

Signs and Signals of Christ's Glorious Return

Small Group Guide for Middle & High School Students

Scripture: Mark 13:14–27 | Suggested time: 30–35 minutes

Big Idea: Jesus wants us to face the future with faith, recognize what is false, and help others know Him today.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Open in prayer:

Lord, help us understand Your Word. Replace our fear with trust, help us recognize Your truth, and give us courage to share Your love. Amen.

Opening question:

What is a warning you sometimes ignore—your phone's low battery alert, your alarm clock, a weather warning, or something else? What happens when you ignore it?

Transition:

Warnings help us respond. In Mark 13, Jesus prepares His followers for difficult days and promises that He will return. His words give us reasons to pay attention—and reasons to have hope.

Have students take turns reading **Mark 13:14–27** aloud.

Leader note: Students may have questions or fears about the end times. Welcome their questions, avoid guessing dates or identifying current events as definite fulfillments, and keep the focus on Jesus' faithfulness.

1. ABOMINATION: TAKE EVIL SERIOUSLY

Read Mark 13:14–16.

What does that mean?

“Abomination” means something deeply offensive to God. Jesus refers to Daniel's prophecy about an act of evil that dishonors a holy place. He tells those in Judea to flee when they see it.

Although this warning describes a specific situation, it also challenges us to take God’s words seriously. We should never become so comfortable with sin that we stop noticing its harm.

Talk about it

- Why is it easy to laugh at, accept, or join in with something we know is wrong?
- Where do students feel pressure to ignore their convictions—at school, online, with friends, or somewhere else?
- What would obeying God look like when everyone around you is doing something different?

Real-life scenario:

A group chat starts making cruel jokes about a classmate. You haven’t written anything, but you keep reading and reacting. What could you do next that would honor Jesus?

Takeaway: Following Jesus sometimes means stepping away from what everyone else accepts.

2. DEVASTATION: LET HARD TIMES MOVE YOU TO CARE

Read Mark 13:17–20.

What does that mean?

Jesus describes a time of terrible suffering. He specifically mentions people who would struggle to escape, including pregnant women and nursing mothers. His words show how serious these events are—and remind us that people’s suffering matters.

When we see pain, our response should include compassion, prayer, and action.

Talk about it

- Why do we sometimes scroll past someone’s suffering without thinking much about it?
- What struggles might students around you be carrying that others cannot see?
- How can you help someone experience Jesus’ love instead of only telling them to come to church?

Real-life scenario:

A friend says, “Everything at home is falling apart.” What could you say? What practical help could you offer?

Leader reminder: When someone shares that they are being hurt, feel unsafe, or may hurt themselves, involve a trusted adult. Caring for a friend does not mean handling a serious situation alone.

Takeaway: We can share the good news of Jesus through our words and show His love through our actions.

3. IMITATION: CHECK WHAT YOU BELIEVE

Read Mark 13:21–23.

What does that mean?

Jesus warns that false messiahs and false prophets will try to deceive people—even through impressive signs. Something can look powerful, sound spiritual, or become popular and still be false.

We need to know Jesus through Scripture so we can recognize teaching that misrepresents Him.

Talk about it

- What makes an online message seem believable—lots of followers, confidence, emotional music, or something else?
- How could you check whether a claim about Jesus agrees with the Bible?
- Who is a trusted Christian adult you can ask when something confuses you?

Try it together:

An influencer says, “If you have enough faith, nothing bad will ever happen to you.”

How does that claim compare with what Jesus tells His followers in this passage?

A simple truth check:

1. What does the Bible actually say?
2. Am I reading the verses in context?
3. Can a trusted Christian adult help me understand?

Takeaway: Being confident or popular does not make someone right. Test their message against God’s Word.

4. MANIFESTATION: JESUS WILL MAKE HIS GLORY KNOWN

Read Mark 13:24–27.

What does that mean?

“Manifestation” means something becoming visible or clearly known. Jesus promises that people will see Him coming with great power and glory. He will gather His people to Himself.

Christians differ on some details about the timing of these events, but our hope rests in the same Savior: Jesus will return, and His people will be with Him.

Talk about it

- How does Jesus’ promise help when the world feels frightening or out of control?
- Read **1 Thessalonians 4:16–18**. How could these words encourage someone who is grieving?
- Read **Revelation 7:9–10**. What does this picture of people from every nation and language teach us about whom God welcomes?
- Who might feel left out in our yo