



Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13

Big Idea: When the alarm clock goes off tomorrow, choose to live committed to Jesus.

Goal: Help students realize what they're living for, and how to follow Jesus and live with purpose.

Message Prop: An alarm clock

Intro:

[TEACHER NOTE: You will use an alarm clock as your primary prop for this entire series. Have it with you as you speak to attach the teaching to the object. You can also add an alarm clock sound effect throughout the message.]

How will you live when the alarm clock goes off? How many of you use an alarm clock to wake up in the morning? How many of you still depend on someone else to wake you up?

I have a love/hate relationship with my alarm clock. I need it to wake up, but then I hate it for waking me up.

[TEACHER NOTE: Share a personal story about your amazing ability or inability to wake up to the alarm clock.]

When I was growing up, my dad was my alarm clock, and he would use three stages of wake up torture:

- Stage 1: Saying my name over and over. It felt like I was always in an amazing dream where people were chanting my name, but then I'd wake up to the harsh reality that the only person chanting my name was my dad.
- Stage 2: Poking me. If stage 1 was ineffective, he would proceed to sit on my bed and poke me in the back as said my name over and over. In stage 1 you can pull your pillow over your head, but in stage 2 you have no place to go.
- Stage 3: Sheets off, lights on. It didn't matter if stage 2 was effective or not, because once he stopped poking me, he'd rip my sheets off the bed—not just off of me, but off my bed—and then turn the lights on.

Anyone else have a similar experience? Maybe some of you have actually mastered the ability of getting out of bed without actually waking up, and you're actually asleep at this very moment. Next week's message will be a tutorial on how to act awake without actually being awake (haha).

An alarm clock can take various forms: daylight, dog licking your face, cymbals, or a bucket of ice water (maybe that's just a college thing).

[TEACHER NOTE: If you have the technology, images or videos of these examples can be used to visualize the point. Find images online.]

If you think about it, an alarm clock might be what wakes us up, but it's not what gets us out of bed in the morning.

- Maybe you get out of bed to check your phone. I guess you can do that in bed.
- Maybe you get out of bed to see your friends, your boyfriend or girlfriend, or your crush. Maybe that's why you're at youth group today.
- Maybe you get out of bed to get your homework done, that you didn't do the day before, or to cram in a few more minutes of studying for the test.
- Maybe you get out of bed for exercise, a sport, to practice your lines for the play, to get to your job so you can have some money, or to post your next video on TikTok.
- Maybe you get out of bed because you're hungry.

So, there are a bunch of reasons we get out of bed. The thing is, if you think about it, the things that get us out of bed have a way of influencing how we live. So, we're faced with the question every day, "How will we live when the alarm goes off?"

What are you going to live for when the alarm clock goes off? School? Friends? Your followers? The weekend? The game? The next level? Your girlfriend or boyfriend? To graduate? To be successful or famous? For approval, popularity, or pleasure?

Whatever you live for after the alarm clock goes off, how are these things influencing your life? How are they influencing your relationship with God?

How are they affecting how you view yourself and others? How do they change how you treat people? And is there a way to influence how we will live before the day influences us?

Over the next couple of weeks, we will be talking about living with a purpose bigger than ourselves, in a way that will get us out of bed regardless of the things that compete for our attention. This whole series will focus on one chapter in the Bible, Matthew 25.

Matthew is the first book of the New Testament in our Bibles, and it is one of the four biographies of the life of Jesus, called the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Matthew was written by a man named Matthew (very original title), who was one of Jesus' disciples. He personally had an interaction with Jesus that changed his life, and then he took it upon himself to write about it and many other life-changing moments people had with Jesus.

The section of Matthew's Gospel that we're going to be looking at comes from the final message Jesus gave before His death. In Matthew 25, we find a collection of stories Jesus told before He was crucified. These stories are called parables, which were fictional stories that used everyday examples to make a point about life. They could be about who we are, how we view life, or what we live for. The stories in Matthew 25 reveal three choices we need to make that will influence how we live each day. Jesus told these stories to instruct His disciples about how they should live as His followers after He was gone, until they died or until He returned. These stories will do the same for us today. They will reveal how we should live until we die, until Jesus returns, or when the alarm clock goes off tomorrow.

Teaching:

The first parable we're going to look at is about a wedding. What comes to mind when you think of a wedding? The couple? The cake? The rings? The Cupid Shuffle?

It's important to mention here that Jesus was Jewish, and He lived in the middle eastern country of Israel in the first century. Weddings in the ancient Jewish culture were a little different than they are today. They were still special occasions of celebration but the process was different.



Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30; John 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 1:7

Big Idea: When the alarm clock goes off tomorrow, choose to be faithful with all you've been given

Goal: Help students realize what they're living for, and how to follow Jesus and live with purpose.

Goal for Small Group: The better understand what it looks like to be faithful with all we've been given.

Conversation is key. Create a safe space for students to be known and belong. Adjust questions as needed, but don't feel like you need to rush to finish the guide or answer all the questions. Build trust in your group to strengthen relationships and encourage vulnerability.

- What stuck out to you from the message?
- What do you get out of bed for?
- When do you feel a lack of motivation?
- What did you think of the parable this week?
- What does it mean to be faithful with everything we've been given?
- Why do you think this is part of the Kingdom of Heaven?
- What fears do you think we'll face when it comes to being faithful?
- How can we remember to be faithful with everything we've been given when the alarm clock goes off tomorrow?

Go Deeper:

[TEACHER NOTE: Pass out Bibles or copies of Romans 12 and have someone read the verses out loud for the group.]

These verses in Romans 12 come from one of the first Christian missionaries, named Paul, on what it looks like to follow Jesus.

Romans 12:1-2

- How does Jesus' example contrast to the pattern of this world?
- How do you think Jesus' example renews our mind?
- How does Jesus' example show us God's will?

Romans 12:3-8

- How do these verses describe faithfulness?
- How do these verses describe different ways to share the gospel?
- How are the different roles like different parts of the body?

Romans 12:9-21

- What does love look like according to these verses?
- Why is loving people harder than it sounds?
- Why is love what faithfulness looks like?

Next Steps:

Review the application from the message:

- Follow Jesus' Example. Jesus showed us the best way to live, and reading about Jesus is how we learn to follow it. If your group hasn't started, have them read (or continue reading) through the Gospel of Matthew together over the next couple weeks. Here's a brief schedule to use:
 - Week 1: Chapters 1-7
 - Week 2: Chapters 8-14
 - Week 3: Chapters 15-21
 - Week 4: Chapters 22-28
- Share His Message. We can have a relationship with God forever through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and we receive this relationship through faith in Him. Have your group share different ways to share and the challenges that come with sharing it.
- Love People. Who is someone you can love this week to let them know that God cares about them? Love is action, our words just back it up.

Pray:

Finish by having each person in the group pick one of the three application statements to pray about for their week coming up.

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