

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Will Come Again

Matthew 24-25

Opening

Gathering: What would you do if you knew that the world would end at midnight tonight?

Today's Focus: We are to be prepared for Jesus to return and to take us to the place He has prepared for us.

Key Verses: *I will come back and take you to be with Me.* John 14:3

Come, you who are blessed by My Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. Matthew 25:34

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Jesus Prepares to Leave (*Luke 24:44-51; Acts 1:1-8*)

What did Jesus do after claiming victory over death through His resurrection?

Acts 1:3 = He showed Himself to His apostles and disciples over 40 days

What reason besides proving He was alive did Jesus have for appearing to His disciples?

Luke 24:44-47 = He opened their minds to see how He was the promised Christ

Why was it important for the apostles to understand this?

Luke 24:48 = They would be His witnesses

What does Jesus expect of His witnesses?

Matthew 28:19-20 = Go, Make disciples of all nations, Baptize, Teach

Isn't this too large of a job to expect eleven simple men to get started?

Acts 1:8 = Not when they have the power of God; Can take to ends of the earth

When would this begin to happen?

Acts 1:4-5 = Within a few days – 10 days later on Pentecost (Acts 1:3; 2:1)

Jesus Leaves (*Acts 1:9-11*)

What did Jesus do after commissioning His apostles and promising the Spirit's power?

Acts 1:9 = He left them and rose into heaven

How did God keep the apostles from feeling forsaken and abandoned?

Acts 1:10-11 = He sent 2 angels to tell them that *Jesus Will Come Again*

Was this news to the apostles?

John 14:2-3 = At Last Supper, Jesus said, *I will come back and take you to be with me*

Would this be news to people other than the apostles?

Matthew 26:63-64 = No, Jesus told Sanhedrin He'd return from God's right hand

Did the early church understand that Jesus would return? = Definitely

Colossians 3:4 (1 Cor 1:7; 4:5; Phil 3:20; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Thess 5:23; 1 Tim 6:14; 1 John 2:28)

The Timing (*Matthew 24:36-41*)

When did Jesus say He would bring this new kingdom to His new people (Israel)?

Acts 1:6-7 = It is not for us to know the times or dates the Father has set

Why didn't Jesus tell them so they knew how much time they had to tell the world?

Matthew 24:36 = Only the Father knows, Jesus and angels don't

Doesn't God warn the world before a major event so people can prepare themselves?

Matthew 24:37-41 = No, look at the example of the flood in Noah's time

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Be Prepared (*Matthew 24:42-25:30*)

What does this lack of knowing when mean for our lives?

Matthew 24:42-44 = We should stay prepared, keep watch, be ready

What example did Jesus give to show how we should live while waiting?

Matthew 24:45-51 = Servant put in charge of household while master is away

What example did Jesus give to show that we must be spiritually ready at all times?

Matthew 25:1-13 = 10 virgins waiting for groom - no last minute catch up

What example did Jesus give to show that we are to do His work while waiting, not wait idly?

Matthew 25:14-30 = 3 servants using/hiding talents - spiritual gifts are to use

Signs of the End (*Matthew 24:3-22, 32-33*)

Will there be any indication that the time for Jesus to return is near?

Matthew 24:32-33 = There will be signs for the spiritually educated to recognize

What will happen before Jesus returns?

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 9-10 (1-12) = A rebellion, lawless one will set himself up as God, evil

Will Christians be able to withstand the temptations of this deceiver?

1 Timothy 4:1 = Some will fall away

When we see wars and people claim to be the Christ, does this mean the end is here?

Matthew 24:3-8 = *Such things must happen, but the end is still to come*

What is significant about where Jesus said this?

Zechariah 14:3-4 = Messiah would stand on Mt of Olives to establish His kingdom

There He Is! (*Matthew 24:23-30*)

What if we hear someone claiming they know when the end will be or that Jesus has returned?

Matthew 24:23-26 = Don't believe it, There will be many who try to deceive

How much notice will we have before He arrives?

Matthew 24:27 = No notice, it will be as quick as lightning

How will we find out if He shows up in some other place in the world?

Matthew 24:30 = All the earth will see Him coming at the same time

Revelation 1:7 = *every eye will see Him*

During This Generation (*Matthew 24:34-35*)

How long did the early Christians believe it would be before Jesus returned?

Matthew 24:34 = Within their generation (lifetime)

Was Jesus talking about the lifetime of the individuals living at the time?

Psalms 78:8 = *Generation* refers to the kind of people - forefathers made one generation

What generation was Jesus speaking about?

Psalms 24:6 = Those who seek Him

See Psalms 112:2; Deut 32:5,20; Jer 7:29; Luke 11:29-32; Acts 2:40; Phil. 2:15; Heb 3:10...

How did Peter point out that people will be confused by this concept of *generation*?

