

Jesus return to renew the world

“I do not think that in the last forty years I have lived one conscious hour that was not influenced by the thought of our Lord’s return” - Lord Shaftesbury

Rescue Accomplished

Waiting for Jesus to return

- Romans 8:19-21
- Romans 8:23-25
- 1 Corinthians 1:7
- Philippians 3:20
- 1 Thessalonians 1:10
- Hebrews 9:28

Jesus is coming back to make everything new, we don’t know when, but we wait eagerly.

Jesus is coming back to make everything new

God’s drama of salvation:

Act 1: Creation – good

Act 2: Fall – broken relationships – with God, each other and the world around

Act 3: Abraham & Israel – a nation to bear witness

Act 4: Jesus’ life, death & resurrection

Act 5: The giving of the Spirit & the life of the church

Act 6: The Return of Jesus: new creation

Renewed people

- Philippians 3:20–21
- 1 John 3:2–3

Renewed World

- Liberated from decay (Romans 8:19-25)
- Utterly made new (2 Peter 3:8-10)
- Sin Destroyed
- God's Kingdom Established

We don't know when

Unexpected – A thief in the night – bible guidelines:

- Mark 13:32 – No-one knows the day or the hour
- We are in the last days now
 - Acts 2:17
 - 2 Timothy 3:1
 - Hebrews 1:2
 - 2 Peter 3:3
- These 'last days' are characterised by both suffering and the advance of the gospel
 - Mark 13:3-13
- Jesus' return is very often spoken of in picture language
 - Revelation not a timetable
 - Revelation uses imagery understood by its first readers

- Promises in the OT are fulfilled in Jesus
 - Ezekiel 47 – John 7:37-38 - Revelation 22
 - Ezekiel 37:24-28 – Revelation 21:3
 - Isaiah 65:1

Unpredictable – yet inevitable – end of labour

Wait Eagerly for Jesus' return

It is worth the wait

- Isaiah 25:6–8
- Revelation 21:1–5
- Revelation 21:22–22:5

Waiting changes everything

- In the world
- Being transformed as we live in the world
- Children of the light
- Lives that show what it means to live with Jesus as King
- Lives in which nothing is wasted

1 Thessalonians 4:18 “We will be with the Lord forever”

We will be with the Lord for ever

We **will be** with the Lord for ever

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We will be with the Lord **for ever**

Conversation Starter: What are you looking forward to?

Growth Group/Personal Reflection Questions

Feel free to pick and choose according to your group

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

Why does Paul bring up the topic of Jesus' return?

Why does he talk about death as 'sleep'?

What is our Christian hope based on (4:14-15)?

What will happen according to Paul when Jesus returns (4:16-17)?

Which direction are we heading when we 'meet him the air' (see Revelation 21:2 for a hint)?

In 5:1-3 Paul uses two images of how the 'day of the Lord' will come – what is the point of using each of these images and what do these tell us about Jesus' return?

Look at 5:4-8 – what does it mean to belong to the day, and what does it mean to belong to the night?

Whereabouts in your life do you need to work on living up to your identity as a child of the light?

When it comes to Jesus' return how ready are you for him to come back?

Look at 4:18 and 5:11 – Do you encourage others? Do you encourage others in particular by reminding them of Jesus' return? How can we do this well? Think about how different aspects of Jesus' return might be helpful for different people?

How should the fact of Jesus return encourage us to live in our every day lives? In the workplace? In the home? With friends?