

YOU

Bible Study

Sermon Series: Essentials of Christianity

To be used with: The Return of Jesus

Sermon Title Possibilities: The Return of the King

Scripture: Matthew 24:3-14,29-44

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study “Essentials of Christianity,” this sermon supports the session Scripture passage to explore the return of Jesus and how He will establish His eternal kingdom.

Introduction: Don’t you just love a happy ending in a movie. You see the main actor and actress find each other, fall in love, then experience some dramatic problem they have to overcome or an enemy they must conquer. You probably have your favorite movie as an example of this. Let me hear some of your favorites.

We love happy endings and we love to see the main characters come out on top. For believers in Jesus, the Bible clearly describes this kind of happy ending for those who follow Jesus. The main characters come out on top, the problem of evil is overcome, and the enemy is defeated. This is what will happen when Jesus returns.

Jesus will return one day—but for so many years, Christians have debated specific details of Christ’s return. There are all kinds of millennial views of when and how Christ will return. But let’s look at what Jesus said would be true.

1. We will see signs. (v. 3-14)

In verse 3, the disciples asked Jesus to explain what would be a sign of His return. Jesus spent quite a bit of time talking about the signs that would precede His return. They included the following:

Deceivers and false teachers will lead people astray with teachings completely contrary to the gospel or messages that are very close but not the gospel. There will also be wars and conflict among the nations. We continue to see more and more international conflict as the time of Christ’s return approaches.

There will be earthquakes and other natural disasters as the Lord displays His sovereignty and power over the forces of nature. Verse 12 describes the rise of lawlessness which, in turn, causes people to stop demonstrating love to one another. In this past year, we have seen so much of this.

2. We will see Jesus. (v. 29-31)

In addition to incredible astrological signs, including the darkening of the moon and sun, Jesus identified the sign of the Son of Man. The visible return of Jesus would be seen by everyone, according to verse 30. All the people on the earth

will see Jesus return. How is that possible? Honestly, it's hard to say, but God can do it. With the rise of social media, important events play out on our phones in real time in other locations around the country and around the world. Even so, not everyone saw these events.

How ever He comes, Jesus will come with power and with glory. There will be no mistaking who He is. Jesus will visibly return to the earth.

3. We need to be prepared. (v. 32-44)

In verse 32, Jesus told a brief parable related to watching signs and being prepared. Just as you know summer has arrived by looking at the trees, you can look for the signs of Jesus' return and not be surprised when it happens.

Beginning in verse 36, Jesus gave a series of scenarios, all with the same teaching: we need to be ready for the return of Jesus. In the first scenario, rather than being prepared for the flood, everyone (other than Noah's family) were doing their own thing and were caught unaware and swept away with the flood. Jesus said this is how it will be when He comes. Even though there will be warning, many will ignore the signs.

In verses 40-41, the picture is that of the two men working in the field or two women grinding in the mill. People who don't know Jesus as Savior and Lord will be surprised when the followers of Christ are suddenly taken to be with Him. Those who are left are those who were not prepared.

The final illustration is to drive home the point that if we knew something was going to happen, like our house being broken into, we would make sure we were prepared and ready. But we don't know the exact day when Jesus will return. But the point is to be ready at any time.

Conclusion: While Christians may debate the specifics related to the return of Christ, we can have great hope in the promise of Jesus' return. To be ready, for those of us who follow Jesus, means we need to remain faithful to God—everyday. Why? Because Jesus will return to establish His eternal kingdom.

Author Bio: Rick Prall is a senior curriculum specialist with Ramsey Solutions and an ordained minister. He has served churches in California, Oklahoma, Texas, and Tennessee and has written Bible study curriculum material for over 30 years. Rick has been married to Helene for 37 years and they have two grown and married children and two wonderful granddaughters. Rick and Helene have a passion for international missions and have served in many countries together; they are members of Gladeville Baptist Church.