

# Bible Studies for Life: May 15

*Trust God's Timing • Matthew 24:32-41*

*By Lee Faler*



Faler

I don't like waiting. Whether it's a red light, at the grocery store behind someone with 157 items in the "10 items or less" aisle, or for the IRS to process my tax refund, I absolutely despise waiting.

I'm willing to bet that you don't like it either. Patience is a virtue that many of us just don't have, yet the Lord calls us to be people who wait patiently for the return of Christ and trust in His timing. So what should we do as we trust in God's timing, while simultaneously longing for our full redemption?

**First, we should watch for the signs of His return.** Jesus uses a fig tree in verses 32-33 as a parable to unpack truth concerning His return and unlike many other parables, this one was not hard for the disciples to comprehend. They understood that a budding fig tree meant that summer was approaching and so was the harvest.

In like manner as we see the signs of Matthew 24 unfold, we should know that a greater harvest is approaching – one that doesn't concern figs, but souls! This harvest deals with

matters of eternal significance. Heaven and hell hang in the balance, and eternal joy or eternal judgment are at stake!

The presence of signs means that Jesus' return is close and that He is, as verse 33 says, "at the very gates." May the proximity of His return fuel our Gospel urgency! This is no time for relaxation or retreat! The Church of Jesus Christ must be full steam ahead as we are closer now to His return than we have ever been!

Like the Titanic, our world is on a collision course with disaster the likes of which we have never seen before, and my fear is that too many Christians are content to rearrange the deck furniture, play shuffle board, or just sit in our lounge chairs when we should be busy sharing the Gospel and passing out life jackets! Lord, stir us!

**Secondly, we should remember that God is faithful.** Jesus reminds us in verse 35 that "heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away." God has a long track record of keeping His promises. He's not about to start breaking them now.

Throughout the book of Matthew, we see God keeping the promises He made in the Old Testament by virtue of sending Jesus to earth. As we see these words from Jesus in our passage today, may we be reminded that if Jesus (God in the flesh) said it, then He will perform it. He is worthy of our trust, even if no one else is.

**Finally, we should avoid speculation about the return of Christ.** Jesus has already warned us about false teachers in the last days, and as we read verses 36-41 we can't help but be reminded of those who have made headline news with their bold and outlandish predictions concerning His return.

Jesus states in verse 36 that even He doesn't know the date of His return, and that only His Father is privy to that sort of information. It is the epitome of arrogance to claim that one

has information that a member of the Godhead does not!

Friends, let me urge you as lovingly and as pastorally as possible to pay no attention to those claiming to know the hour or day of His return. Let's be okay with not knowing the time of His return, and attain rest in knowing that He *is* returning some day.

Jesus has not charged us to be correct about every dot and tittle of His return, but He has commanded us to be ready for His return. We don't have to be right, but we do need to be ready.

As I've studied this lesson, I'm reminded of a hymn we used to sing at Willow Grove Baptist Church. May its words compel us to Gospel urgency this week: *We'll work til Jesus comes, we'll work til Jesus comes. We'll work til Jesus comes and we'll be gathered home!*

God is not being slow. He is patiently giving lost people a chance to experience His grace. Church, let's rejoice in His patience and serve Him until we see Him!

*Faler is senior pastor of First Church, Terry.*