

How and When Is Jesus Coming Back

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[0:00] And if you want to open up your Bibles, we're going to be in Matthew 24 this morning, 24 and 25.

It is on page 985 of your pew Bible. Are you ready for Christmas?

I mean, we're 10 days out. Nine days to get some stuff done. We know the day and the hour.

Are you ready? Have you done your shopping? Have you sent out your Christmas cards? Have you solidified family plans? Are you ready for Christmas 2024?

You know the day. You know the hour. It's one day closed. You know, one of the things that we've been saying is that we live in between the advents. The arrivals.

[1:02] The first advent of Jesus Christ was when the eternally existent second person of the Trinity took on flesh and dwelt among us. The word became flesh.

Emmanuel has come. God with us. Oh, come let us adore him. And we live in between the first advent and the second advent when Jesus will return in his glorified resurrection body.

In what Jesus will say in power and in great glory. The thing is, nobody knows that day or hour. Well, nobody except one person in all of existence.

But we've got to be ready. Last week, we started this Even So Come series. We are in the first advent celebration, Christmas time, but we're looking at the second advent.

And so last week, I asked, where is Jesus right now? He is at the right hand of God the Father. And we asked and answered, what is Jesus doing right now? He is upholding his creation.

[2:13] He's expanding his kingdom. He is receiving, welcoming his praise. And he's awaiting his return. Remember, he's looking at his watch. It's one day closer.

This morning, we are going to ask and answer three more questions. The first question is this. How will Jesus come back?

Second question is, when will Jesus come back? And the third question is, what difference does this make? For those living in 2024 and on the verge of 2025, what difference does this make?

We live in between the advents. The first advent is our incarnate king lying in a manger. Remember the magi bowing before him? And then the second advent is the incarnate king coming back in glory and every knee shall bow before him.

So let's ask and answer this first question. How will Jesus come back? I'm going to answer that question by looking at Matthew chapter 24 and verses 29 and 30.

[3:29] But I just want to situate you. Because typically at this time of the year, we are in Matthew 1 and 2. The birth of Jesus. But this morning, we are at the back end of the gospel of Matthew.

Talking about the second advent of Jesus. And so at the end of chapter 23, Jesus has come into Jerusalem. He has spoken his woes on the Pharisees.

And he has wept over Jerusalem. Lamented over them. Because they did not recognize the time of their visitation. And then at the beginning of chapter 24, Jesus says, you see all these things, do you not?

He's pointing to the temple complex. Truly I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down. And then in verse 3 of chapter 24, the disciples like, tell us when will these things be?

And what will be the sign of your coming in of the end of the age? And Jesus answers that question specifically in 29 and 30. But then he tells us what's going to happen before that.

[4:39] And so before his coming, we learn that there will be wars and rumors of wars. Verse 6. Nation will rise against nation. Check. There will be famines and earthquakes.

7 and 8. Check. Check. These are the beginnings of the birth pains, Jesus says. The birth pains to his second coming. In verses 9 through 14, he speaks of suffering for his sake.

In verse 12 and 13, he talks about some because of the suffering will fall away, but those who persevere to the end will be saved.

In 15 through 20, he talks about the abomination of desolation, which I believe has already taken place. And then in verses 21 through 22, he starts talking about this great tribulation.

Some theologians think that is the entirety of the church age from Jesus' ascension to his return. Others think that that is a concentrated, unique moment right before Jesus' return when there is unusual suffering among God's saints.

[5:55] I think it is a combination of both. And it is in verse 29 that Jesus pivots. And he says this.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. And the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man.

And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. So let me just point out just a few things about how he will return.

The first thing in verse 30 is this, that it's going to be visible. Did you see that? Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man.

And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds. They will see him. What you need to understand is that the sign of the coming of the Son of Man is the coming of the Son of Man.

[7:03] They will see him. They will see the Son of Man. It's a reference to Daniel chapter 7. When the Son of Man comes and God gives him the eternal kingdom forever.

But what I want you to notice is how public it is. In verse 30 we read, Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man.

And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. If you flip back in your Bible to Revelation chapter 1 verse 7 we read this.

Behold, he is coming with the clouds. And every eye will see him. Every eye will see him. In other words, Jesus' first coming, his first advent was kind of limited visibility.

But his second advent, when he comes back, everybody on the planet will see him simultaneously. Whether that's 8 million people, plus or minus.

[8:04] He will be seen by all. And this is going to be a multi-sensory event.

Because, I mean, look at verse 29. The sun will be darkened. The moon will not give its light. The stars will fall from heaven. And the powers of the heavens will be shaken. There is heavenly seismic activity.

