



JESUS' SECOND COMING

Waiting With Great Anticipation

December 31, 2022

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

2 Peter 3:8-14 (NIV) • “But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”

Hebrews 10:25 (NIV) • “Not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

John 14:1-3 (CEV) • “Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Don’t be worried! Have faith in God and have

faith in me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house. I wouldn’t tell you this, unless it was true. I am going there to prepare a place for each of you. After I have done this, I will come back and take you with me. Then we will be together.’”

1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 (NIV) • “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.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

“The waiting people of God approached the hour [October 22, 1844] when they fondly hoped their joys would be complete in the coming of the Savior. But the time again passed unmarked by the advent of Jesus. It was a bitter disappointment that fell upon the little flock whose faith had been so strong and whose hope had been so high. But we were surprised that we felt so free in the Lord, and were so strongly sustained by His strength and grace. . . . We were disappointed, but not disheartened. We resolved to refrain from murmuring at the trying ordeal by which the Lord was purging us from the dross and refining us like gold in the furnace; to submit patiently to the process of purifying that God deemed needful for us; and to wait with patient hope for the Savior to redeem His tried and faithful ones” (Ellen G. White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 54).

B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT "JESUS' SECOND COMING"

Jesus' return has always been the central doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church— it's right there in our name! But to teens today, the Second Coming may seem far-off, unreal, irrelevant. Christians have been waiting for Jesus to come back for 2,000 years—the Adventist Church, specifically, has taught for more than 160 years that we are living in the end-times. How can we speak with conviction and fresh hope about the "soon" return of Jesus?

Jesus' second coming will become real and meaningful to students when they focus on a relationship with Jesus. When you love Someone, you just can't wait to see Him and be with Him again. That's what it takes to make teens—and adults—excited about Jesus' return.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "JESUS' SECOND COMING"

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Increase their own knowledge of biblical teaching on Jesus' return.
2. Understand that when Jesus returns is less important than our readiness to meet Him.
3. Commit to being ready when Jesus comes.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) newspapers; (Activity B) pencils, paper, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons.

Applying • "How Do I Prepare for Jesus' Second Coming?" handout (p. 149), pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word. At some point you should distribute or call their attention to their student lesson for this week.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Collect several recent newspapers and bring them to class on Sabbath.

Get set • Distribute the newspapers (only the news sections will be needed) for everyone. **Say:** **We often tell people that the world is coming to an end, and many signs show Jesus will return soon. As you look through this newspaper, find any headlines, pictures, or stories that suggest to you that we are living in the end-times.**

Go • Allow about 10 minutes for students to find news stories. Ask each person to share one item they found.

Debriefing • Ask: Why do you believe these things are signs of the end? Do they line up with the signs Jesus told us to watch for in Matthew 24:14? (Review this passage as necessary.) Have similar things happened at other times in history? Why do you think today is any different? Lead students toward the realization that although the situation on earth may be bad today and we may legitimately hope that Jesus will return soon to end it, news stories alone do not provide enough evidence that we are in the end-times, since wars, disasters, and tragedy have happened often throughout history. Though Jesus wants us to be prepared, He does not want us to get involved in setting dates for His return.

Say: Our lesson today is about how you use your time and what kind of steward you are with the time that God has given you.

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Hand out pencils and paper to each class member.

Get set • Say: I want you to list the top 10 things you believe Jesus wants you to do before His return. Rate them in importance from 1 to 10.

Go • Allow about five minutes for each person to make their list.

Debriefing • Invite people to share what's on their lists. Make a note of items that come up again and again by writing them on a white/chalkboard at the front of the room. **Ask:** Why are these things so important to God? These may be things that they feel will help them be ready for Jesus' coming, such as getting baptized, giving up bad habits, or telling others about Jesus. Respond to and discuss their answers. **Ask:** What do you think is the most

important thing to do before Jesus returns?

Discuss different answers that arise: the ideal answer might be along the lines of "accepting Jesus as your Savior."

