comes at us to steal, kill and destroy (*John 10:10*). As we know, Peter was not always alert, but he finally got it — *"Be sober, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith . . ."* (1 Peter 5:8-9). John Piper says it this way:

Sometimes I use the phrase "wartime lifestyle" or "wartime mind-set." It tells me that there is a war going on in the world between Christ and Satan, truth and falsehood, belief and unbelief. I need to hear this message again and again, because I drift into a peacetime mind-set as certainly as rain falls down and flames go up. I am wired by nature to love the same toys the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to call earth "home." . . . Given the vulnerability of my heart to the seduction of the peacetime mind-set, which is pushed into my mind every day by media and entertainment, I need reminders that we are at war. The repeated biblical warning to *"be alert"* fits the wartime image. And I need this reminder every day.

There is another reason to be alert and pay attention — a very positive reason. Because we are followers of Jesus, we are always on a journey. Jesus is taking us somewhere. Human life is life on a road — on a quest for purpose and meaning and destination. Human life is in search of home. Jesus said He is the Way, that He is the Life, that He is taking us home. Since we don't know the exact path He has for each of us, we journey on as "followers of the Way" — paying attention to Jesus! Or, as it says in Hebrews 12:2 — *"fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."*