It's going to be highly, highly public. Jesus describes this earlier as lightning flashes from the east to the west.

It's going to be seen in the sky like vultures around a corpse. It's going to be highly visible. All we'll see. It's going to be visible.

The second aspect of how he will return is that it's going to be visible because he's returning bodily. We see it in verse 30.

[9:08] Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man. And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds. Jesus isn't speaking metaphorically here.

He's not super spiritualizing his return like it's some just kind of like spiritual body. He is actually talking about his body returning.

Visible. His incarnate resurrection body. Remember in Acts 1, I pointed to this last week. Jesus is speaking to his disciples in Jerusalem.

And he says, hold on, wait. Wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you'll be my witnesses. Jerusalem, Samaria to the end of the age. And then he ascended into heaven.

And the disciples were watching on a cloud. And two angels said, what are you guys looking at? Don't you know he's going to come back in the same way? Bodily. On a cloud.

[10:12] The eternally existent second person of the Trinity took on flesh first advent. He is at the right hand of God.

Incarnate. Right now. And he will come back second advent. Incarnate. Bodily. And everyone will see him. So he's coming back visibly.

He's coming back bodily. And he is coming back gloriously. Verse 30 again. And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn.

And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Great glory. What kind of glory are we talking about?

We've already been given a hint of it. If you flip back in your Bible to Matthew, to Matthew 17. We get a preview of this glory of which he speaks.

[11:14] It's Matthew 17.2. This is the transfiguration. 17.1. And after six days, Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John, his brother, and led him up on a high mountain by themselves.

And two, he was transfigured before them. And his face shone like the sun. And his clothes became white as light. That kind of glory. Turn in your Bibles to Revelation chapter 1 again.

We learn that John is in the Spirit on the Lord's day. He hears this voice in verse 11. And he turns in verse 12.

Chapter 1, verse 12. To see the voice. He sees seven lampstands, which are the seven churches in chapter 2 and 3. And in the midst of the lampstands, one like a son of man clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest.

There's some glory. The hairs of his head were white glory, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire. Note that. His feet were like burnished bronze refined in a furnace.

[12:21] And his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars. From his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. There's some power.

And his face was like the sun shining in full strength. Power and great glory. Flipping your Bible back to Revelation chapter 19. Verses 11 through 16.

11 through 16. John writes, Then I saw heaven open and behold a white horse. Power. Power. The one sitting on it is called faithful and true.

And in righteousness he judges and makes war. Power. His eyes are like a flaming fire. That's back to Revelation 1. Glory. And on his head are many diadems.

And he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood. And the name by which he is called is the Word of God. And the armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

[13:23] From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. And he will rule them with a rod of iron. Power. And he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

On his robe and on his thigh he is a name written. King of kings and Lord of lords. He is coming back in glory, in great power.

King of kings and Lord of lords. King of kings and Lord of lords. King of kings and Lord of lords. It's glorious. It's fulfillment of Daniel chapter 7. When he comes back, all eyes will see.

And all eyes will see his body. And all eyes will see him in his glorious state. Are you ready?

Are you ready? Are you longing for his appearing? Or is it just something you know back there?

[14:29] The last aspect of his return of how he will return? Visible bodily, gloriously, provocatively.

I'm sure you noticed this. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man. And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. Maybe you picked up on that.

You know Revelation chapter 1. Verse 7. Behold, he's coming with the clouds. And every eye will see him, even those who pierced him.

And all the tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so, amen. Who are these people wailing? In mourning at his return.

At the second advent. What is going on? Well, these are all the multitudes of people at the time of his return that have refused him. That have rejected him. Outrightly or just kind of like off the cuff. [15:37] They know at this one terrible moment. This one terrible instant. And when he is visible and comes back bodily.

And gloriously. They will know at that moment. That their time is up. Judgment has come. The king has returned.

And they will now face him. It's that moment. When all of those people who have refused Christ. Will see him in the heavens.

And there is this. Oh, no. Oh, no. One of the most difficult things this week. In preparing. I know you don't want to go here.

But we need to go here. Is thinking about the people that I love in my life. Who have refused him.

[16:39] And the just. Just the sense of dread. Is if Jesus were to come back tomorrow. These people I love. Will wail on that day.

Oh, no. And so we pray. We witness. We evangelize.

We appeal to people. You can escape the judgment to come. By believing in him now. You don't need to wail on that day. You can worship on that day.

And you can rejoice. And be glad when he comes back. And when you say. Come Lord Jesus. And he comes. You're going to say. Yes and amen. He's here. Come Lord. Most people on that day.

Will wail. But some of us. Will worship. Because our king has come. There are many ways you can enter a room.

