



WEEKLY CELL GUIDE

10 OCT 2021 | WHY WE DO NOT LONG FOR JESUS' RETURN MATTHEW 24:3-31

Series: Jesus is Coming Back (Pt 2/5) | Speaker: Josh Yeoh



WELCOME

[15 MINS]

You may want to look up the following websites for icebreakers suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)



WORSHIP

[15 MINS]

You may select songs like

1. Blessed Assurance (My King is Coming)
 2. The Return
 3. Soon
-



WORD

[45 MINS]

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Reflect on our hearts' attitudes and condition as the Church waits for Jesus' return.
2. To respond to God's call to be a Church that longs for His return.

SERMON SUMMARY

In the previous week, Josh covered the four signs of Jesus coming back:

- a. Disasters in the earth
- b. Developments in the church (persecution, pressure, proclamation)
- c. Distress in Jerusalem (Abomination of Desolation) and
- d. Darkness in the heavens (Jesus comes again)

Josh continues on his preaching of the Olivet Discourse, looking again at Matthew 24 with another question for our consideration – why we don't long for Jesus to return. May our hearts be awakened to long for His return.

- **Reason 1: We Don't Care / Indifference (v 12)**

- "The love of many will grow cold..."
- Josh shared about the experience he had with recording the song "Purify" and how he felt led to sing about "Laodicea". Ps Francis Chan also spoke about the church of Laodicea on the day the song was released.
- [Revelation 3:17-19](#)
- "If to love is to obey, when I don't obey then it's not an obedience problem, it's a love problem." – When we have problems obeying, it is because we love something else more than God – it can be reputation, family, even our own selves. What is in the way of us obeying God?
- We usually only recognise how much worth a person or object has in our lives when it is removed and it results in our world crashing down. How much do our lives change when Jesus is removed from our lives?

"The opposite of love is not hate, but indifference." – **Elie Wiesel** (Activist, Professor, Nobel Prize Laureate, Holocaust survivor).

- While Jesus' first coming was one that was quiet and without much announcement, Jesus' second coming will be one that is glorious and one that everyone will know of. God is not indifferent to the return of His Son.
- May the Lord awaken us from slumber, indifference, apathy; and to be aware of the return of His Son.

- **Reason 2: We Don't Understand (v 4)**

- "See that no one leads you astray (no one deceives you...)"
- There are times where we do not long for His return because we do not understand. However, Paul shows us that it is possible - he planted the church at Thessalonica and taught them for the short period he was there.
- The word taught is full of information of the coming of Christ and formed the basis of everything the apostles taught. It is described as elementary doctrine and is meant to be simple ([Hebrews 6:1-2](#)).
- There are times where we are confused by wrong teachings – however, the enemy does not want the church to know about the end of the age, for the church that knows the end will be empowered with courage to endure through the hardest days of warfare and confusion ([Matthew 24:25](#))
- Jesus desires that we have clarity and it is needful for us to keep sight of this importance.
- Using the analogy of the engaged and married woman, it is important that the church is focused on the wedding rather than getting caught up in the engagement.
- The gospel is not just what He has done but what He will do - we need to proclaim both the First and Second coming.
- We will encounter times where we struggle to understand God's ways. In these moments, we can turn to our spirit family for wisdom and understanding ([2 John 1:6-7](#)):
 - Doing life together in love protects us against deception. To love Biblically is to have our love for one another centred in God and what He says. May we be such a community to each other ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#)).

- **Reason 3: We Are Frightened (v 6)**

- "See that you are not alarmed [frightened; troubled] ..."
- Revelation is a book of majesty, mystery (about what is to come) and misery.
- It is important for us to have the correct lens when we read and interpret the book. The book of Revelation is about Jesus Christ, who loves His bride so much that He came to redeem her.

- When we love someone, we desire to know everything about the person, and not just about loving the ideas of the person.
- Revelation is the only book that states a blessing for those who read it ([Revelations 1:3](#)). It gives a road map about the very end. When we know what comes at the end, it empowers us to go through the various challenges the end times will bring.
- After Jesus preached about the end in [Matthew 24](#), He also assured His disciples in [Matthew 28](#) that He will always be with them.
- **Reason 4: We Don't Know Him Enough (v 14)**
 - Jesus was lifted up during the ascension ([Acts 1:9-11](#)). Jesus will come back the same way He left.
 - Josh encouraged members to meditate on the humanity of God whenever we are in a rut or struggle with intimacy with Him.
 - Josh shared about the analogy of how families wave goodbye to their loved ones at the airport. His disciples missed Him dearly because they knew Him.
 - They had lived and spent every single moment with Him and experienced the pain of loss of living with Jesus. At the same time, the disciples were told how He would return by taking the gospel to those who have yet to know Him. Imagine their passion and zeal to do so as to facilitate Jesus' return.
 - When we do not know Him enough, it is normal that we will not miss nor long for Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Share your experience / thoughts after listening to the past two sermons and/or our midweek series with Ps Peter Tsukahira. Were there any learning points/reflections sparked?** [15 Mins]

Leader's Notes

This is a question for the cell to reflect and share how the sessions have been for them.

Does it inspire them to have a renewed perspective about the End Times? Does it encourage them to know God and God's word more, or about the importance of being a Christian witness to others around them? For some, it could be a jarring reminder about where they are in their faith in God, and for the cell to consider how they can support each other in this faith journey.

