

FAITHFUL



Be Prepared

Matthew 25:1-13

October 11, 2026

Following the Jesus way of life prepares us for life now and for the future.

Answers to the fill in the blanks, extra Bible verses and Study questions

Introduction Notes:

Matthew 24:3

Three Ways to Be Prepared in Uncertain Times

Prepare to Be Part of God's Plan Matthew 25:1

Matthew 28:19-20, mark 16:15, Acts 1:8, 2 Peter 3:18

Prepare with Diligence Matthew 25:2-4

Matthew 22:39

Prepare for the Lord's Return Matthew 25:5-13

2 Peter 1:3

Study Questions to Go Deeper with God:

How do you think knowing that we are part of God's larger redemptive plan change the way we live faithfully today? The ten virgins from Matthew 15:1-13 were waiting for the bridegroom, but their waiting required them to be ready. What might it look like for you to recognize that your life is part of something bigger than your immediate circumstances and to faithfully participate in what God is doing? **Further study:** Ephesians 2:10, Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Peter 2:9-12, Philippians 1:6, Colossians 3:1-4

What spiritual practices and choices do you think help us remain faithful when following Jesus becomes difficult, inconvenient, or requires perseverance? The wise virgins prepared beforehand; they could not borrow preparedness at the last moment. Since salvation is by God's grace through faith, not by our works (Ephesians 2:8-9), how do you think God's grace should motivate us toward diligent, faithful living rather than spiritual complacency? **Further study:** 2 Peter 1:5-8, Philippians 2:12-13, Hebrews 10:23-25, Galatians 6:9, 1 Corinthians 15:58

If Jesus could return at any time, what would you want to be different about the way you are living, loving, serving, and relating to others? Jesus concludes the parable with the command, "Therefore keep watch" (Matthew 25:13). How do you think we can live with both confidence in Christ's return and urgency in following Jesus' way of life today—without becoming fearful or trying to predict the timing of His return? **Further study:** Matthew 24:36-44, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, Titus 2:11-14, 2 Peter 3:10-14, Revelation 22:12, 20

Be prepared is not primarily about trying to figure out when Jesus will return. It is about faithfully following Jesus today, trusting His grace, persevering together as His people, and living with confident expectation that He will return.

Know the Signs of the Times

1. The Gospel Will Be Proclaimed to All Nations... Jesus connected the proclamation of the gospel with the end. **Matthew 24:14** — “And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

Additional Scriptures: Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 13:10; Revelation 7:9–10

Emphasis: The church’s response is not speculation but **mission**.

2. There Will Be Wars and Rumors of Wars... Jesus warned that conflict would characterize the age leading toward His return. **Matthew 24:6** — “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars.”

Additional Scriptures: Mark 13:7–8; Luke 21:9–10

Important clarification: Jesus says these things are “**not yet the end**” (Matthew 24:6). Therefore, individual wars should not automatically be identified as proof that Christ is returning immediately.

3. There Will Be Famines, Earthquakes and Other Disasters...**Matthew 24:7** — “For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.”

Additional Scriptures: Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11

Jesus describes these as “**the beginning of the birth pains**” (Matthew 24:8).

4. Persecution of Christians Will Increase...**Matthew 24:9** — “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake.”

Additional Scriptures: John 15:18–21; 2 Timothy 3:12; Revelation 13:7–10

The church should expect that following Christ may involve suffering.

5. Many Will Turn Away From the Faith...**Matthew 24:10** — “And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.” Paul similarly warns of rebellion and deception.

Additional Scriptures: 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; Hebrews 3:12–14

This is a call to **perseverance and faithfulness**, not fear.

6. False Prophets and False Teachers Will Increase...**Matthew 24:11** — “And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.” Jesus repeatedly warns His followers: **Matthew 24:24** — “For false Christs and false prophets will arise.”

Additional Scriptures: 2 Peter 2:1–3; 1 John 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:3–4

Application: Know God’s Word so that we can recognize what is contrary to it.

7. Lawlessness Will Increase...**Matthew 24:12** — “And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.” Paul gives a similar description:

2 Timothy 3:1–5 — “But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.” He then describes increasing self-centeredness, pride, disobedience, hostility and rejection of godliness.

8. Love Will Grow Cold...This is one of Jesus’ particularly striking warnings:

Matthew 24:12 — “Because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.” The answer isn’t merely to identify evil around us. **Christ calls His people to continue loving God and others.**

Additional Scriptures: Matthew 22:37–40; John 13:34–35; 1 John 4:7–12

9. There Will Be Increasing Deception ...Jesus begins His Olivet Discourse with:

Matthew 24:4 — “See that no one leads you astray.” He repeats the warning in verse 24.

