

Bible Studies for Life: January 5

Looking Forward with Expectation • Matthew 24:32-44

By Sydney Charlton



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The promised Messiah has come! God's plan to redeem mankind back to Himself continues to unfold. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, people are drawn to His presence as they recognize their desperate need for a Savior. Jesus' first coming was humble, but His second coming will be full of undeniable magnificence and wonder.

"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. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." – Matthew 24:30-31

As we strive to live God-honoring lives now, we eagerly await Jesus' second coming, when all who are in Christ will be taken to Heaven to dwell with Him for eternity!

Matthew 24:32-35

When the local news stations declare that a storm is headed our way, we run to the supermarket. With great urgency, we purchase more bread and milk than we likely need for an entire year. We want to be prepared when the storm arrives.

The return of Jesus is near! This truth should compel all Christ-followers to live in a mode of preparation. We cannot run to the local store to purchase items that will help prepare our friends and family. We are the ones responsible for the preparation!

We are called to live in a state of readiness. Are we declaring the Good News of Christ to others? How are we encouraging other believers in their faith? We must remain diligent to make much of Jesus while we still have time.

Matthew 24:36-39

Unlike a storm's landfall, there will be no prior news coverage leading up to Christ's return. Reporters won't be gathered at the Mount of Olives waiting for the sky to split to capture Jesus on horseback (Zechariah 14:4; Revelation 19:11-16, ESV). Our readiness is critical, and our calling to make much of Jesus here on earth is urgent! No one knows when the trumpets will sound other than God the Father. He is being patient with mankind, waiting for people to turn from their sins, and embrace His grace, love, and mercy (2 Peter 3:9, ESV). Jesus' return will be a surprise to us all. May we be found ready!

Matthew 24:40-44

When we know impending doom and devastation are on the horizon, we prepare. Besides buying all the bread and milk we can, we're also prone to purchase batteries, gasoline, and flashlights. We board up windows and put sandbags in our home's entryways. We want our prized possessions to be intact

after a storm makes landfall, and we want our loved ones to remain safe.

Christ's return calls us to be prepared regarding our spiritual condition. The way we conduct ourselves in our daily lives either points others to fix their gaze on Him or doesn't. Our actions and reactions proclaim what our hearts know to be true. So, as His children, we must often consider what news our lives tell others.

Christians don't pray, read and study the Bible, or attend church to check things off a to-do list. We have enough things to do. These things are part of growing in our faith. Trusting in Jesus as Savior and Lord is the most important decision, but there's much more to the Christian walk than that one decision.

To be prepared for His second coming, we must be intentional about our relationship with Him. Spending time with Jesus is necessary if we are going to become more like Him.

Let 2025 be the year you become more prepared for His return than ever before! Make much of Jesus Christ in all circumstances and in each place He sends you this year.

Charlton is the OneHope Missions Assistant at Crossgates Baptist Church, Brandon.