



FIRST STEPS

STUDIES TO BEGIN YOUR WALK WITH CHRIST
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“Jesus Is Coming Back”

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Jesus is coming back!

Jesus often told His disciples that He was going to die, but they were unable to conceive of such a thing. He had demonstrated His power over demons. He stopped storms with a word. He multiplied bread and fish, turned water into wine, and even walked on water. He healed multitudes of disease. He had even raised the dead. There was no way He could die!

They were convinced Jesus was the Messiah. When He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, they assumed He would soon establish Himself as King over all the earth and squash the wicked governments of the world. The farthest thing from their mind was that in less than one week Jesus would die on a cross.

Knowing how His death would confuse them, just hours before His arrest, Jesus told them again that He was going back to the Father. But this time He also promised them that He'd be coming back. Read **John 14:1-3** below.

*“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In My Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back** and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am.”*

In this study you’ll learn what the Bible teaches about the time, the manner, and the purpose for the Return of Christ. This is often referred to as the **Second Coming of Christ**.

Though hundreds of generations have lived and died since Jesus left this earth and ascended into heaven, every generation is called to live a life that reflects their assurance that Jesus will return one day. You will also investigate how the Second Coming of Jesus is to influence and affect your daily life.

How will He return?

Read the following verses for the Bible's description of Jesus' return. Summarize some of the key observations you make in each of them.

Matthew 24:26-27

"So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

Matthew 24:30-31

"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Revelation 1:7

Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

Titus 2:13

...while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Based on your study of the above verses,
what are three words you would use
to describe our Lord's return?

When will He return?

No one knows exactly

Jesus told us that no one would know the exact time of His return. Therefore, it is foolish to speculate and predict dates. He, Himself said in **Matthew 24:36**,

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

We can know generally

While we don't know the exact day or hour Jesus will return, He said the condition of the world would be similar to the times of Noah and Lot. In **Luke 17:26-30**, Jesus said,

"Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed."

In other words, the world will be going on as though it's just another day. Most people will be completely clueless. Jesus likened His return to that of a thief, meaning that most people will not suspect anything and be taken completely by surprise. Followers of Jesus, on the other hand, are to have an attitude of alertness and watchfulness, always being ready for His arrival.

What about the Rapture?

When Jesus returns, the bodies of Christians who have died will be resurrected from their graves. The Rapture refers to the event which immediately follows — living Christians will rise from the earth to meet the Lord in the air as He descends.

Here are two places the rapture is most clearly described.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

"According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

"Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."

The timing of this Rapture, however, is disputed. Some Christians believe the Rapture will take place several years before Jesus actually returns to the earth. Other Christians believe the Rapture will take place as part of Jesus' descent from heaven to make His glorious entrance for all to see. When Jesus comes, then we'll know for sure!

Jesus is coming back to rule as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Hebrews 9:28 states, "So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him." The chart below shows this.

First Coming	Second Coming
Jesus came to REDEEM mankind	Jesus will come to REIGN over the earth
Jesus is depicted as a LAMB to be sacrificed.	Jesus is depicted as a LION to rule.

Jesus' crucifixion was the major purpose for His first coming. But when He returns, it will be to take the throne as King over all of the earth. God has always intended for Jesus to be acknowledged as King.

God foretold His plan in the Old Testament

Isaiah 9:6-7

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the **government** will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His **government** and peace there will be no end. He will **reign** on David's **throne** and over his **kingdom**, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever."*

Jesus knew He was King

Jesus knew He was king and that one day He would establish His physical kingdom on the earth. But His first coming was to establish a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of people, to sit on the throne of our hearts. He made that very clear in His response to Pilate. Listen to His interchange with Pilate.

John 18:33 Pilate: "Are you the king of the Jews?"

John 18:36 Jesus: "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

John 18:37 Pilate: "You are a king, then!"

John 18:37 Jesus: "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

The thief knew Jesus was King

The thief hanging on the cross next to Jesus recognized Him as the Messiah. He knew Jesus would one day set up His Kingdom and rule as the Righteous Sovereign. Moments before he died, the thief voiced his faith in **Luke 23:42**, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

One day the world will recognize that Jesus is King

Revelation 19:11-16

*I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: **KING** of kings and **LORD** of lords.*

How are we to live in light of the King's return?

Jesus said in **Matthew 24:42**, "Keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come."

Keep watch over your life

As Christ-followers we are to stay alert. We are to take our relationship with Jesus seriously. Now that we know Jesus Christ, the devil will try to trip us up to keep us from developing our relationship with God to the fullest. He tempts us to compromise our obedience and to sin, thus ruining our testimony for Jesus.

1 Peter 5:7-9 "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings."

Hebrews 12:1-2 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Romans 12:1-2 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Romans 6:11-13 "In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness."

Keep watch over your mission

Our presidents send representatives ahead of them to prepare for their arrival somewhere. Our King Jesus has told us to announce His Second Coming throughout the world. He wants people to get ready, to repent of their sin, and to surrender their lives to Him. That is the message He has given us to tell all who will hear. The devil will try to get our focus on other things so that we don't live primarily for the King!

Matthew 28:18-20 "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"

2 Corinthians 5:20 "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

Homework:

Record any observations in the following verses about Jesus' return.

1 John 3:2	
2 Thessalonians 1:6-9	
2 Thessalonians 2:8-9	
Matthew 16:27	
Philippians 3:20-21	
1 Corinthians 15:51-52	