

Are You Ready ?

Text : **Matt. 24: 36-44, 25: 1-13**

A. One of the primary themes of the N.T. is the second coming of Christ.

**S#1.
S#2.**

1. One of the most often repeated promises in the New Testament.
 - a. **John 14: 1-3** ... Jesus repeatedly promised it.
 - b. **Acts 1: 9-11** ... Angels promised it.
 - c. Apostles promised it. It's repeatedly mentioned in almost every book of the N.T.

2. Consider one book as an example ... **I Thessalonians** :

- a. **I Thess. 1: 9-10** For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, **10** and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come. **S#3.**
- b. **I Thess. 2: 19** – For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? **S#4.**
- c. **I Thess. 3: 13** – so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints. **S#5.
S#6.**
- d. **I Thess. 4: 13-18** ... Most detailed description of His return in all the scriptures.
- e. **I Thess. 5: 23** – Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **S#7.**

B. Therefore, it's appropriate for us to reflect on the return of Christ.

S#8.

1. The Apostle wrote that ignorance of what is coming is not acceptable. **S#9.**
I Thess. 4: 13 – But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.
2. Anticipating the return of Jesus changes the Christian's view of death and life.

I. Christians are to live in anticipation longing for the return of our Savior.

S#10.

A. The man of faith sincerely longs to be with his Savior.

S#11.

1. **Phil. 1: 21-23** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. **22** But if *I am* to live *on* in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. **23** But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that is very much better*; **S#12.**

2. **Phil 3: 20-21** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; **21** who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, **S#13.**

3. **Rom. 8: 18-19** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. **19** For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. **S#14.**

B. When Jesus comes our circumstances will radically improve. **S#15.**

1. When Jesus returns we will be given a crown of righteousness. **S#16.**

II Tim. 4: 7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; **8** in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

2. When Jesus comes we will get a new body. **S#17.**

II Cor. 5: 2 – For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, (cf – **I Thes 4: 16, I Cor 15: 53**)

3. Our new body will be like the body of Jesus. **S#18.**

I John 3: 2 – Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

4. When Jesus comes we'll go to live with Him. **S#19.**

a. **John 14: 3** – If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

b. Our home with Jesus is now waiting for us. **S#20.**

I Pet. 1: 3 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, **reserved in heaven** for you,

c. That home in Heaven will always be ours. **S#21.**

I Thes 4: 17 – Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

b. Life in Heaven will have none of the problems we face on earth. **S#22.**

Rev. 21: 4 – and God Himself will be among them, **4** and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

C. Is it any wonder we're encouraged to "hasten" the day of His return. S#23.

1. **II Pet. 3: 11-12** Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **S#24.**
(Praying for His return) **12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God,**
because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning,
and the elements will melt with intense heat!
2. The crown of righteousness is for those who love His coming, want to see. **S#25.**
II Tim. 4: 8 – in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,
which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day;
and not only to me, but also to all who have **loved His appearing.**
3. Bible ends with a prayer for the soon return of Christ. **S#26.**
Rev 22: 20 – He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."
Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

II. Jesus used the parable of the 10 virgins to teach us to stay ready for Him. S#27.**A. Our understanding requires some knowledge of Jewish wedding customs.**

1. Most marriages were arranged between the parents while children were young.
 - a. Marriages need not take place soon after the arrangements.
 - b. Typically, they married at a young age. *(Boy could marry at 13 and girls at 12)*
2. There was a period of betrothal. *(similar to, but more than engagement)*
 - a. At the betrothal the groom paid the bride price. *(same price as a bondwoman)*
 - b. The couple was considered married, but they were not permitted sex.
3. The Jews did not consider marriage a religious event, but they were a celebration.
 - a. The wedding feast lasted a week. *(Couple was King and Queen for a week)*
 - b. After the return from captivity their customs varied some. However, generally ...
4. The groom went to the home of the bride to fetch her and the feasting started there.
 - a. There was a joyful procession from the bride's home to the place of the wedding.
 - b. There would be love songs, tambourines, and dancing.
 - c. Jewish weddings took place at night so lamps or torches were essential.
 - d. The bride's attendants would join the procession carrying the lights. **(10 virgins)**
5. The wedding took place at the home of the groom or some suitable venue.
 - a. Right after the wedding the couple went in a room to consummate their marriage.
 - b. In the morning the bride's parents took the bloodstained sheet as proof of virginity.

B. In the parable, the 10 virgins were the attendants to the bride.

1. They all showed up for their assigned task.
2. If the procession had come when they expected it, all would have been fine.
3. Half of them were not prepared for the delay. (**message → be ready to wait**)
 - a. All wanted to be there and to enter the feast.
 - b. All waited and all slept with their torches burning.
 - c. All needed to fill their torches with oil, but some had none.