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story from the life of a youth pastor:

An inspector of schools who really loved children visited a certain school and spoke to the children, saying, "I am coming back sometime and I'm going to give a prize to the one who has the neatest desk."

"But when are you coming back?" the children asked.

"That I cannot tell you" was the reply.

A girl who was noted for her disorderly habits announced that she was going to win the prize. The other students laughed at her.

"Your desk is always out of order. You will never win it," they teased.

"But I am going to clean my desk at the beginning of every week," she insisted.

"But suppose he comes at the end of the week," her friends said.

"Then I'll clean it every morning," she said.

"But what if he comes in the afternoon?" she was asked.

She thought for a while. "I know what I'll do," she said. "I'll just keep it clean all the time."

This is a parable for all of us. By God's grace we must be ready. We must give our lives to Him every morning and evening, being prepared at all times.

—Adapted from Henry Feyerabend, "Always Be Ready," *Slices of Life (Oshawa, Ont.: It is Written, 1995)*, p. 160.

Debriefing • Ask: Why do you think the inspector did not tell the students when he was going to return? Was it good for the students that they did not know the date of his coming? Explain your answers.

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

The second coming of Jesus is the central hope of the Christian church. To Seventh-day Adventists, it's so important that we included it in the official name of our church. "Adventist" means "someone who believes in the second coming (advent) of Jesus."

Why is Jesus' return so important? Because it gives meaning to everything we do. Jesus saved us by dying on the cross, but what are we saved for? Eternal life with Him in the earth made new. We want to live for Jesus here on earth, but we have the hope that everything we do has eternal value because we will live forever. We experience suffering and hard times here on earth—but someday we'll live in a perfect world without pain and sorrow.

Though we can't know how soon is "soon," we can be sure that He is coming back, and that His return is important to each one of us.

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the introductory illustration from the student guide.

Ask: Do you have a way of gauging your free time? What are some beneficial ways of spending your time? Try to lead them toward acts of service, and have some practical ideas ready for them.

Ask students to read **Matthew 24:36-44** and **Acts 1:6-11**. **Say:** Now put yourself in the place of Jesus' disciples. Jesus died, came back to life, and within a few weeks He returned to heaven, telling them that He was going to return for them. How would you have felt? Why do you think it was important for Jesus to warn them that no one knew the hour of His return?

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following questions:

Ask: How do you respond when you hear predictions that the world will end or that Jesus will return at a certain time? Why is it important not to set times for Jesus' return? What did Jesus tell His disciples in **Matthew 24:36**? How would you describe your state of preparation? What intentional steps you are making to be ready when Jesus returns? Are you thinking of others? How can you share the blessed hope whenever you have the opportunity?

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Give each student a copy of the handout "How Do I Prepare for Jesus' Second Coming?" (p. 149). Read the questions out loud and allow students a few minutes to write their individual answers. When everyone has finished, ask class members to share their answers.

Debriefing • Ask: Are any of your answers to number 1 things that you should be doing now anyway? Do you think that knowing a definite time for Jesus' return might make you put off life changes until His coming is ready to happen? Why do you think Jesus didn't tell us when He would return?

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Do any of us know the time of our own death? How does that fact relate to being ready for Jesus' return?
2. How would your life be different if you knew exactly when Jesus was returning?
3. What does it mean to you to be ready for Jesus' return?
4. How would you respond to someone who does not believe in His coming?
5. What are some examples of how you can prepare for Jesus' coming and at the same time do good to others, helping them to prepare for His return as well?



CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

The Bible promises again and again that Jesus will return and that God will create a new earth and establish His kingdom here. We have a lot to look forward to. We can't know when it

will happen, but we can live every day in a state of preparation so that we might be ready to meet Jesus. We don't know the time of our own death, and that may be "the end of the world" for us—then we may no longer prepare. Or perhaps Jesus will come in our lifetime. What matters is how we live. If we're trusting Jesus and living in a relationship with Him, following His example and trying to grow more like Him, we'll feel right at home in His kingdom, whenever we get there!