Additional Scriptures: 2 Timothy 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:9–12; Revelation 13:13–14

Application: Biblical discernment becomes increasingly important as the end approaches.

10. Humanity Will Become Increasingly Self-Centered... Paul's description of the "**last days**" in 2 Timothy 3 is especially important: "People will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy..." — **2 Timothy 3:2** Notice where Paul begins: "**lovers of self.**" The problem isn't simply cultural deterioration; it is the human heart turned away from God.

11. There Will Be Mocking and Rejection of Christ's Return... Peter says: **2 Peter 3:3–4** — "Scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing... 'Where is the promise of his coming?'" The delay of Christ's return should not cause Christians to doubt God's promise. Peter explains: **2 Peter 3:9** — "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise... but is patient toward you." That gives us an important **missionary perspective**: God's patience provides opportunity for people to repent.

12. There Will Be Spiritual Apostasy ... Paul warns: **1 Timothy 4:1** — "In later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons."
Additional Scriptures: 2 Thessalonians 2:3; Hebrews 3:12; 2 Peter 2:20–22
The church is called to remain anchored in **the truth of Scripture and the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

13. The "Man of Lawlessness" Will Be Revealed... Paul speaks of a coming figure associated with rebellion against God: **2 Thessalonians 2:3–4** This passage is important in biblical eschatology, but it should be handled carefully. Christians have differing interpretations concerning the identity, timing and relationship of this figure to other end-times events.
Additional Scriptures: 2 Thessalonians 2:8–12; 1 John 2:18; Revelation 13

14. The "Antichrist" Spirit Will Be Present John writes: **1 John 2:18** — "Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come." And: **1 John 4:3** — "This is the spirit of the antichrist." Notice that Scripture speaks both about **a coming antichrist** and **many antichrists already present**.
We need to be cautious against allowing an obsession with identifying the Antichrist to overshadow our focus on **Jesus Christ Himself.**

15. The Nations Will Gather in Opposition to God The Bible describes a final confrontation involving the nations.
Scriptures: Psalm 2:1–3; Revelation 16:13–16; Revelation 19:17–21
Whatever one's particular millennial position, the ultimate biblical message is clear:
Jesus Christ wins.

16. Christ Will Return Personally, Bodily and Gloriously... **Acts 1:11** — "This Jesus... will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." **Matthew 24:30** — "They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." **Titus 2:13** — "Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

17. The Time of Christ's Return Cannot Be Predicted This is perhaps the most important caution when teaching the signs. **Matthew 24:36** — "Concerning that day and hour no one knows." **Matthew 24:44** — "Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."
Additional Scriptures: Mark 13:32–33; 1 Thessalonians 5:1–2
The timing is known only to God and that Christians should live with constant expectancy.

Elements of the 'End of the Age'

Return of Jesus I believe that Christ could come at any time for His bride, the church and return them to Himself (1 Cor. 15:51-53, 1 Thes. 4:14-17; 5:2, Rev 3:3).

Rapturing the church (1 Thes. 4:16) Those believers who have died will be raptured first (1 Cor. 15:52-53, 1 Thes. 4:16) and those still living will be caught up in the air with them (1 Thes. 4:15-17).

Tribulation, pouring out His wrath through the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:4-21, Rev. 6-19),

Setting up Messiah/Jesus' reign in the **millennial kingdom** (Rev. 19:11-16). Satan will be bound (Rev. 20:1-3) and Jesus will rule from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-4; 11:1-5, Micah 4:1-8) over the earth for the duration (Rev. 20:4) with His saints (Dan. 7:21-22, Rev. 20:4). This will be a time of great peace (Isa. 11:2-10; 65:17-25) and fulfillment of the promises to the nation of Israel (Isa. 9:6-7, Ez. 37:21-28).

Great White Throne Judgement After one thousand years, Satan will be let loose and he will seek to deceive the nations (Rev. 20:7-9). Satan will be captured and thrown in the lake of fire to be tormented forever (Rev. 20:10). All unbelieving people are then brought to the Great White Throne Judgement where they are judged and sentenced by being cast into the lake of fire where they will live out eternity in punishment and separation from God (Matt. 13:42; 25:41-46, Rev. 20:11-15). Death and Hades will also be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15).

New Heaven and New Earth

I believe after the Great White Throne Judgement, a New Heaven and New Earth will be established (2 Pet. 3:10-13, Rev. 20:1-22:5). This is where righteousness will dwell and believers will live forever with Jesus Christ (John 14:1-3, 2 Pet. 3:13, Rev. 21:3-7; 22:3-5).