

LESSON ESSENTIALS

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORLDVIEW

LESSON 14: THE LORD WILL COME AGAIN

The Bible tells us that the triumphant return of the Lord Jesus is as swift as a thief in the night. This requires us to be prepared for His return, but being steadfast in following His will until He comes.

How has the world been waiting for Christ's return? What exactly did Christ promise about His return? How should we prepare for it? Read on to find out more!

The Lord's return is a significant event that will take place in the future. In this lesson we will be looking at the details of the Lord's return, and how it should affect the way we live until then.

Matthew 24 talks about a person who will be left behind and another disappearing when the Lord comes. We have to be prepared for the Lord's return, not fading in our belief so that we will be with Jesus when He returns.

After His resurrection, Jesus spent some time with his disciples and assured them of His plans for the world to come. One day, on a hill Jesus ascended into the skies as the disciples watched. Can you imagine being there in that moment? What questions would you have had? How much would you long for Jesus, your Lord and friend, to return to you? Acts 1:10-11 says that as the disciples watched Jesus ascend into the heavens, two angels appeared and told them that Jesus would come again just the way he had gone. Since the ascension of Jesus, the church of believers has been looking forward to His return.

The Bible tells us that when the Lord returns there are certain events that will take place on the earth. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 informs us that the return of Christ will be accompanied with a loud command, with the voice of an arch angel and the trumpet of God. This loud command of the Lord's return will raise all the dead people who believed in Him, and trusted God for their salvation. The believers who are alive will be taken up to meet him in the skies. From that moment, all who believed in Him, dead or alive, will spend eternity with Him. Our reward for believing in Christ is to spend eternity with Him. As a believer the Lord's return is a moment to be treated with great significance!

It is important to know that the hour and day of the Lord's return is not mentioned and is unknown to everyone except God the Father. The disciples asked Jesus about His return. Jesus replied, "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son but the Father only." (Matthew 24:36). Mathew 24 gives us an idea that the return of the Lord is unknown to all of us. The Bible uses the metaphor of a thief in the night for the Lord's return. It is similar to the days of Noah when the big flood hit the earth when the people were not ready. The second coming of Christ is an unexpected time when we will be busy with our daily routine. 1 Corinthians 15:52 says that the return of the Lord is like a twinkling of an eye, like a flash of light. Jesus thus warns His disciples to be ready for His return.

We have to be prepared for the Lord's return by all means. But what does being prepared look like? Jesus explains this in the parable of 'The Ten Virgins'. The ten virgins were waiting for the bridegroom, each with a lamp. There were five wise virgins who carried extra oil for their lamps while the other five, the foolish virgins, did not care to do so. Finally when the bridegroom arrived after much delay there was no oil to keep their lamps burning. The wise virgins used their extra oil to keep their lamps burning until the bridegroom reached them, but the foolish virgins could not do so. By the time the foolish virgins returned from the market with the oil, the wedding doors were closed. They pleaded with the door keeper to let them enter but they were not allowed in to join the feast, as the door keeper could not recognise them. Similarly everyone who is devoted to

God's ways, looking forward to the Lord's return, will be taken up into the skies along with Jesus; the rest will be left behind. So like a servant, who must always be on guard indefinitely, awaiting his master's return, we should also carry out our lives preparing ourselves, abiding by His word and anticipating His coming every single minute of our lives. We must not hold tightly to anything on this earth because at any moment we may be taken from it. Living in hope of the return of Christ and putting our trust in heavenly treasures rather than earthly things is how we prepare ourselves.

We have to take up the responsibility of serving the Lord with diligence. 1 John 2:28 tells us, "And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming." God wants us to continue in our good works, in following His words and in preaching His gospel to the ends of the earth. We should constantly remind ourselves of His second coming so that our excitement and our confidence should not die down. How are you preparing for Christ's return today?

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IN REVIEW

- The return of the Lord is very soon but we are uncertain of its time. No one except God the Father knows about His return.
- When Christ returns He will come with majesty, as the King of kings and the Lord of lords contrary to His first humble birth on this earth.
- The Lord, our master, desires us to be ready and willing to be a part of His triumphant return.
- We ought to be ready for the Lord's return by serving God and constantly living in His will, to bring glory to His name. We should make sure that we constantly remind ourselves about the Christ's return.

HAVE YOUR SAY

- What do you know about the Lord's return? What do you wish you knew?

- Are you living a life preparing for His return? What are you willing to do so that you are ready for the coming of the Lord Jesus?

- In what ways can you try to remind yourself of the Lord's return so that you would be ready?

- How can you be instrumental in preparing others for the Lord's return by sharing the gospel of Christ? Set a goal this week for conversations that may lead to explaining the Gospel to others.

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