FOR LESSON FOURTEEN:

THIS HANDOUT IS FOR THE APPLICATION ACTIVITY.

How Do I Prepare for Jesus' Second Coming?

Answer the questions below.

1. If you knew that Jesus was coming in one month's time, what would you spend the month doing?

2. What changes would you make in your life?

3. If you knew that Jesus was coming the year you turn 75, how would you live your life until then? Would you wait until you are old to start preparing for His return? How would that be dangerous for you and for others?

3. Why is it important that you start preparing for Jesus' coming today, while you are young?

4. How can you make a difference in the lives of others and in your own life if you give Jesus the best years of your youth? How can your hope in Jesus' return show in everything you do on a daily basis?

5. If you felt you had to make some major changes in your life before Jesus returned, when would you start making them?



STUDENT LESSON

JESUS' SECOND COMING

Waiting With Great Anticipation

December 31, 2022

Sabbath

FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 25, The Second Coming of Christ:** “The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Savior’s coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 107, 108

WAITING WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION

In 1914 an expedition led by Sir Ernest Shackleton set out from England to cross the continent of Antarctica in the ship *Endurance*. Pack ice closed around the ship and split it in two. For five months the members of the expedition drifted around on large ice floes. Then, with the help of small boats they had salvaged from the *Endurance*, they made their way to Elephant Island. The nearest human habitation was 800 miles away on the island of South Georgia.

Shackleton, with five of his men, faced the mountainous waves in his little whaleboat, and managed to reach South Georgia. Soon a rescue attempt was organized. The first attempt failed. The pack ice closed in, and the rescue ship had to turn back. A second attempt was organized and failed. A third attempt was made, and once again the ice was the victor.

Only after four rescue attempts could Shackleton find a way through to Elephant Island. As he approached that wilderness of snow and ice, he wondered what he would find. Would anyone still be alive after those months of waiting?

Shackleton found every man alive, in good condition, and in good spirits. How had they survived? The secret lay in the leadership of the man he had left in charge. Every day he would say to his men, “Get ready, boys; the boss may come back today.”

And every day they got ready. Every day they prepared themselves. Every day they watched. Every day they waited. And despite the long silence, despite the great odds, one day Shackleton did come back, as he had promised.

We need to watch and pray every day. And one day soon Jesus will come back to rescue us. His admonition to us is: “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Matthew 24:44, NKJV).

The most important part of this message is the need for every Christian to be ready for Jesus’ soon coming.

—Adapted from Henry Feyerabend, “Sir Ernest Shackleton,”
Slices of Life (Oshawa, Ont.: It is Written, 1995), pp. 163, 164.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 24:23-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 1:7.
- » A friend of yours is all excited about the Left Behind books he's been reading. He really believes there's going to be a secret rapture and all the good people will be taken to heaven secretly, leaving the wicked here on earth.
You tell him you don't agree. "What?" he says. "Don't you believe Jesus is coming back?"
"Well, yeah," you agree. "But I don't believe a secret rapture. That's not what the Bible teaches."
"So what does the Bible teach?" your friend challenges.
What do you tell him? Can you sum up Seventh-day Adventist beliefs about Jesus' coming? How can you share what you learned from today's Scripture passages about Jesus' second coming? For a list of additional Bible references about Jesus' second coming, check the readings listed for Monday in the section below.
- » Log on to www.guidemagazine.org/rtf to post your responses. Be up-front and honest. Say what you think.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

- » Read Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
- » When Jesus returns in glory, He will receive to Himself those who accepted His saving grace, kept His commandments, and had the faith of Jesus. At His coming the dead who believed in Him will be resurrected, and together with the faithful who will be alive they will be glorified and taken to heaven. Yet those who chose to

reject Christ's invitation of grace and who did not accept Jesus as their personal Savior will be destroyed by the glory of His coming. We are now living in the time of the end, when Jesus is about to return. Bible prophecy and the signs of the times are being fulfilled before our eyes (see Matthew 24). These indicate that Jesus' second coming is very near. Since we do not know the time of His return, we need to live in a constant state of preparation so that we might be ready when He comes.

