

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 26

An Hour You do not Expect

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The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To begin a series on the return of Christ by teaching the students that no man knows the hour of Christ's return.

Key Verses

Matthew 24:36-44—Main Teaching Passage

John 14:1-6

Titus 1:2

1 Thessalonians 5:2

Memory Verse - 1 Thessalonians 5:2

"For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 1 Corinthians 15:57.

Ask the students, "Does anyone know where in the Bible Jesus promises that He will return?" (We have studied John 14:1-6 at least twice this year.)

Ask, "Why does Jesus need to return? What will happen when Jesus does return?"

Finally ask, "When is Jesus coming back?"

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In Matthew 24, Christ began to focus His disciples' minds on end times events. He was looking beyond His current ministry, beyond His crucifixion, beyond even our own day and time. Christ described to them the events surrounding the "abomination of desolation" (vs. 15-22), the rise of false saviors (vs. 23-28), and finally the horror of the great tribulation and His eventual return. Knowing what their inevitable question would be (when will this happen?), Christ spoke not about when, but rather how. He explained that His return will be completely unexpected. In fact, it will be just like the flood during the days of Noah. Even though the flood had been warned, the whole world was blissfully unaware that their doom was upon them. They lived normal, everyday lives right up to the point when the waters rose and they drowned. Jesus informs us that His return will be so quick that people who are raptured will be taken from the middle of their work. Not even His followers will be expecting the moment of His return. Because of this, He warns us, "Be ready, for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

In 2011 a group of believers, people who love Jesus and wanted to live their lives honoring Him, were led astray. They had been listening to a well-known pastor's radio station and had heard very exciting news. Jesus Christ was coming back to earth on May 21st, 2011. They were assured this was the definite date, 100% guaranteed. These believers could not keep this incredible news to themselves, so they put up billboards and advertised at train stations, warning people to get right with God before He returned. Some of these believers sold every last thing that they owned, their house, car, possessions, everything, in order to tell as many people as possible that Jesus was coming back. Who needs a house after the rapture? What good is a car in heaven? There was one big problem: Jesus did not return on May 21st, 2011.

If there is one thing that we know for sure, it is that Jesus is coming back. Remember that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), and He promised that He would return to earth to take His Church with Him to heaven (John 14:1-6). Jesus is most definitely coming back, but in Matthew 24 we read that no one, and I mean no one, knows when that is going to happen.

Jesus tells us that the day when He returns is going to be a complete shock to the whole world. The comparison that He uses is the story of Noah. Noah had been building his ark in obedience to God for years and years. Everyone knew what Noah was doing, and everyone knew why.

LOOK (Continued)

They had all been warned that a flood was going to come, and everyone ignored that warning. Jesus tells us that right up to the day when the rains came down, people were living normal lives. They were getting married, having children, and going to work, just like normal. Jesus' return will be just like that. It will be a complete shock to everyone in the world, even the Church. This is because Jesus tells us that nobody knows when Jesus is coming back, and if someone tells you that they do, they are lying to you.

In fact, in 1 Thessalonians 5:2 (our memory verse for this week) we read this, "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night." Thieves do not tell you when they are going to come and rob your house. If they did, you would be waiting for them at the front door with ten police officers ready to arrest them. That is exactly the attitude we should have with Jesus' return. We should be prepared and waiting as if Jesus was coming back today.

How can we prepare? First off, by living righteous and upright lives. How would you feel if Jesus came back to the earth and you were in the middle of bullying someone or stealing something? We know that it could happen any minute, maybe even before the end of this lesson. So why wouldn't we live like that? Secondly, we need to know what will happen to us when He does return. The people in Noah's day could have stepped aboard the ark and been saved, but they refused to listen to the warnings until it was too late. In the same way, we have all been given warnings, but also an ark of salvation. Our salvation is not a giant boat made of wood, it is Christ Himself. He has made a way for all of us to be saved from the terrible things that are coming on this earth. His blood has saved us from sin and death, but only if we have trusted in Him as Lord and Savior. Jesus is coming back. It could be today! Do you know what will happen to you if He does?

TOOK

As a class, memorize 1 Thessalonians 5:2.

Take time to clearly and concisely explain the gospel to the students. Offer them all an opportunity to respond.

Pray: Thank Him for His promise to return and take us home with Him. Praise Him that He has given us a future hope. Ask Him to help us to be diligent in being about His work, and patience to wait for His return.

