

Living Ready for His Return

#3293 26 0621A Matthew 24:1-14
Olivet Discourse

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Dark to Different emphasized the *transformation* we must see in our words, ways, and attitudes. We are called *out* of the *dark* and *into* the *light*—seeing *visible evidence* of genuine faith in Jesus.

Matthew 24 is about remaining faithful to God; respecting the authority of His Word; and living a life of faith in His Son until He returns.

Jesus wants to *change* our attitude, but we have to ask Him and allow Him to do that. Real *faith* in Him produces real *fruit* of love and forgiveness.

Living Ready for His Return has us think *How will it all end?* So many End Time books written; predictions made; and dates set—but we are *not* to set a *times*, just watch for *signs*—and “Remain *obedient* to the instructions I gave you.”

During this *Olivet Discourse*, Jesus told His disciples about the *End of the Age* while on the Mount of Olives overlooking the city of Jerusalem.

The disciples were admiring the magnificent temple building—how permanent and indestructible it seemed to be.

Matthew 24:1 “*Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.*”

2 *And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall*

be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Matthew 24:3 “*Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*”

Jesus’ warning and message *then* remains just as relevant *now!* Matthew 24:4 “*And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed [Watch out NIV, be careful] that no one deceives you."*”

He gives them and us a serious warning about deception from false teaching—and this increases during uncertain times when many become fearful, confused, and seeking answers.

Matthew 24:5 “*For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many."*”

It is not always opposition from *outside* a church but deception can come from *inside* as well 2 Timothy 4:3 “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."*”

Reading the Bible every day, praying fervently for divine guidance, and asking for the Holy Spirit within is the guard we need against deception.

Matthew 24:6 “*And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*”

7 “*For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.* 8 “*All these are the beginning of sorrows."*”

Jesus says “*See that you are not troubled*” because political conflicts are common and are sure to increase as the End approaches.

Nations rise and fall; Political systems change; people’s rights are neglected because the human heart is sinful until it is reborn and made new by repentance and faith in Jesus.

End Times signs are—Nation against nation; Kingdom against kingdom; Famines; Pestilences; and Earthquakes. All these tell us that the return of Jesus is close. It’s “*the beginning of sorrows.*”

We should not be *fearful* but stay *faithful* to the words of Jesus. Luke 21:28 “*When these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."*”

News headlines today remind us that even more serious things will take place. Psalm 46:1-2 “*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear."*”

The world panics but God has promised—NIV Jeremiah 29:11 “*I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*”

Matthew 24:9 “*Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.* 10 “*And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another."*”

When we accept the teaching of Jesus, we should expect opposition from unbelievers because following His plan of life brings on hostility.

Living ready for His return is not a trouble-free path—but a daily struggle with Satan. Matthew

5:10, "*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.*"

When faith *costs nothing* many claim it; but when faith *costs everything* true followers of Jesus live it—***Fruit Reveals the Root*** of our relationship.

Persecuted for following Jesus reveals what is in our heart; storms uncover faulty foundations and trials expose surface faith. Persecution can show the difference between verbal *profession* of faith and real *possession* of trusting faith in Jesus.

Many want the Lord's *blessings* but ignore His *instructions*; many want His *presence* in life but stop at *obeying* His Word for *Eternal Life*.

True believers trust Jesus even when the road is difficult. The apostle asked "*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life*" **John 6:68**.

Matthew 24:11 "*Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.* **12** "*And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.*"

The majority of people in the world do not read the Bible at all, and it is safe to say that if they did, would have no intention of applying the principles of faith and trust on God concerning life issues—even though faith and trust is the foundation of a life that promises salvation.

The spiritual *erosion* and moral *deterioration* in the world today is most distressing, but the Bible predicts that before the return of Christ, such spiritual *darkness* will increase; *deception* will abound, and the hearts of most grow cold.

Matthew 24:13 "*But he who endures to the end shall be saved.*" With God's help we can follow the instructions of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount—

words spoken to inform us how to live in a very dark, dangerous, and defiant world today.

Satan uses counterfeit truth to help him carry out his agenda and destroy human souls. Lawlessness will abound and divine love decrease as the return of the Messiah comes ever closer.

Lawlessness is rebellion against the divine authority of God's Word—but if godly standards are rejected the heart becomes cold; compassion decreases; worship becomes routine; and prayer is neglected—leading to much spiritual harm.

Living ready for Christ's return means guarding our heart and being loyal to His Word—having a forgiving attitude; showing respect; working at our job as if Jesus were our Superior; and treating ***everyone as we want them to treat us*** **Matthew 7:12**.

Maintaining a desire for God's Word does not come natural to us—we must make a decision to stay connected to the Word, asking God for a renewed interest and having Him speak to us through His Word.

Endurance is not to *earn* anything but to *demonstrate* something—real and genuine and living faith in the living Savior Who told us **Matthew 24:13** "*He who endures to the end shall be saved.*"

This study of the Olivet Discourse concludes with **Matthew 24:14** "*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*"

God will always preserve His Truth—persecution cannot silence it; false teachers cannot destroy it; and most people will not value it nor live it.

Jesus' return is imminent [pending; about to happen]—and as a group of believers, we are called to proclaim the way to the Kingdom by the way we head toward that Kingdom. **AV Acts 4:12** "*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*"

As *darkness* increases the *light* of the gospel becomes more urgent. Going from ***Dark to Different*** means ***shining the light*** of God's Truth through the activities we take part in; the words we use; the decisions we make; the attitudes we keep; and the treatment we give those around us.

Fruit Reveals the Root so our lives should demonstrate we are truly connected to Jesus—maintaining ***His*** attitude toward everyone—showing compassion, mercy, love and forgiveness to all in all situations.

Acts 1:8 "*You shall be witnesses to Me.*" The *mission* is unchanged; *Sinners* need forgiveness; *People* need hope; and *we* need salvation through faith in our ***risen Redeemer***.

That is why—we *Sing of our Redeemer*—*With His blood, He purchased me; On the cross He sealed my pardon; Paid the debt, and made me free.*

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www.fcgchurch.org

*Receive free Tracts email:
fcgchurch1@gmail.com

Or write to: PO Box 24283
Philadelphia, PA 19120
#3293 26 0621A