- » "The kingdom of God's grace is now being established, as day by day hearts that have been full of sin and rebellion yield to the sovereignty of His love. But the full establishment of the kingdom of His glory will not take place until the second coming of Christ to this world. 'The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,' is to be given to 'the people of the saints of the Most High' (Daniel 7:27). They shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them 'from the foundation of the world' (Matthew 25:34)" (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 108).



See activity at the end of this lesson.

Tuesday REFLECTING

- » Read Matthew 6:9, 10 and Matthew 28:19, 20.
- » "His kingdom will not come until the good tidings of His grace have been carried to all the earth. . . . Only those who devote themselves to His service, saying, 'Here am I; send me' (Isaiah 6:8), to open blind eyes, to turn men 'from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified' (Acts 26:18)—they alone pray in sincerity, 'Thy kingdom come'" (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 108, 109).
- » The early Christians kept their eyes focused on what Jesus' return meant for them in their

Monday activity

Find the words listed below in the puzzle. The words can appear forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally.

ADVENTIST PETER
 APOSTLES READY
 BIBLE RETURN
 COMING SECOND
 DISAPPOINTMENT TIME
 ELLEN WHITE
 JESUS

O T J H D Q B J K J P W T Z W
 X W L E Y E P R Q T Y U A H S
 T N E M T N I O P P A S I D E
 M G L M J I K J Y I Q T D Q L
 K W B J E J Y P O B E U P A T
 K S I E J O R R K R V T T B S
 T G B S N E L L E P E E I B O
 R S O U L F Q M Z A G T P U P
 F E I S Y Z Q G P Z B W U I A
 F D T T M Y D A E R K M D R F
 B K E E N H X F C T W N M A N
 B Y I J P E J D X T O P E U A
 E B J O B C V F M C O M I N G
 F Z S R Z G T D E M I V Y I D
 C N J U D U Y S A T G I X S S

Wednesday activity

Read the following Bible verses and circle all the correct answers. Then answer the questions below.

Matthew 24:36 1 Corinthians 1:7, 8 John 14:1-3
 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 2 Peter 3:8-13 Matthew 25:31-40

1	Do we know when Jesus will return?	<input type="radio"/> the Father knows	<input type="radio"/> we don't know	<input type="radio"/> the Son knows
2	How will He come?	<input type="radio"/> in glory	<input type="radio"/> with angels	<input type="radio"/> like a thief in the night
3	How will Jesus keep us?	<input type="radio"/> firm	<input type="radio"/> to the end	<input type="radio"/> blameless
4	What is a day like to God?	<input type="radio"/> a day	<input type="radio"/> 1,000 years	<input type="radio"/> 2,500 years
5	What is a thousand years like to God?	<input type="radio"/> a day	<input type="radio"/> 1,000 years	<input type="radio"/> 2,500 years
6	What does God want everyone to do?	<input type="radio"/> live holy and godly lives	<input type="radio"/> share Him	<input type="radio"/> look for His coming
7	What did Jesus go to do for us?	<input type="radio"/> prepare us a place	<input type="radio"/> intercede	<input type="radio"/> plan a feast
8	In what ways do we show we belong to God?	<input type="radio"/> feed the hungry and give water to someone thirsty	<input type="radio"/> give clothes to someone in need	<input type="radio"/> care for the sick and visit the prisoners

- How does knowing that Christ will return affect your behavior?

- How important is Christ's return to you? Does knowing the specifics of that event matter to you?

- When someone presents to you something about Christ's second coming that you know to be incorrect, how do you respond? What do you say to that person?

- Do you want to share the "blessed hope" of Jesus' second coming with others? If so, why?
