

Chat with the Children

- Do the filling a jar with big stones, little stones, sand thing:
 - we need to put the important things in place first
 - we need to see the shape of the future accurately to be able to live well in it and prepare for it...
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What's it all for?

- Intro round what is life all about, asking the big questions:
 - what will the future hold? Where is life going?

Explore the Passage

- *Paragraph by paragraph exegesis, making points as we go...*
- What is impressive, apparently reliable and permanent?
- That which seems so, in earthly terms, is not
- So what is coming, what can we rely on, what will the future hold?
 - or, what kind of kingdom are you bringing in?

First Warning (v.5)

- Deception into a false Saviour

Second Warning (v.9)

- Appearance of failure, through persecution and trouble

Third Warning (v.12)

- Appearance of failure through betrayal and breakdown of relationships and loyalty

Fourth Warning (v.14)

- Appearance of failure through the flaunting of God's rule, mocking him

Promise (v.26)

- Jesus coming back in power and glory!
 - and signs of that coming....
 - so we remain sharp, alert, ready to serve, not caught up with our own interests but caught up with his
 - not saying "I'll get round to that..." (witnessing, giving, coming to church, learning more of Christ, putting into practise his teaching....) but doing it now.
 - could be anytime!

Near and far

- Immediate reference (Roman invasion) and future reference (end of the age)

Conclusion

- Drawing the threads together...
- So understand the future context:
 - Jesus' is coming back, what we do matters, we will be called to account and vindicated for our faith and trust in him
 - (so able to be free to serve him now, without fear...)
 - danger of being taken in, diverted, deceived - be on guard! (eg other spiritual powers, like contacting the spirits, messages from the other side...)
 - danger of being intimidated into silence or passivity...
- This is the Kingdom Christ has inaugurated by the Cross:
 - final victory assured
 - reality established - cf Einstein's insight into special relativity, nothing appeared to change on the streets, but nothing would be the same again - we'd entered the nuclear age, and what was possible was changed forever