2 Peter 3:3-4, 8-10 = Scoffers will lose patience, Lord is patient, day like 1000 yrs

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What About Those Who Die? (*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*)

What problem did early Christians have as a result of expecting Jesus' return during their lives?

1 Thessalonians 4:13 = Christians were dying. Did that mean their faith was weak?

How did Paul answer their concern and confusion?

1 Thessalonians 4:14-16 = The dead will rise before any of the living are taken

What will happen to the faithful who are still alive?

1 Thessalonians 4:17-18 = Caught up with the risen in the clouds to meet the Lord

Why is He Coming Back? (*Matthew 25:31-33*)

Jesus came the first time to take away our sins. Why will He come a second time?

Hebrews 9:27-28 = *To bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him*

How will He do this?

Matthew 25:31-33 (Ezekiel 34:17-24) = He'll separate the sheep from the goats

Shepherds grazed sheep and goats together and separated them at shearing time

Wouldn't it have been easier not to let the sheep and goats get all mixed up in the first place?

Matthew 13:24-30 (36-43) = Leave the weeds until harvest so wheat isn't harmed

Who is included in this judgment?

John 5:28-29 (Daniel 12:1-2) = Everyone who ever lived. Good live, evil condemned

Who will help Jesus with this massive task?

Jude 14-15 (Matthew 16:27; Daniel 7:10) = Thousands upon thousands of angels

Destiny of the Sheep (*Matthew 25:34*)

What will the Good Shepherd do with the sheep that belong to Him?

Matthew 25:34 = Give them their inheritance, prepared for them since creation

What is the significance of the word *inheritance*?

Ephesians 2:8-9 = Heaven is a gift, it is not earned

What will happen to these sheep?

1 John 3:2 = We will be made like Him, although we don't understand what this means

How does Paul describe this?

Philippians 3:20-21 = Lowly bodies will be transformed to be like His glorious body

What will this body be like?

1 Corinthians 15:35-44 = Our earthly body is a seed to our glorious heavenly body

Proof of Faithfulness (*Matthew 25:35-40*)

What proof will Jesus give of the faithfulness of His sheep?

Matthew 25:35-36 = You took care of me when I was in need

How do the Lord's sheep show that this was done out of response to God's grace?

Matthew 25:37-39 = They ask, "When did we ever do any of these things to you?"

How does Jesus explain that He was all around them during their earthly lives?

Matthew 25:40 = *Whatever you did for one of the least of these ... you did for Me*

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Works or Faith? (*James 2:14-26*)

Does this mean that people will be saved based on their good deeds to others?

Romans 3:20-24 = No, righteousness comes through faith in Jesus

Then what do the good deeds have to do with being saved?

James 2:14, 18, 26 = A living faith results in good deeds

The Good Ship *Salvation*:

Christians ride in a sailboat named *Salvation*. The wind of God fills the sail of faith and propels the boat. As the sailboat moves, ripples of good deeds are left behind in the water.

- What causes the boat to move, the wind or the ripples?
- What causes the ripples, or the good deeds, to be produced?
- If you look behind a sailboat and see no ripples, what can you conclude?

Destiny of the Goats (*Matthew 25:41*)

What will the Good Shepherd do with the goats that belong to His enemy?

Matthew 25:41 = Send them into the eternal fire prepared for Satan and his angels

Who all will be sent to this eternal fire?

Revelation 20:10, 13-15 = Satan, false prophets, those not of God's family

Proof of Faithlessness (*Matthew 25:42-46*)

What proof will Jesus give of the faithlessness of the goats?

Matthew 25:42-43 = You did not take care of me when I was in need

What excuse do the goats give to try to save themselves?

Matthew 25:44 = They say that if they'd have helped if they had recognized Him

How does Jesus explain that He was all around them during their earthly lives?

Matthew 25:45 = *Whatever you didn't do for one of the least...you didn't do for Me*

What will happen after the sheep and goats are separated and judged?

Matthew 25:46 = Both sheep and goats receive their destinies

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. How prepared would I be if Jesus returned today?
(*Matthew 24:36-25:30; Luke 12:35-48; 17:20-36; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6*)
2. Will Jesus clearly recognize me as a sheep or a goat?
(*Ezekiel 34:17-24; Malachi 3:17-18; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 2:5-11; Galatians 6:7-10; 1 John 5:10-13; Revelation 3:15-16*)
3. Have I done enough to be counted as a sheep?
(*Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:20-24; 4:1-5; 9:30-33; 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-10*)
4. What motivates me to do good deeds to others?
(*Leviticus 19:15; Matthew 6:1-18; 10:40-42; 23:5-7; Luke 14:7-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; James 2*)
5. How have I shown the love of God to another recently?
(*Job 31:32; Isaiah 58:7; Ezekiel 18:7; Matthew 5:43-48; 26:35-40; Luke 6:27-36; Hebrews 13:1-3; James 1:27; 1 John 4:7-12, 19-21*)