Parent Question: Why does Jesus need to come to the earth a second time?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life.?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Matthew 24:36-44 by David Guzik

1. (36) Jesus says that the day and hour of His return is unknowable by men, and even unknowable by angels.

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

a. **Of that day and hour no one knows:** Here, Jesus refers back to the original question of Matthew 24:3 (*what will be the sign of Your coming?*). His answer is somewhat unexpected, saying **of that day and hour no one knows**.

i. To give this idea the strongest emphasis, Jesus claimed that this knowledge was reserved for His **Father only**. If Jesus Himself - at least during His earthly ministry - did not know this **day and hour**, it emphasizes the foolishness of any later person making certain predictions regarding the prophetic timetable.

b. **No one knows:** Based on what He had told us about the abomination of desolation, we might have expected that the exact day and hour *could* be known. After all, Daniel set the day of Jesus' return as being exactly 1,290 days after the abomination of desolation (Daniel 12:11).

i. In this, there is a dilemma. How can the day of Jesus' coming be both completely unknown, and at the same time be known to the day according to Daniel 12:11?

2. (37-39) Jesus says that His coming will be when the world is as it was in **the days of Noah**.

"But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."

a. **As the days of Noah were:** Jesus explained what He meant by **the days of Noah**. It means life centered around the normal things: **eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage**. In other words, life will be business as usual; reprobate perhaps, but usual.

i. **Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage:** Bruce notes that "Some charge these with sinister meaning: [**eating**], hinting at gluttony because often used of beasts, though also, in the sense of eating, of men...[**marrying and giving in marriage**], euphemistically pointing at sexual licences on both sides." Yet he comes to the conclusion, "The idea rather seems to be that all things went on as usual, as if nothing were going to happen."

ii. We should also remember that the days of Noah were also marked by violence and demonic oppression (Genesis 6:1-5).

b. **And did not know until the flood came and took them all away:** Those in the days of Noah were

warned, and judgment eventually came. To those who had ignored the warnings, it came suddenly and unexpectedly.

i. "That the coming of the Son of Man takes place at an unknown time can only be true if in fact life seems to be going on pretty much as usual - just as in the days before the Flood." (Carson)

ii. In this, there is a dilemma. How can Jesus come to a "business-as-usual" world, and a world experiencing the worst calamities ever seen on earth?

3. (40-44) Jesus cautions His disciples to be ready for an unexpected coming.

"Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two *women* will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

a. **Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left:** Jesus here pointed to curious disappearances; to a catching away of some at the coming of the Son of Man (as also described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

i. "*Taken* is the same verb used, *e.g.*, in 1:20; 17:1; 18:16; 20:17; it implies to take someone to be with you, and therefore here points to the salvation rather than the destruction of the one 'taken'." (France)

b. **Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming:** Since the day and hour of this coming are unknowable, Jesus' followers must be on constant guard for His coming.

i. Here again is the Second Coming dilemma.

- Is it at an unexpected hour or is it positively predicted?
- Is it business as usual or worldwide cataclysm?
- Is it meeting Him in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17) or is He coming with the saints (Zechariah 14:5)?

ii. William Barclay describes one aspect of the difficulty here: "It is in two sections and they seem to contradict each other. The first (verses 32-35) seem to indicate that, as a man can tell by the signs of nature when summer is on the way, so he can tell by the signs of the world when the Second Coming is on the way... The second section (verses 36-41) says quite definitely that no one knows the time of the Second Coming, not the angels, not even Jesus himself, but only God; and that it will come upon men with the suddenness of a rainstorm out of a blue sky."

iii. The dilemma is resolved by seeing that there are actually *two* second comings. One is in the air, for the church - commonly known as the *rapture*. The other is to the world, coming with the church, commonly known as the Second Coming of Jesus. The "contradictions" in Matthew 24 (and much of the rest of prophecy) are often solved by seeing there are really references to "two" returns of Jesus.

c. **Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect:** We must not escape the emphasis. We must be ready, because His coming for us is without warning. Jesus follows with a few parables to drive home this point.

i. "Suetonius tells us that it was a piece of Julius Caesar's policy never to fore-acquaint his soldiers of any set time of removal or onset, that he might ever have them in readiness to draw forth whithersoever he would." (Trapp)