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Luke 21:5-19  
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## Resurrection Church

For the past two Sundays, we've been talking about how the body of Christ is united on both sides of the veil. There is a mystery and truth to this reality that no one is dead in Christ. However, it is also true that death and destruction are true felt realities of this world. Nations rise and fall. Christianity and Judaism split into two different religions. And suffering is part of the human experience. Yet, paradoxically, this text acknowledges the pain, yet promises the reader that "not a hair on your head will perish." Let's figure this out together.

Prayer: May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts be pleasing to you O God. Our rock in troubled times. Amen.

The world is about to change! Be ready!

The destruction of the temple, wars, earthquakes, and famine. These are some scary visions. End of the world kind of stuff. And indeed it is. The world ended. Jesus said these words around 30 AD and lo and behold the Romans razed the temple to the ground 40 years later. And one may think wow, Jesus you're so good at reading the signs of the times, and leave it at that. I don't really understand the appeal of predicting the future. It reminds me of the story of the Greek King Croesus going to the oracle of Delphi, a woman who told the future. He asks her what would happen if he went to war and the Oracle replies, if you go to war you will destroy a great empire. Croesus is overjoyed by this prophecy, goes to war with his neighbor, and his great empire crumbles. Jesus's prediction of wars, earthquakes, famines, and plagues as a prediction begs the question, which earthquakes, famines, and plagues? A fascination that populates a Wikipedia page "list of dates predicted for apocalyptic events full of hundreds of results. Though if I look behind the curtain to see that the gospel of Luke was written 20 years after the temple fell.

Which I think actually makes this text more approachable, because it was written for us, people on the other side of the end of the world.

The world is changing! Be Ready!

This morning I want us to consider if the end of the world is not only inevitable but something that has happened many many times. Jesus was born around the end of the world when the Romans conquered the autonomous nation of Israel. A few decades after Jesus died, the world ended again with the destruction of the temple. And the early part of the Jesus movement was very rough and full of persecution. Where Stephen was stoned and Saul sought out Christians to arrest. Yet, Jesus says “not a hair of your head will perish.”

Maybe this is a word of comfort for us in our rapidly changing world. That even the most sacred temple is destroyed, even if you get arrested and killed, but ideas will never die. The powerful can tear down buildings and break people, but they cannot kill love. The Romans can hang Jesus on a cross, but his words about loving my neighbor and enemy were not snuffed out. The Romans brought the second temple low, but millions of churches and synagogues replaced it. What the church needs to learn is not how to not die, but how to become a resurrection church. Dying to the modes of the church that no longer work, being reborn into something new!

The world will keep on changing under our feet. Maybe the world will end. But a new creation is always being born from the ashes.

I don't know what worries you all are bringing today. It may be the election, the church, war, earthquakes, famines, or plagues. And these worries all matter and we will need to keep testifying to love. But this text gives us the weird perspective you get when you write down words spoken 60 years ago about an event 20 years ago. That the world can end, but the church keeps on breathing.