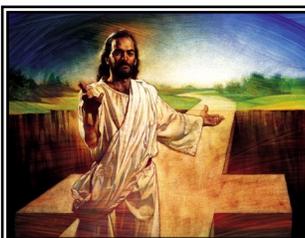


Stay Alive

with Jesus



Lesson 1:

He's Coming Back

Through the centuries families have watched husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, sweethearts, sons, daughters, brothers and sisters leave home to fight wars, explore new places or make money. The hope of all those who have stayed home has always been "He'll be back. She'll return." Love causes people to keep looking and longing for the return of the absent ones.

When Jesus left His friends on earth, He gave them a promise, "I will come again." Since that time all who love Him have been looking for Him and their love has kept hope alive in their hearts.

As your love for Jesus grows, your longing to see Him will grow.

JESUS PROMISED TO RETURN

What does Jesus promise? **John 14:1-3**. (Notice especially verse three)

He's coming back! He promised He would and the Bible speaks of this event 1,518 times!

WHEN WILL JESUS COME?

The disciples wondered when Jesus would return and they asked "What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (**Matthew 24:3**)

Jesus made it clear that He couldn't give an exact date, ("But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not even the angels of heaven, but my Father only." **Matthew 24:36**) But Jesus answered His disciples' question by telling them of signs, or mileposts, they could observe to know that history was moving toward the great climax of all time - the second coming of Christ.

Let's look at some of these signs that Jesus told His disciples to look for.

SIGNS IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD

What are some signs in the physical world? **Matthew 24:7**, second part.

1.2 billion people on our planet cannot afford the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter.

That's close to one-fourth of the world's population!

Famine is a sign that the world is moving closer to Christ's second coming. When you think of the major earthquakes that have occurred in recent years, you're again reminded that another of the signs of Christ's coming is being fulfilled.

SIGNS IN THE POLITICAL WORLD

You will also see signs in the political world. What are they? **Matthew 24:6-7**

When you read the daily paper you can see that world governments are in a constant struggle with each other, which is one more evidence that we are approaching the end of time.

SIGNS IN THE INTELLECTUAL WORLD

Daniel is an Old Testament prophet who was given information by God about the time of the end. What did he say about it? **Daniel 12:4**

Daniel mentioned two things that would earmark the end of time: people hurrying about and an increase of knowledge. Bible scholars interpret this two ways:

1. There would be an increase of knowledge concerning the long-hidden prophecies of Daniel which point to Christ's second coming.
2. An increase in general knowledge and travel.

As you think of how humanity has gone from horseback to outer space travel in the last one hundred years, you agree that Daniel's prophecy has been fulfilled! And when Daniel wrote of an increase in knowledge, he couldn't have begun to imagine the "information overload" most of us deal with in today's world. Daniel's prophecies are dramatic evidences that Christ is coming soon, yet there are even more signs to consider.

SIGNS IN THE SOCIAL WORLD

How does **2 Timothy 3:1-5** describe people in the last days?

Besides signs in the physical, intellectual and social world, you'll find signs in the religious world.

SIGNS IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

Jesus warned about a deception that would take place prior to His second coming. What is the deception? **Matthew 24:4-5,23-24**

What do these false prophets and false Christs teach? **Matthew 24:23,26**

Today there are many people who teach that Jesus is coming secretly or that He has already come.

What did Jesus say you should do when you hear these teachings? **Matthew 24:26**, last part

Why? **Matthew 24:27-30. Revelation 1:7**

Jesus describes His coming, not as an obscure happening, but as an event that will demand the attention of the whole world because of its glory and power. "Every eye will see him."

As you look over the signs Christ gave the disciples in **Matthew 24**, you'll notice that they all lead up to His coming. **Matthew 24:6**, last part, says "all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." But there is one sign that Jesus said once it was accomplished, then He would come.

What is it? **Matthew 24:14**

THE GOSPEL TO ALL THE WORLD

You can measure the nearness of Christ's coming by the progress of the gospel proclamation to the world. This is why the early Christians spread the gospel everywhere. They wanted Jesus to come soon! But during the dark Ages, this emphasis became obscured.

Then, in the last century, as Christians focused once again on the Bible message of the second coming of Christ, they were stirred to tell the world about it. Mission programs sprang up all over the world. Today there are thousands of dedicated Christians carrying the gospel of Christ to every part of the globe.

As countries once closed to new ideas open up; as walls of separation are broken down, there are great opportunities for the gospel to be preached. God has a thousand ways to accomplish his work. Who knows how swiftly He could finish the distribution of the gospel story!

Aren't you excited? You're living in End Time!
This Jesus you love is coming for you soon.

ASK YOURSELF

Do I look forward to Christ's coming? Why or why not?