



Pastor Hanke's Blog

November 17, 2019

Do Not Panic – The End is Near

Bible Reference: Luke 21:5-28

This week I got to attend an afterschool computer class my boys are taking, and it gave me a glimpse into their future. The teacher is incredible. The class was structured more like a high school class, but most of the kids lived up to the high expectations the teacher set in the beginning. (I learned this in youth ministry as well. If you set the expectations high, often times kids will live up to them. Yet we still have to remember that we are all sinners.) One boy in the class kept asking what time the class would get over. The teacher answered this child repeatedly, but getting tired of answering the same question finally said to this student, “It will be over when it’s over.”

Most situations in life that we enjoy we wish could go on longer, but those that require work or suffering we are excited to see end. The situations that usually invoke panic in us are death and the end of the world. There are so many people panicking about whether or not humans are going to destroy this earth. Even those churches that focus on the end times share their message of the end of days on earth with a sense of panic.

Jesus has a direct response to all those struggling with this. He tells us not to panic, and then goes on to describe what will happen. Jesus has a similar response as the computer teacher who said the class will be over when it’s over. These are great words of wisdom, but how does it help us avoid the panic? Part of my Calling as a pastor is to sit with people in some of the most trying times of their lives. They don’t know it, but they become a teacher to me. Most of them come up with a similar response—I can’t do anything about this situation, so what good will panicking do me. This reminds me to go back to the James passage we studied previously, “Consider it pure joy when you face trials of many kinds...” (*James 1:2-3 NIV*) and try to let myself be in the trial without the normal reactions my body wants to have, like worry or panic.

We are quickly approaching the end of the church year. By December 1st we will start over again with Advent and preparing for Jesus. But just like the end of our calendar year, we take time to reflect on the past and look ahead at our expectations for the future. In the church, the future is that one day Jesus will come back. He says that leading up to His return there will be some challenging situations, but He gives us His words of wisdom on how to not panic. We will take time to dissect those words this weekend so we can put them into practice.

God's Peace,

Pastor Will