



# ARE YOU READY?!

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U6#4 1st-3rd Grade • Jan.7, 2024

## Concept

Jesus will return.

## Goal

Students will learn that Jesus will return and what it means to be ready for His coming. They will be encouraged to grow in their longing for Christ's return and to live a life of readiness.

## Passage

Matthew 24

Key Verse: "So always be ready, because you don't know the day your Lord will come." Matthew 24:42.

## Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p><b>Activity Station:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Signs of Jesus' Return" activity sheet, 1/student</li> <li>• <i>Tell Me the Story, Max Lucado</i></li> <li>• <i>1 bed sheet</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Activity #2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>CD player</i></li> <li>• <i>Music CD</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Station:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printed pattern of "Are You Ready" box, 1/student</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Scissors</li> </ul>

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

# Background Information/Teacher Helps

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## *The Setting*

In the course of giving His Olivet Discourse, Christ was instructing His hearers concerning the uncertainty of the time of His return. The signs given in Matthew 24:4-26 would alert the nation to the fact that they were living in the last days. However, 'no one knows about that day or hour..., but only the Father' (v.36). Christ likened those days immediately preceding His second advent to the days of Noah. Noah forewarned his generation of an impending judgment... The message was clearly understood, but it was ignored. The people occupied themselves with the normal activities of life, eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage. There was nothing morally wrong with living in a normal way, but they were living joyously when they should have been preparing for judgment. Christ revealed that when the signs of the Messiah's approach are given in the last days, the generation that sees those signs will act like Noah's generation, that is, they will ignore them and go on with the normal way of life.

## *The Problem*

Christ faced the question of how those who witnessed the signs should respond to them. One reason for giving signs was to alert people so they could prepare themselves for the judgment... Christ spoke of this judgment when He said, 'Two men will be in the field; one will be taken [away in judgment] and the other left [to go into the kingdom]...

## *The Solution*

In order to answer the question, Christ gave two brief parables to teach watchfulness, preparedness, and faithfulness...

In the second parable Christ stressed the need for faithfulness on the part of those who will witness the signs (Matt. 24:45-51)... When the master returned, he would note the faithfulness of his servant. If a servant was found faithful, that servant would be given added responsibilities..."[1] We are to wait and watch for His coming (Mark 13:35; 1 Corinthians 1:7) not in idle sloth but in earnest endeavor... We are to 'occupy' or 'do business' till He comes. This truth will... stir us to more zealous service for our Master." [2]

[1] The Parables of Jesus, J. Dwight Pentecost, 1982, Zondervan Corporation, pp. 149-151.

[2] The Incomparable Christ, J. Oswald Sanders, © 1971, Moody Press, pp. 243-245.

## Set Up

Choose 4 students to help act out the drama in Learning Activity #1. Read the passage with them and help them decide how they will mime their parts. The parts are: master, chief servant, and other servants. **Optional:** Go to the storage room with them to get some costumes (*if at Main Campus*).

## Incorporation Lg. Group

### Activity Stations:

- **Research – “Signs of Jesus’ Return”**
  - **Instructions:** Give each student an activity sheet and follow the instructions.
- **Game – “Are You Ready?”**
  - **Instructions:** Divide students into 2 groups. Lay the sheet on the floor and have the groups sit on either side of the sheet. Before you have each group tell their names to the students in the other group, make it clear that they will need to remember each other’s names for the game. Have 2 students or 2 teachers hold the sheet up high enough to hide the groups of sitting students from each other. Choose a student from each group to crawl up very close and sit facing the sheet. The two holding the sheet will say, “Are You Ready?” and drop the sheet. The two students facing the sheet will each call out the name of the student on the other side of the sheet. The first student to say the correct name wins a point for their team. Choose 2 different children and repeat.
- **Craft – Are You Ready Box**
  - **Instructions:** Give each student a printed sheet with the box and follow the printed instructions on the paper.
- **Music:** “I Am Sure” (Michael W. Smith), “King of Kings”, “Step By Step”

## Introduction Lg. Group

Have you ever thought about what it means to be ready for something to happen? Pretend you have a substitute teacher at school. She gives you some homework that you don't want to do so you decide not to do it. After all your teacher isn't here and you don't need to obey this other person. Then the next day your teacher comes back unexpectedly and tells everyone they must hand in the homework assignment or they'll have to stay in from recess. You weren't ready for the teacher to return, were you? What would it have looked like if you had been ready? (Homework would have been done and you wouldn't have missed out on recess.)

