



READY, SET, GO

Disciples & Early Church • U5# 2 1st-3rd Gr. • Nov.3, 2024

Concept

Jesus will come back to rule on earth; be ready for His Second Coming!

Goal

Students will learn that when they have a personal relationship with God, they can eagerly look forward to His Second Coming.

Passage

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; John 3:16

Key Verse: "So always be ready at all times. You don't know the day your Lord will come." Matthew 24:42

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Box representing an earth scanner</i>• <i>Telephone</i>	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>"READY, SET GO" printed on cardstock, 1/student</i>• Markers, crayons• Scissors• Glue sticks

*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 (for the teacher)

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"Ever since the sin of Adam and Eve this world has been a DARK PLACE (2 Pet 1:19), a moral 'Night' (John 1:5). By faith the believer looks forward, through prophecy, to the DAY (2 Pet 1:19), the glorious Day, which is coming, when salvation, which is now by faith and hope (Rom 8:24), shall be revealed (1 Pet 1:5), in all its grandeur and glory (1 Cor. 2:9). For this Day the hearts of God's people yearn with earnest desire." [1]

"A dear brother writes us as follows: 'I find so many who are willing to receive the truth of the Second Coming, but it is generally those who are passing through affliction, or those living very near the Lord. Those who are enjoying the well watered plains of this world, seem to care very little about seeing the Owner of the Estate. But He will come. Hallelujah! He will come. Yes! He is coming. The bride who knows the Bridegroom, and is true, says, He is coming. 'Come Lord Jesus,' Come! Come!! Come!!! Come!!!! A poor cursed earth (Rom. 8:19-22) groans out Come! Thank heaven, He speaks: Surely I Come Quickly.' Rev. 22:20. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching: ... Lu.12:37." [2]

Acts 1:11 tells us that, just as the disciples saw Christ leave this earth, we will see Him return. In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Paul encourages his audience to remain alert and sober (5:6) because just as they know and have been taught (5:1,4) Christ will return unexpectedly (5:1-3). Matthew 24 and Luke 21 cite many signs of Christ's Second Coming. But what effect should these signs of Christ's return have on our lives today? The children in your class may very well live until the end times. It is through the Spirit's conviction in your teaching that they may realize that in a moment of time the opportunity to accept Christ may be gone for their friends, relatives, and other loved ones. Every day is possibly their final day on earth. So let's take the challenge to make the most of every opportunity to share the gospel.

[1] Blackstone, William B., Jesus is Coming, © 1908, Fleming H. Revell Co., pp. 213, 214.

[2] Blackstone, William B., Jesus is Coming, © 1908, Fleming H. Revell Co., p. 215.

Set Up

The Week Before: Plan for the SKIT and decide which teachers will play the 3 characters.

Activity Stations:

- **Craft – Ready, Set, Go**

- **Instructions:** Give each student the printed cardstock, "READY, SET, GO." Color the symbols in the lower box as desired. Around the outside border cut out the lower box. Cut the bottom strip of the page. Cut it in 2 pieces. Glue the pieces on the back of either side of the box to use as pull strips. Cut the vertical slits in the box with the key verse by folding the paper so that the ends of each line touch each other. Cut along the lines and unfold the paper. From the back, slide the box with the pull strips through the first vertical slit, across the top and back out through the 2nd vertical slit. Slide from left to right for the progression of the gospel. As students work on their craft, discuss the key verse and each of the verses that go with the symbols. Talk about the importance of telling people about Jesus.

When it starts getting cold and the days get shorter, you know that winter is coming soon. And when you start seeing stores put up Christmas decorations, you know that Christmas is coming soon. These are signs. They tell us that something we know is coming will be here soon. We had a discussion earlier about the progression of signs that indicate something will soon happen (give another example). The Bible tells us that Jesus will come back to rule on earth. It also tells us that there will be signs of Jesus' Second Coming. As these signs progress and intensify we are reminded that He will return and the time of His return is getting closer. Our key verse is, "Be ready at all times, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming" (Matthew 24:42).

Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 24 that His return to earth would be near when they saw certain signs. Some of the signs are increased wars, hunger, earthquakes and natural disasters; Christians will be persecuted; people who appeared to believe in Christ will turn away and hate and mistreat those who continue to believe; many false teachers and preachers will influence people to believe them rather than the Bible; people will become more and more selfish and self-centered; violence will increase.

Let me read you something that was written by a person who imagined what Jesus might say to us if He was here.

Drama - "Today" performed by 3 teachers

Incorporation Lg. Group

Introduction Lg. Group

Transition

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Let's talk about Jesus' Second Coming.

Do any of you think you know when Jesus will come back to earth? Turn to 1 Thessalonians and follow along as I read 1 Thessalonians 5:1, 2, 4. So we don't know the exact day or time Jesus will come back to earth. But we do know that He will come back and we are to always be ready. So how do we know if we are ready for Jesus to come back to earth? Why did Jesus come to earth the first time? (He came to take the punishment we deserve for our sins.) Who can tell me what "sin" is? (It is any thoughts or actions that disrespect God, disrespect and/or hurt people.) Do you know anyone who doesn't sin? The Bible tells us that we all sin. How did Jesus take the punishment we deserve for our sins? It's so amazing that Jesus came to earth as a man to live a perfect life so He could die on the cross to take the punishment we all deserve. But knowing that Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins doesn't make us ready for His return. Who can tell me how we can be sure we are ready? (When we admit to God that we need His forgiveness and ask that Jesus' death on the cross count for our sins.) At that moment He forgives us and we begin a relationship with Him that will last forever. Then we are then ready for Jesus to come back.

Although we don't know the exact day that Jesus will come back to rule on earth, the Bible gives some signs that will indicate that the time is getting closer. Turn to Matthew 24 to look at two of the signs.

Sign #1 – Persecution of Christians

Let's read verses 9 and 10 for the first sign. Turn to Luke 21:12-19 and follow along as I read. What does this passage say will happen? (There will be a time of great persecution.) What is persecution? (Read Luke 5:12b, 16, 17 again.) Christians will be hated, put on trial and even put to death because of their belief in Jesus. It will be a very difficult time for Christians but also a time when God will give great strength and power to those who persevere. Look again at Luke 21:13, 14, 18 & 19. What does God promise?

It will be a time when those who trust God will see Him work very powerfully and have an opportunity to show the world that God is more powerful than any person or circumstance. The Bible promises that God will give Christians everything they need, especially when they stand with and for Him.

Sign #2 – The gospel will be preached to all the world

Go back to Matthew 24 and look at verse 14. The second sign is that the gospel will be preached throughout the world. Who knows what the gospel is? (It is the good news that Jesus came to earth and died for our sins so we can accept His forgiveness and spend eternity in heaven with God.) Christians are spreading the gospel throughout the world, both at home and in other countries.

Lesson Continued

Do you know that families from this church have gone to live in Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Russia, Cambodia and Ethiopia so they can tell others about Jesus? Did you know that thousands of people each day are becoming Christians? When every people group in every language has an opportunity to hear the gospel, this sign will be fulfilled. So, "Be ready at all times, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming" (Matthew 24:42).

When Jesus comes back to earth again it will be a very exciting time for all Christians. Listen while I read 2 Thessalonians 1:5- 7, 10. When Jesus comes to rule this earth, we will rule with Him. He will stop all evil. Life will be so incredible, better than anything we can ever imagine.

Now listen while I read 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9. What does this tell us? (Jesus' return will be terrifying for those who don't know Him.) When Jesus comes back it will be the end of time for all people to make the decision to accept His gift of forgiveness. When He comes back to earth to rule as King only those who are ready will be with Him. Everyone who has heard about Jesus and asked Him to forgive their sins is ready. Everyone who has heard about Jesus but has not asked Him to forgive their sins is not ready. But everyone can decide to be ready. Everyone can choose to ask Jesus to forgive them at any time. Everyone who asks will be forgiven.