While speaking about the End Times can look scary for some or faraway for others, it is a reminder for us to live faithfully now while awaiting His return. It is about a blessed Hope to come for a fallen world, and how we as His disciples can play a part in it.

Transition

The End Times consist of signs or "birth pangs" of pointing to our glorious hope – the return of Christ. We are encouraged to be prepared so that we can be ready when it comes, and to be able to prepare others as well.

2. **What characteristics does God desire of His bride whether in persecution, the end times or today?** [15 Mins]

Leader's Notes

This is a recap and relate question. As a cell, take time to consider what is the vision God has for the church. Members can reflect on what Josh had preached. Biblically speaking, what God desires of His church does not change be it in times of persecution or in times of peace.

Whether we are in times of persecution or times of peace like today, Christians can be led astray if we are not mature. That is why God desires every one of His children to grow into maturity in Christ; this is called discipleship and it never changes regardless whether we are in the end times or not. Those who are mature in their faith will long for His return, will live lives that pleases God, and will not be easily deceived by the evil one. This should be our focus as His disciples.

Transition

Like how God desires for us to be a Bride that looks forward to His coming, God also desires for His church to be the glorious Bride – one that is mature and spotless.

3. Josh shared about the 4 reasons why many Christians do not long for Jesus to return. Do you identify with any of these reasons? Why a change of heart attitude necessary and how can you make that happen? [15 Mins]

Leader's Notes

This is a reflect and response question for the cell to talk about one's attitude towards Jesus' return. Encourage your cell members to examine their hearts to see if within the depths of their hearts, they long for Jesus to return. Then, ask them to share if any of the 4 attitudes apply to them.

It is important for members not to stop at realisation. This must progress on towards change. Therefore, practically speaking, what needs to change in their lives so that they can live their lives in light of Christ's return. Are they living the following areas of their lives in light of Christ return – priorities, urgency of reaching out to their loved ones, maturity in Christlikeness, maturity in one's relationship with God, and bringing God's love into the world.

Possible Activity: If leaders feel led, they can do an activity where members have some individual time to reflect and write a note to God about where they are in their walk with God and to commit their walk to God.

Closing

"I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. **He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**" - *The Apostles Creed*

The return of Christ is one of the foundational beliefs of the Christian faith. Since the early church, Christians have always believed and anticipated this blessed hope – that Christ will return for His bride (His Church). He will return as King, Judge and Bridegroom. From there, He will make all things new and right. There will be no more sicknesses, sin, tears and pain. And all we believers will be with Him for all eternity. This is the blessed hope that we have as believers in the midst of a world full of injustice, sicknesses, pain and sorrow. May we all live in light of this blessed hope and prepare ourselves as the bride for the coming of our Bridegroom.

Resource: [How Can We Prepare for the Return of Christ? By CBN](#)



Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

1. **Pray that:**

- Every disciple in RiverLife will know Jesus intimately and desire His will to be done.
- Every disciple in RiverLife will awaken to the reality and nearness of Jesus' return.
- We will evaluate how prepared we are for His coming and to truly live in light of His return.
- For wisdom and grace to live out as faithful witnesses and to boldly proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom.

2. COVID-19 in Singapore

- God's intervention as we experience a sharp increase in the number of community cases and a return to tighter social measures in society.
- God's hand to alleviate the sufferings, and for practical help to arise and be rendered to these suffering communities, especially the old and the vulnerable.

3. COVID-19 in the World

- A swift end to the COVID-19 crisis globally, if not a reduction in cases in third world nations, and a stable environment where humans and virus coexist.
- Healing and comfort for those who are sick and suffering.
- Protection and guidance for healthcare professionals at the frontline, giving them wisdom, courage, and strength to confront this crisis.

4. Opportunities for Outreach

- Ask the Lord to grant you opportunities to reach out to a non-believing loved one, friend, or colleague this week as we seek mature in Christlikeness.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

[5 MINS]

1. **Jesus Is Coming Back Sermon Series – Weekly Rhythms.** On top of the weekly Sunday Sermons, there will be two additional platforms as part of this series:
 - **RiverLife Prayer Room on Tuesday at 8pm.** This coming Tuesday night, our Prayer Room team will partner with Burning Hearts for a special time of Worship and Intercession.
 - **Equipping Sessions on Thursday night at 8pm with Peter Tsukahira.** Our next session will cover the topic on The Antichrist. (Note: Recordings for each session will be made available only for one week after the session)
2. **Missions from Home.** What does Missions look like when we're unable to travel? We believe God is calling RiverLifers to sow continually and faithfully into the nations by partnering Him and adapting in the way we approach Missions. We have 104 RiverLifers who have signed up for 9 MFH teams, reaching out to India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, and Thailand. Over the next few months, they will be collaborating with our Missions Partners to develop missions projects that provide prayer support, resources and raise awareness for their ministries. We encourage all to get involved by praying, giving, or serving. Find out more about the different countries we're working with: rlc.sg/mfh. Join a MFH team: rlc.sg/mfh-serve
3. **Prayer Ministry.** If you require prayer ministry for any issues you face (eg. unforgiveness, demonic oppression, etc), you can sign up for RLC's RTF ministry: <https://bit.ly/rlcrtf>
4. **Bible Reading Plan.** You can access our 2-Year Bible Reading Plan 2021-2022 by visiting <https://rlc.sg/brp2021>.

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VIEWS ON THE END TIMES

NEW SERMON SERIES:

JESUS IS COMING BACK

3 - 31 OCT

WHEN WILL JESUS RETURN?

