



Main Idea: The return of Jesus is a clear teaching in the New Testament. Because of this fact, it is critical that we keep watch and are prepared.

Scriptures: Acts 1:7-11; Matthew 24:37-39; Matthew 24:42, 44

Game Suggestion: Your Number is Up

Instructions: Have your entire group wander around the room randomly. Every ten seconds or so, shout out a number. Everyone playing must quickly gather for a group hug with the number of people you just called. Sometimes, this means some folks can't form a group because there aren't enough of them, and they get eliminated from the game. Keep going until only two players remain, and then declare them the winners.

After the game, bring everyone back together and say something like:

This game makes me think about living in a state of readiness. Most, if not all of you, were really focused on what number would be called so you wouldn't miss out. Wouldn't it have been awesome if you knew what beforehand what number was coming next? If you did, you'd be prepared for what was ahead and perform way better in the game. Tonight, we're going to discuss how to get ready for the future.

Message:

Have you ever had something you just couldn't wait for? Maybe it was the release of a new video game or a movie you'd been counting down the days for. Maybe it was hanging out with a friend you hadn't seen in forever. Some of you seniors might be looking forward to graduation and finally being done with high school. And honestly, I bet when you head back to school on Monday, a lot of you will already be looking forward to next weekend.

That's kind of how life works. We're always waiting for something. We're always looking forward to the next big moment.

[Leader Note: share a personal story here about a time you were really looking forward to something.]

But here's the thing: as followers of Jesus, the biggest thing we should be looking forward to isn't just the next weekend, or a movie release, or even graduation. The thing we should be most excited about is the return of Jesus.

[Leader Note: consider mentioning #RaptureTok, which blew up on TikTok in June 2025. A South African Christian, Joshua Mhlakela, forecasted that the world would end on September 23 or 24. It gained massive popularity, and TikTok users started sharing posts about quitting their jobs and selling their stuff, including their cars.]

Point #1: Jesus is really coming back!

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:7-11, NIV)

Luke, the author of Acts, tells us that after Jesus rose from the grave and spent over forty days with His disciples, He ascended into heaven right before their eyes. One moment He was talking with them, and the next He went up into the sky, disappearing into the clouds. As the disciples stood there with their jaws dropped, two angels appeared and made this encouraging promise: "This same Jesus will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Think about that. The disciples had already seen Jesus do mind-blowing things:

- He fed thousands with a kid's lunch.
- He raised Lazarus from the dead.
- He walked on water and calmed a storm with a word.
- He cast out demons.
- He performed over 40 recorded miracles (and likely many more).

[Leader Note: share your favorite miracle of Jesus with your students.]

But Jesus' greatest miracle was dying on the cross for our sins and rising again, proving once and for all that He was God. And yet, here's what we sometimes forget: Jesus' story isn't over. He's coming back. The Bible doesn't just hint at it. It mentions Jesus' second coming over and over. In fact, the New Testament talks about Jesus' return over 300 times! If Scripture mentions something that often, we should pay attention.

So, here's the truth: just as sure as Jesus died and rose again, He is going to return. It's not a maybe, not a what if. It's a guaranteed promise from God Himself. Jesus left in a very real and physical sense, and His very real and physical return is sooner than we think.

So why is He returning to Earth? We will be exploring this for the next few weeks, but the Bible tells us that Jesus' second coming is to raise the dead, judge the wicked, establish His Kingdom, and ultimately destroy sin and death.

Point #2: Jesus compared His return to Noah's day.

³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. (Matthew 24:37-39)

Everyone listening to Jesus' words would've instantly known the story of Noah. Just like today, people had heard about Noah's Ark whether they fully believed it or not. And here's what happened: the world was so evil and full of sin that God judged it with a flood. Everything and everyone were wiped out, except for Noah, his family, and the animals God brought into the ark. Eight people survived. The rest of humanity didn't.

Now, here's the thing: when we're little, we usually see "cutesy" pictures of Noah's Ark. Maybe you've seen them in a children's Bible or a Sunday School classroom. The pictures usually include a boat with giraffe heads poking out the top, rainbows, and smiling animals.



Main Idea: One day, we'll finally be with God, and He'll make all things new forever.

Scriptures: Revelation 21:1-5a

- What's something you own that you wish you could make brand new again?
- If you got to design the perfect world, what would it be like?

Have a student read Revelation 21:1–5.

- When God says, "I am making everything new," what do you think that means?
- What do you imagine the new heaven and new earth will be like?
- What are some broken things in our world that you can't wait for God to fix one day?
- The passage we read says God will live with His people. What do you think that's going to be like?
- Revelation 21:4 says there will be no more pain, death, or tears. What does that promise mean to you right now, and why?
- What are some things in your life that feel broken or hard right now?
- What would it look like to bring those broken things to God this week and trust Him with them?

PRAYER

Ask the students for prayer requests and then close in prayer.

If you have time, give each student some time to share a "high," a "low," and a "God moment" from this past week.

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