

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOV 14TH-15TH, 2020 // BOOK OF MATTHEW

THE RETURN (MATTHEW 24:23-31)

MORE ABOUT FALSE TEACHERS AND LEADERS

Jesus had already warned the disciples that false leaders would arise. Here Jesus adds that many people will predict exact times of His return from a secret knowledge they have.

- There are cult leaders and narcissistic preachers doing this virtually non-stop all around the world, but this will get even worse as time goes on.

SOME WILL EVEN PERFORM "SIGNS AND WONDERS"

Jesus said in Mt. 12 and 16 that "evil" people only look for signs and wonders. It isn't that God doesn't give us signs, but we should be seeking truth through the Word and prayer, not miraculous events.

- **We believe in the miraculous, but a mature Christian follows God even if they never witness "signs and wonders."**

JESUS IS NOT IN A HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

Many false churches today use verbiage like "secret place" or "inner rooms" to try and sell a hidden knowledge of Jesus. Ironically Jesus blatantly warned us to avoid those that say He's "in the wilderness" or in "storehouses."

- Remember, **the Bible is not secretive. The Word is exposing and revealing truth, not hiding it. YOU WILL KNOW WHEN JESUS IS BACK**

Though people will always claim to have a secret knowledge of Jesus, during the last days people will say He has literally returned to particular places.

- Jesus said His return will be like lightning that is seen from the east to the west. He also makes an odd reference to vultures. This is most likely from Rev. 19:17-21.

JUMPING TO THE END OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

V29-31 jumps from the building of evil throughout time to the end of time as we know it. Jesus speaks of, and John echoes in Revelation, the cosmic disturbances that will take place right before Jesus returns.

- These cosmic changes are also found in Is. 13, Ezek. 32, Joel 2-3, Amos 5, Zech. 14, Acts 2:20, and of course Revelation.

IT WILL BE UNMISTAKABLE

Jesus says the people of the earth "will mourn," meaning those that are lost will realize their time has come. Jesus directly quotes Daniel 7:13 about "coming on the clouds of heaven with power."

- The only people not mourning are the "elect" gathered from around the world because they are excited about their eternity.

THE HOUR (MATTHEW 24:32-44)

KNOWING THE SEASON, BUT NOT THE HOUR

Jesus uses the simple analogy of looking at a fruit tree. People who know fig trees know that looking at how the fruit is developing indicates that summer is coming.

- Much the same way, **Christians who should know how to gauge the fruit around them should be cognizant of the season. As evil increases, our awareness should too.**

BUT DIDN'T THAT GENERATION PASS AWAY?

Jerusalem was going to be judged in a manner of speaking in 70 A.D. when they were leveled by Rome. Jesus goes back to the disciples' generation and warns them to be aware of the coming destruction.

- That generation did pass away, and so will the evil one right before His 2nd coming, but the Word of God will never pass away.

THE SEASON, YES. THE DAY OR HOUR, NO.

Though Jesus tells His disciples that they can sense the season of His coming back, they cannot know the day or hour. Not even the angels or Jesus know, only the Father.

- **This should give us a clear sign that when people claim specific days, we should not take that to heart.**

THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE DAY IS ON PURPOSE

Jesus left the exact time unclear so that His followers would learn to be ready at all times for His coming. God knows that if we knew the future, most would only serve Him at the last minute to avoid hell.

- **It always goes back to the posture of the heart. Are we seeking salvation out of love or fear and selfishness?**

LIKE THE DAYS OF NOAH

Just like before the rain fell in Noah's day, people who don't care about living for God will be caught up in "eating, drinking, and marrying," in other words, **just living their lives with no thought of the afterlife.**

- **It is our unwillingness to think ahead and outside of our own comforts that make us miss eternity and the things of God.**

STAY ALERT

Jesus uses a couple analogies of people working and one being prepared for the end and the other not being prepared. He also mentions a homeowner that prepares for a "thief in the night."

- The point is simple: **be prepared at all times for Jesus to return.**

FAITHFUL (MATTHEW 24:45-51)

"WHO THEN IS FAITHFUL AND WISE...?"

Jesus poses the question of "Who is faithful?" and immediately answers it, "...that servant who the Master finds doing [their] job when He comes."

- Our biggest challenge is to be faithful and wise servants of Jesus. **God entrusts us with the stewardship of our lives. We're called to live in obedience and love.**

WE'RE ALSO CALLED TO STEWARD RESOURCES WELL

How we spend our money matters. Jesus says that we are put "in charge of [our] possessions" for a time.

- **Everything we have ultimately is by God's grace, but we are called to steward our finances well.** This means faithfulness to our family, church, and to the betterment of society.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE FAITHFUL IN LOVING OTHERS

Jesus warns us that if we have the mindset that His coming is delayed, we may become hateful to people around us and live recklessly.

- **We're not only called to be kind and loving, but to also live in sobriety and care in order to not hurt others with our careless choices.**

THERE WILL COME A DAY OF JUDGMENT

Though the Bible assures the believer that the faithful will receive an amazing reward, the ones that refuse to believe and love Him will face eternal damnation (separation from God).

- **Why? Because a life without Jesus leads to arrogance, selfishness, hurting oneself, and hurting others. Hell will be the absence of God. Whatever that looks like, it will be dark.**

TO BE FAITHFUL

- God does not expect perfection, but He does expect diligence and consistency.
- Are we **building our relationship with Him, loving others** (biblically), **servicing, giving,** and **being held accountable?**
- Do we **repent and step away from evil** when we make mistakes? Do we show this grace to others?

TO BE PREPARED AT ALL TIMES

- Are we cognizant about the brevity of our life and other people's lives?
- **Are we using time wisely?** Are we **intentionally disciplining** others as we also grow in our knowledge of God?
- **Are we full of His Spirit?** Are we displaying the Fruit and praying for the Gifts of wisdom and discernment?

ARE WE CHRISTIAN ATHEISTS?

- **Do we say we believe in the Word, but live like the things in it will never come to pass?**
- Have we become religious people that really don't believe in the power of and depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit?
- Do we honestly believe that **one day we will be held accountable by the standard of God's Word?**
- 2 Timothy 3:1-5