## Transition

Let's watch as your friends act out a parable from the Bible about two servants. Watch to learn who is and who isn't ready.

## Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

**Instructions:** Have the 4 chosen students mime the following parable as a teacher reads **Matthew 24:44-51** from the Bible.

# Learning Activity#1 Continued

## Transition

## Lesson Lg. Group

### Debrief:

- Which of the 2 servants was ready for his master's return? (The first one)
- Why was he ready? (He believed the master and knew he would return that day)
- Why wasn't the second one ready? (He thought the master would be gone for a long time and decided to live selfishly rather than to get ready for the master's return.)

Everyone gather around so we can talk about this parable that Jesus taught.

This is a parable that Jesus told the disciples to let them know that, like the master, He would go away for a while, but will come back. Our key verse is "So always be ready, because you don't know the day your Lord will come" (Matthew 24:42). Think of somebody who doesn't live with you that you would most like to see. You haven't seen them for a long time and you know they are coming, but don't know exactly when. *(Describe what it would be like to wait for them)* Jesus tells us that He will come back and He wants us to look forward to and be ready for His return.

When Jesus returns it will be better than we can imagine. God promised in His Bible that someday He will send Jesus back to be the king of the whole world. And we know He will be the perfect King who will rule fairly, always doing what is best for everyone. Even more than the person you really can't wait to see, it will be like the greatest, coolest, most awesome thing that you can ever imagine!!

Let's repeat our key verse. "So always be ready, because you don't know the day your Lord will come" (Matthew 24:42). This verse says we are supposed to be ready. What are we to be ready for? (Jesus to return.) How do we know if we're ready? How do we get ready? (Give children an opportunity to give their ideas.) We begin to get ready by becoming God's children. When we admit that we sin and ask Jesus to forgive us we become God's children. When we become a child of God we begin a friendship with Him and He promises that we will live forever with Him in heaven after we die.

Why is it important to make that decision to become a child of God before Jesus comes back? When Jesus returns, the time will be over for people to choose to ask Him for His forgiveness. The people who have not become His children will not be ready and will be sent away for His judgment. They will not go to heaven.

## Lesson Continued

Jesus loves all of us and wants everyone to make the decision to become His child so that we can live with Him forever in heaven. He wants us to look forward to His return and be ready when He comes. Then, like the good servant in our story, those who have asked Jesus to forgive them are ready.

## Transition

Let's say our key verse: "So always be ready, because you don't know the day your Lord will come" (Matthew 24:42). Let's play a game to practice being ready.

## Learning Activity# 2 Lg. Group

### Game – "READY OR NOT"

**Instructions:** This game is a combination of "Simon Says" and "Musical Chairs." Set up 2 rows of chairs back to back with one less than the number of children. They are to circle the chairs while the music plays and sit when the music stops. At the same time the music is stopped, a teacher will call out a command, e.g. "Pat your tummy." They must obey the command when they sit down or they are also out of the game. Keep removing chairs so there is always one less than the number of children playing. If you have a large group, you may need to remove 2-4 chairs each time so the game doesn't go on too long.

## Transition

Let's get into small groups and talk about how His children can be ready for His return.

## Learning Activity# 3 Sm. Groups

- If you are a child of God and you know that Jesus will come back, are you looking forward to it? Why or why not? (Haven't ever thought about it, like it here on earth, not sure what it will be like so afraid.)
- What could you do to help you to look forward to Jesus coming back? (Learn about what heaven will be like, ask God to help you look forward to it, get to know God by reading the Bible, talk with people who look forward to heaven and find out why they're looking forward to it.) The more we learn about how wonderful it will be the more excited we'll be. We'll want to tell others about Jesus and how great it will be to live with Him forever.
- The craft we did tells us about how to be ready for Jesus to come back. If you aren't a child of God, you can read these verses with your parents or friends and talk about them. If you are a child of God, you can share this craft with your friends and family members and talk to them about how they can be ready for Jesus to come back.

**Mission Prayer:** Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Let's pray now and thank God that we can look forward to the time Jesus will return. Let's ask Him to help us look forward to it!

## Review

Today we learned that Jesus will come back again. Review main points and key verse (Matthew 24:42). Invite students again to accept the gospel and be ready for Jesus' return!

## Extension

Repeat one of the games.