C. Chapters 24-25 are in answer to two questions asked by the disciples.**S#28.**

1. **Matt. 24: 3** – As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

- a. The signs He gave them about the destruction of Jerusalem saved them.
- b. Jesus did not give them any signs about the end of the age.

Matt. 24: 36 – But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

S#29.

2. In lieu of signs to identify the time of His 2nd coming, He taught them a principle.
 - a. God does not make appointments for His judgments.
 - b. Live so that you are always ready for judgment.

S#30.**D. There’ll be no way to tell when God will bring judgment; it comes w/o warning.**

1. Christ’s coming is described as being like “**a thief in the night.**” **I Thes 5: 2**
2. His reason for this is to cause us to live expecting His return.

S#31.

Luke 12: 35-40 Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps lit. **36** Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open *the door* to him when he comes and knocks. **37** Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself *to serve*, and have them recline *at the table*, and will come up and wait on them. **38** Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, **39** But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. **40** You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.”

S#32.**S#33.**

3. We must not allow this world to distract us from the coming glory.
4. Lost or saved, we are all but sojourners on the earth. **Earth itself is a sojourner.**

III. What does living in expectancy mean to one's life ?**S#34.****A. It means that one should establish a relationship a fellowship with God.****S#35.**

1. **I Thes. 4: 13-18** ... Only those who are in Christ will go to be with Him.

2. **II Thes. 1: 7b-10a** Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, **8** dealing out retribution to those who **S#36.**

Called by gospel .. 2: 14 do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. **9** These will pay the penalty of eternal **S#37.**
destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, **10** when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day,

3. **Gal. 3: 26-27** ... Relationship through faith and baptized into Him.

S#38.**B. It means one should never leave anything that disrupts his fellowship with God.**

1. Sin separates people from God, but God is eager to forgive if we repent and confess.

2. **I John 1: 7-2: 2** ... As long as we confess our sins our relationship is secure.

3. If Jesus could come at any moment, we dare not leave any obstacle between us.

C. It means we must never allow ourselves to become unfruitful servants.**S#39.**

1. **Eph. 2: 10** ... We are created in Christ to do service for God.

2. **John 15** ... All unfruitful branches are cut off and thrown in the fire.

3. **Gal. 6: 9** – Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

** More Christians drift away than rebel or apostatize.*

D. It means that we should lead lives that are totally surrendered to God.**S#40.**

1. **Eph. 5: 15-16** Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise **16** making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

2. **Luke 9: 23-24** And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. **24** "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. **S#41.**

3. Give him our time, our abilities and our treasures.

E. It means there is an urgency in sharing the gospel.**S#42.**

1. Who do you hate so bad you want them to go to Hell ?

a. *Don't tell them the gospel and you'll meet them in eternity.*

b. Everyone who does not obey the gospel will be lost. **John 14: 6**

2. Who do you love that has not obeyed the gospel ?
 - a. *They have no hope outside of Christ.*
 - b. Everyone sins and there is no forgiveness outside of Christ.
 - c. There are no exceptions ... parents, siblings, spouse, children, nice guys, etc.

F. There is no guarantee of tomorrow.

S#43.

God exists outside time ... 1000 yrs & 1 yr are the same to Him.

CONCLUSION :

A. Jesus clearly stated the attitude He wants for us to have in life.

S#44.

Mark 13: 33-37 Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come. ³⁴ *It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert.* ³⁵ Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— ³⁶ in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷ What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!' ”

S#45.

S#46.

* *Again, more Christians drift away than rebel or apostatize.*

B. Is this your attitude toward life ?

S#47.

1. Are you living in expectation of the return of our Savior ?
2. Do you live each day as if it might be the last day ?

C. If the Lord were to come today, would you run to Him or from Him ?

S#48.

1. Are you “**hastening the day?**”
2. Do you “**love His appearing?**”
3. Like John, *do you pray He is* “**coming quickly?**”

D. In Christ we have every reason to long for and to pray for our Savior to come.

INVITATION :

As in the days of Noah, people are wrapped up in daily living.

S#49.

Jesus is coming ! Are you ready to meet Him ?

S#50.

Lesson Text :**Matt. 24: 36-44**

36 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. **37** For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. **38** For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, **39** and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. **40** Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. **41** Two women *will be* grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.”

42 “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. **43** But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. **44** For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will.*”

Matthew 25: 1-13

1 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. **2** Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. **3** For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, **4** but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. **5** Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and *began* to sleep. **6** But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet *him*.’ **7** Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. **8** The foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ **9** But the prudent answered, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy *some* for yourselves.’ **10** And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. **11** Later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’ **12** But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’ **13** Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.”