

Hope in Uncertainty - Week 2 Pastor David Hutsko 4.19.26

INTRODUCTION

We are not meant to know the “day or the hour” of Jesus’s return. In Mark Ch. 13, Matthew Ch 24, and Luke Ch 11 Jesus told us himself, (“However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.”) There are various places in the Bible that refer to the “last days” or “end times” and the signs of their culmination. But Jesus redirects our attention from the date of His return to what He calls us to do as we await His return. Let’s take a look at some of our assignments while we wait for Jesus to return.

Ice Breaker

What “End of the World” movies have you seen?

Key Passage

2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. - 2 Timothy 4:2-5 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Parable of the Man Who Went Away

32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. 34 It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. 35 "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. 36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. 37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!' " - Mark 13:32-37 NIV

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. - John 15:4-5 ESV

49 "And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven." - Luke 24:49 NLT

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." - Acts 1:8 NLT

Jesus tells us to abide in Him as He abides in us. That word in the Greek (menō) means to remain, not depart, and become as one. How does Jesus abide in us? What can we expect to receive as He abides in us? What do we do to abide in Him?

Jesus has told us how we are to live until His return, but He has also given us the Holy Spirit to be in us and empower us to be His witnesses and bear much fruit. If we want to be ready for the 2nd coming, we must abide in Him.

WRAP-UP

No one knows the exact timing of Jesus’s return, so the focus should not be on predicting it but on living faithfully and staying spiritually alert. Scripture calls believers to remain ready by preaching truth, caring for others, using their spiritual gifts, practicing humility, and sharing the gospel. Jesus’ teachings emphasize diligence, perseverance, and avoiding complacency while waiting. Above all, believers are to abide in Christ—remaining connected to Him through the Holy Spirit—so they can be strengthened to live out their faith and be prepared whenever He returns.

MEMORY VERSE

9 for they keep talking about the wonderful welcome you gave us and how you turned away from idols to serve the living and true God. 10 And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God's Son from heaven--Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.

- 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 NLT

Challenge – To learn more about Apocalyptic writing watch Bible Project’ How to Read Apocalyptic Literature

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNDX4tUdj1Y>

In chapter 13 of Mark, we saw Jesus prophesy about the destruction of the Temple which took place 40 years after His death. But Jesus also went on to describe events which he described as birth pangs that must happen before the end comes. And although we are to learn the lessons taught by these prophecies, Jesus clearly states that even He doesn't know when that will happen. So, we needn't try to figure out the date of Jesus' return, but along with these signs Jesus focuses our attention on some things we are expected to do while He is away. And we do want to take a good look at those.

What are the first two things Jesus tells us to do in verse 33 and the final thing we are told to do in verse 37? What is it we are watching for? How would you characterize the attitude the owner expects the servants to have while they watch? How does that attitude translate into the way we are keeping watch for Jesus' return?

In this parable the owner hasn't told his servants how long he will be gone. Likewise, Jesus hasn't told us how long he will be gone. But He has promised to return. The danger is that we may grow weary in waiting, grow lax and begin to doubt. We might neglect our assigned tasks. Imagine the contrast between how you would feel if Jesus returned and found you faithfully living as He commanded you to, versus finding you were neglecting what you had been assigned. As He said in verse 36 "do not let him find you sleeping."

2. Some of Our Assignments

If we survey the scriptures, we will find the Jesus has given us many different assignments while he is away. Here is a sampling.

- Care for Those in Need

15 Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, 16 and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"-- but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? 17 So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. - James 2:15-17 NLT

The Lord wants us to be shaped by the Holy Spirit until He returns. Love is arguably the most important way we reflect God in us. Jesus said the greatest commandments are to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. But love is more than words, it involves action.

Pause to brainstorm a few practical ideas that you and your friends can do to put the love of God into action by caring for others. Then agree to a time to do one.

- Serve one another with our spiritual gifts

10 God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. - 1 Peter 4:10 NLT

We are all members of one family; we are all one body of believers. And God has given us unique gifts and abilities to share with one another. Those gifts are needed to make the body whole and healthy. But we must choose if we are going to put our gifts into practice to serve others or not.

Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? If you are unsure, ask those who know you well what unique gifting they have seen in you (or use an online assessments tool to identify your gifts). How can that gift be used to serve others?

- Practice Humility

3 Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4 Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. 5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. - Philippians 2:3-5 NLT

We are steeped in a culture of self-promotion, entitlement and pride. But the Bible tells us we are to have the same attitude that Jesus had- putting the interest of others ahead of ourselves. In short, we are to practice humility.

In the above verse, what are the different ways we might fail to have the humble attitude of Jesus? What is one area in which you would like to improve?

- Share the Gospel

19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." - Matthew 28:19-20 NLT

Making disciples isn't limited to teachers and preachers. The great commission was Jesus' instructions to all His followers. We are to be ready to share the good news of Jesus wherever we go.

What has been your experience sharing the Gospel with friends or family? What is it about sharing the Gospel that you find most challenging? What do you imagine is the worst that could happen, the best that could happen and the most likely to happen if you shared the Gospel with someone.

3. Abide

While we are carrying out the tasks that Jesus has assigned us, we await His return actively, faithfully, and with great expectation. But we cannot do that in our own strength, nor does Jesus want us to.