[17:39] Right? Have you ever been in a room. Where someone with a big personality. Comes in and they just fill the room. This is the ultimate. In final. Entry. Arrival.

Return. And he's going to fill the planet. At his first coming. Magi bowed. Before the incarnate king. In his manger. At his second coming.

All. Will bow their knee. Whether wailing or worshiping. Before the incarnate king. In all of his glory. He. He. He. He. He.

He. He. So how will he come back? Visibly. Bodily. Gloriously. Provocatively. And it begs a question.

When. When will he come back? The answer is. We don't know.

[18:35] If you look at chapter 24 verse 36. We read this. But concerning that day and hour. This is Jesus speaking. That day and hour of his. Of his return. The coming of the son of man.

No one knows. Not even the angels of heaven. Nor the son. But the father. Only. Neither the angels. Neither. The son.

Jesus doesn't know. There's only one person. In all of existence. Who knows the day and the hour. And it is on his private. Personal. Calendar. It's circled.

It's God the father. And you may be asking. Well how does that work? I thought that Jesus was fully God. And fully man. How can God. Jesus who was God. Did not know.

Something like that. Maybe you can. Explain it this way. He's choosing not to know. As a way of submitting. To his father's will. And so every day.

[19:34] In glory. He's looking at his watch. Saying. As he's upholding his creation. As he's expanding his kingdom. As he's receiving his praise. He's looking at his watch. And saying. Father. It's today of the day.

I'm ready to go. He doesn't know. And we don't know with him. Here's what we do know.

He has promised. He will come back. We don't know when. He will come back. So there's this promise. And then there's this.

Unexpected time when. And you know what it does? It creates tension in us. It's intentional. To live in tension.

To live in suspense. So we wait with him. On his return. Here's another way to think about it.

[20:31] We are one day. Farther away. From his first advent. But one day closer. To his second advent.

In the mind of God the father. On his plan. For the fullness of time. These two advents. Are set dates.

On his calendar. Which means. The second advent of Jesus. Isn't getting further away. It's getting closer. The time.

The day. The hour. Is set. We're one day. Closer. To the second advent. Not one day. Further. From it.

We're living between. The advents. We're on Christ time. Do you know what's interesting. About this passage? It's what happens.

[21:26] After verse 36. Jesus. Jesus lays out. Five. Illustrations. Of this. Unexpected return. Of. Of the son of man.

Let me just point them out. Really quick. In verses 37. Through 42. It's the. Unexpected arrival. Of the flood. It's being compared.

To the. To the. To the. Unexpected arrival. Of Jesus. Jesus. And then. In verses. 43. Through 44. We have this. Unexpected arrival.

Of a thief. And there's two responses. In verses 45. To 45. 51. Of chapter 24. We have an unexpected. Return. Of a master. Of a house.

And we have two responses. Turning into chapter 25. The. The parable. Of the ten virgins. We have the delayed. And unexpected arrival. Of a. Of a bridegroom.

[22:21] And two responses. And then the parable. Of the talents. We have a master. Who gives. His. His servants. Talents.

To use. And he comes back. Unexpectedly. And holds them to account. And there are two responses. What Jesus is getting at.

Here is. There is a day. And an hour. He promises us. We just don't know. When it is. Which means. It will be sudden.

And unexpected. When he comes back. It puts us. In a state. Of suspense. A sense.

Of waiting. I love my parents. Mom. Dad. If you're watching. I love you. They live. Outside Chicago.

[23:14] It's about an hour. And a half drive. From where they're at. To our house. In Kenosha. And when they're coming up. To visit us. When it gets to about.

An hour. And 25 minutes. I'm like. Where are they? Where are they? I am literally. Pacing our house. Usually. You'll find me. Out on our sidewalk. Pacing our sidewalk.

Waiting for my parents. Because I can't wait. To see them. And usually. I get to a point. Where I call them. And I say. Where are you? And my dad says.

Something to the extent of. Hey. We're right around the corner. My mom says something. We just passed. The Wisconsin sign.

It's really sweet. But I know the day and the hour. I can't wait to see them. The tension that I live in.

[24:10] Oh. I love it. Because I can't wait to see them. Do you feel the tension. Of living between the advents. Do you feel it?

Do you have this idea. Functioning in your being. And in your life. That you are one day closer. To his return. Are you.

Ready. For his return. Which brings us to the third question. What difference does this make for us? What difference does this make. That Jesus is coming back. In 2024. And heading into 2025. What. It's kind of like. So what.

What difference does it make. Well as. I was pointing out. In this passage. That we are looking at. In 24 and 25. Those five illustrations. Following Jesus.