Transition

Let's get into our small groups.

Learning Activity# 2 Sm. Groups

- What does it mean to be prepared for something (i.e. school, play out in the snow, etc.)?
- Thinking back to the passages we read, what do you think it means to be prepared for Christ to come back one day? (chance to re-explain the gospel)
- Thinking back on the passage we read in Luke 21:13,14,18,&19, what do you think it's saying? Discuss how this passage might apply to the students.

Missions Prayer: Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

Let's pray now. For people who are not ready for Jesus to come back, they can get ready by telling God that they know they need His forgiveness for their sins and want Jesus' death to pay the punishment for them. Let's thank God that He has told us everything we need to know in His word and that He gives us signs to remind us that Jesus will come back to rule one day. We can thank God that he has promised to come back!

Today [1]

Characters: Michael, the angel
Gabriel, the angel
Abraham

Scene: A table sits in the middle of the stage with a box representing an earth scanner on it. A phone sits on the table also. Michael stands behind or beside the scanner adjusting knobs.

Telephone rings

Michael: Oh WOW, it's the hotline. Answers phone Yes sir, good morning. Today? Right now? But nobody is expecting it! *(Pause)* Right sir, they are supposed to be watching and prepared, and a few are, but ... yes, sir ... yes ... right away, sir. *(Dials the phone)*
Hello, Dave? Get the troops ready. Today is C-day! Yes, I mean today!

Gabriel enters singing

"Oh What a Beautiful Morning" and struts around during the following conversation, but hardly ever looks at Michael

Gabriel: Well, Michael, I see things are in order this morning.

Michael: Gabriel, my friend, you better get your lips tuned up and your trumpet polished.

Gabriel: These lips are always tuned. Always ready to sound forth the call of God.

Michael: Well, you ...

Gabriel: Always in tune for the Lord.

Michael: Then you are already ...

Gabriel: Always polished up and ready to blow is the trumpet of this angel.

Michael: Then you'll be glad to hear that today is the day.

Gabriel not listening to Michael

Gabriel: My troops of trumpeters always stand with horns ready to blow forth the call of God, whenever that may be ... TODAY? It can't be! I'm not ready! I have to practice. I don't even remember how to blow charge. My troops aren't ready. Are you sure it's today? How could it be?

Michael: That's what the Almighty said. I just talked to him on the hotline.

Gabriel: Man, I better get ready.

Hurries out, runs into Abraham

Abraham: Morning, Gabe, what's the hurry?

Gabriel: I'm not ready!

Abraham: What's with him? What's he mean he's not ready?

Michael: Not ready for the C-day.

Abraham: Really? I thought everybody was ready for that day. When it comes I'll be ready. But that will probably be a good while.

Michael: I don't know, Abraham. It could be sooner.

Abraham: What do you mean? I thought a bunch of signs had to occur first.

Michael: Suppose they already have.

Abraham: Maybe, but I just don't think Jehovah would do it yet. See, I figure there is going to be this war ...

Michael: Abe, I got a call from the Almighty a little while ago. He said he's decided upon a day.

Abraham: When, Mike? You gotta tell me!

Michael: Today.

Abraham: TODAY? It can't be! I'm not ready. I've got to get my people ready! I've got to get all Israel together. I gotta find Moses and Aaron.

Exit Abraham, Enter Gabriel

Gabriel: How's it look, General?

Michael: Real good, Gabe. There's a bit of confusion, but things are shaping up. Are the troops in line?

Gabriel: Ready to go.

Michael: Good. We've got just a few minutes to countdown. I've been watching the earth scanner. It looks like we aren't the only ones surprised and unprepared. There are a lot of people down there who are clueless. There's going to be great confusion on earth. (picks up the phone) Yes, this is General Michael. Get ready for the countdown. (pause. looking down at earth scanner) Ready or not, here we come.

Exit.

[1] Adapted from Rice & Yaconelli, Greatest Skits on Earth Vol. 2, ©1987 by Youth Specialties, Inc., "Today?" pp. 166-169.