[25:11] Words in 36. That no one knows. The day and the hour. Well. They help us know. The difference that this makes. Is. The days. The days. The days. The days. The days. The days. The days. The days.

The days. So in verses 37 through 42. In chapter 24. When Jesus is. Comparing his return. To the days of Noah. When. When that. Flood was coming. But nobody knew when.

There were two responses. There was the response of Noah. And his family. Who built the ark. And then got into the ark. When the floods came.

And they were delivered. And then there was the response. Of everybody else. Who were marrying. Giving away in marriage. Unaware. Of what was going to be happening. And they got swept away.

By the flood. Two responses. You're either ready. Or you're not. In verses 43 through 44. In chapter 24. Jesus talks about his coming.

[26:04] As a thief in the night. And there's this master of a house. And Jesus is like. How will a master of a house. Respond. To a thief coming. If he's not ready. The thief will break in.

And steal from him. But if he's ready. And he stays awake. He'll deliver his house. Two responses. In verses 45 through 51. There's this other master of a house. And we have these two servants. One is a faithful and wise servant. Verse 45.

And the other is. A wicked servant. And the wise servant. While the master is gone. He is. He's doing his master's business. Of the household.

And when his master gets back. He gives him a reward. He puts him over. Gives him more responsibility. But that wicked servant. He comes back. When he's not expecting it.

[27:03] That wicked servant. Wasn't doing the master's business. He was. He was exploiting people. For his own gain. And when the master gets back. He throws him out. In the place of hypocrites.

Where there's weeping. And gnashing of teeth. Two responses. You've got to be ready. In Matthew 25.

The parable of the ten virgins. You have this bridegroom. Who's delayed. And finally comes back at midnight. And you've got five young ladies. Who didn't have enough oil for their lamps.

It's kind of like this. They didn't have an external battery pack. For their iPhone. Their iPhone ran out of power. But you have these other young ladies. Who had an external battery pack.

They had more lamp. More oil for their lamp. And so they were ready. When the bridegroom came. And if you look at verse. Chapter 25. Those who.

[28:08] Those who came. Who were ready. Verse 10. And while they were going to buy. The bridegroom came. And those who were ready. Went in with him. To the marriage feast.

And the door was shut. But those young ladies. Who weren't ready. They had to go buy. More oil. And when they finally get. To the place.

They say. Lord. Lord. Open us. Up to us. But he answered. Verse 12. Truly. I say to you. I do not know you. Two responses. Unexpected return.

And of course. There is the parable of the talent. Three servants. Are given. Different sets of talents. It's just some of money. The master gives.

One five talents. The other two talents. Another one. One talent. The master goes off. On a journey. He comes back. The servant. With five talents. Doubles it. The servant. With two talents.

[29:04] Doubles it. The servant. With one talent. Squanders it. Does nothing with it. And when they're held. To account. In verse 21. The master.

Says to the one. With five talents. Who made. Talents. Who made a ten. Well done. Good and faithful servant. You have been faithful. Over a little. I will set you over much. Enter into the joy. Of your master. To the one. Who had two talents. And doubled it. His master said to him. Well done. Good and faithful servant. You've been faithful. Over a little. I will set you over much. Enter into the joy.

Of your master. But the one. Who squandered it. You wicked. And slothful servant. And then what results.

Is this. Not an entering. Into joy. Cast the worthless servant. Into the outer darkness. In that place. There will be weeping.

[29:56] And gnashing of teeth. Two servants ready. One servant. Was not ready. The point.

What does it mean. For us. In 2024. That Jesus is coming back. We must. Be. Ready.

And so what does that look like? We take Jesus at his word. We believe what he's saying.

Jesus says I'm coming back. We say. We'll be ready. This amounts to. A requirement. Of us. Who've been saved. By his grace.

Now we live out. Our salvation. In anticipation. Of his coming. We persevere. To the end. And so he is saying. Be ready. Be ready. He's expecting us.

[30:55] To be ready. And so at the end of Matthew. Matthew 28. When Jesus gives. The great commission. He says. Go make disciples of. All nations. Baptizing them in the name of the father. And the son. And the holy

spirit.

He then says. Teaching them to observe. All that I have commanded you. This would be that. To be ready. We must be ready.

Are you ready? Are you taking Jesus. At his word. Here's what I'm not asking. I'm not asking. If you believe. Jesus said these words. I'm not asking that. I am asking you. Are you building your life. On what Jesus is saying. With these words.

That's what I'm asking you. Are you ready? Are you taking Jesus. At his word. We're one day closer. Not one day further.

[31:51] Not only do we take Jesus. At his word. We. We watch and wait. We live in tension. We live in suspense.

We. We synchronize. Our watches. To being on Christ. Time. We're one day closer. Mark. We're one day closer.

To his coming. In hard times. We're one day closer. In times of ease. We're one day closer. When you want to give up.

Christian. We're one day closer. When. When you want to celebrate. We're one day closer. When. You are being ridiculed.

For Jesus. Think of our brothers. In an Uttar Pradesh prison. We're one day closer. Or if you've been. Honored.

[32:47] For something you've done. For Jesus. We're one day closer. Do you know what? Do you know who we're like? We're like Noah. In the days.

Of the flood. Who are busy. At work. Knowing. Something's coming. We don't know when. But we've got to be ready.

While everyone else. Ignores it. We watch. And we wait. And we are waiting.

For the appearing. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ. The glorious appearing. Titus 2.11. We watch. And we wait. We faithfully.

Do his work. That's the third way. We respond. That we're ready. We faithfully. Do his work. We're about. Our master's business. In those five illustration. That follows.

[33:46] Verse 36. Two of them. There's a relationship. Between a master. And a servant. And there's a word. That gets repeated. In that first.

Usage. In verses. 45. Through 51. Who then. Is the. Faithful. And wise. Servant.

Whom his master. Has set over his household. To give them their food. At their proper time.

Blessed. Is that servant. Whom his master. Will find. So doing.

When he. He comes. And if you flip to. Chapter 25. The parable of the talents. 21. Well done. Good and.

Faithful servant. You have been. Faithful. Over little. I will set you over much. Enter in the joy. Of your master. And he repeats the same thing. In verse 23. Faithful. Faithful. Faithful.

[34:41] We're to be faithful. To his work. We're to be about. His business. So when he. Finds us. When he comes. He will find us. Faithful. What is this work?

What has he called us to do? It's the work of evangelism. And discipleship. Telling other people.

About Jesus. Helping them get grounded. In the faith. And follow Jesus.

Themselves. Our gathering. On Sunday mornings. Sunday. After Sunday. This is part of. His good work. Speaking the truth.

And love to one another. Bearing with one another. In times of hardship. Giving generously. To the gospel work. Of this church. And then to other opportunities. Being a King's Kids teacher.

Being a KP. King's Place mentor. Serving on the worship team. Being on the connect team. Serving as an elder. Or deacon. Or a life group leader. Or whatever it may be.

[35:40] We get to be about his business. It's not. These aren't the only ways. To be about his business. About expanding his kingdom. Do you remember what he's doing. At the right hand of God in heaven.

He's expanding his kingdom. His kingdom of grace. And we get to join him in that. So we faithfully do his work.

Let me just ask you a question right now. If he were to come back this afternoon. What would he find you doing? Are you doing what he has called you to do?

Or are you doing something else. That you would be embarrassed by. At his coming. Our doing isn't to earn his favor.

Our doing is responding to his favor. And his grace. How do you want to find him. Find you when he comes back.

[36:44] Finally. We encourage one another. Being about his work is tough. It's hard. Huge disappointments.

A lot of suffering. A lot of joys. But we encourage one another. With the truth. We're one day closer. Don't give up.

Your labor is not in vain. Do you abound in the work of the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15.58. Right after a beautiful passage. On the coming of Jesus.

Don't give up. Press on. It's all true. We're one day closer. We're going to have a different agenda. And priority list. Than everybody else in the world.

Who doesn't know Jesus. What difference does this make? We must be ready.

[37:43] We live between the Advents. And we're one day closer. To the second Advent. Of our glorious.

Appearing of Jesus. How do we do that? Well how will he come back? He'll come back visibly. He'll come back bodily. Gloriously. And provocatively. When will he come back?

Well he's promised he's coming back. But we don't know when. It's going to be unexpected. So what do we do in response? We must be ready. Maybe you're ready for Christmas.

10 days from now. Maybe you've done all of your shopping. Maybe you have made all of your family plans. And written all your Christmas cards. But the real question.

Are you ready for his second Advent? Are you about his business? Next week. We'll ask and answer.

[38:42] What will he do? When he comes back? Let's pray together. Lord Jesus. These are weighty things that we're talking about.

We live in both. The glory and wonder. The joy of your first coming. And the sobriety of your second coming. And we bow our knee to you now.

God I do pray for any person in the room. Who has not bowed their knee to Jesus. That they run from the judgment to come.

And run to you now. And worship you now. And bow their knee to you now. Lord Jesus.

Thank you for rescuing us. And it's our joy to serve you. Every day. Until we see you face to face. It's your name we pray.

[39:47] Amen.