

Matthew
24-26

THE LAST DAYS

Devotional + Discussion Guide



HOUSTON'S FIRST
BAPTIST CHURCH

THE LAST DAYS

Day 1

Knowing the Signs

BIBLE VERSE

"You are going to hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, because these things must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these events are the beginning of labor pains." — Matthew 24:6–8 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

Jesus did not give His disciples a calendar – He gave them a warning and an invitation to stay spiritually awake. In Matthew 24, Jesus describes signs that point toward His return, comparing them to labor pains that increase in intensity as the moment draws closer. These signs – wars, famine, earthquakes, deception – are not meant to frighten believers but to remind us that God is still sovereign and His plan is unfolding exactly as promised. Try limiting how much news or social media you consume each day and replace that time with Scripture or prayer, allowing God's truth to shape your perspective instead of fear. Just as the Olympic torch signals that the games are coming, these signs remind us that Jesus is faithful to His word. The goal is not speculation but preparation. When we understand the signs, we learn to anchor our hope not in this world but in Christ alone. Intentionally begin each day by surrendering your plans to God, asking Him to align your priorities with what matters eternally. Knowing the signs should move us to faithfulness, not fear.

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does knowing that God is in control of the future shape the way you live today?

KEY TAKEAWAY

The signs of the last days are meant to prepare our hearts, not panic them.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for being faithful to Your Word. Help me stay spiritually alert and grounded in Truth, trusting You even when the world feels uncertain. Amen



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Day 2

Waiting Faithfully

BIBLE VERSE

"Therefore be alert, since you don't know what day your Lord is coming."

— Matthew 24:42 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

Waiting is one of the hardest parts of the Christian life, especially when the wait feels long. Jesus reminds us that no one knows the day or hour of His return, which means every day matters. Waiting faithfully doesn't mean sitting idly – it means living intentionally. Scripture shows us that living prepared is different from living scared. Faithful waiting looks like obedience, consistency, and trust, even when God feels silent. Identify one spiritual discipline – prayer, Scripture reading, or serving – and commit to practice it consistently this week. Just as a servant continues his work while awaiting the master's return, believers are called to stay alert and faithful. Examine your daily schedule and ask where God may be inviting you to make room for obedience rather than distraction. Waiting becomes meaningful when we remember who we are and who we belong to.

REFLECTION QUESTION

What does faithful waiting look like in your current season of life?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Faithful waiting means living ready every day, not just watching the clock.

PRAYER

God, teach me to wait with faith instead of fear. Help me remain obedient and hopeful as I trust Your timing. Amen.



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Day 3

Living Prepared, Not Scared

BIBLE VERSE

"This is why you are also to be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." — Matthew 24:44 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

Jesus calls His followers to readiness, not anxiety. Being prepared means aligning our lives with God's priorities and walking in daily obedience. Pause before major decisions – big or small – and ask, "Does this reflect trust in God or fear of the unknown?" Fear causes us to hide, delay, or disengage, but preparation pushes us toward faith-filled action. When we live prepared, we invest in our spiritual growth, care for others, and remain sensitive to God's leading. Readiness is revealed in how we worship, serve, give, and love. Jesus' return is not meant to intimidate believers but to inspire them to live with purpose and urgency. Preparation keeps our hearts soft and our faith active. Try engaging more fully in worship and community this week: arrive early, participate actively, and listen with expectation.

REFLECTION QUESTION

In what areas of your life might fear be replacing faithful preparation?

KEY TAKEAWAY

God calls us to live prepared with confidence, not paralyzed by fear.

PRAYER

Father, remove fear from my heart and replace it with faith. Help me live prepared and fully surrendered to You each day. Amen.



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Day 4

Living a Life That Counts

BIBLE VERSE

"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master's joy.'"
— Matthew 25:21 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

God has entrusted each of us with time, resources, and opportunities to steward for His glory. In the parable of the talents, Jesus teaches that faithfulness matters more than comparison. What we do with what God has given us reveals our trust in Him. Faithful servants act with courage, investing what they've received rather than burying it in fear. Identify one gift, resource, or opportunity God has given you and intentionally use it this week to bless someone else. A life that counts is one that multiplies God's work through obedience, generosity, and service. Prayerfully review how you use your time and resources and ask God to show you one area where you can steward them more intentionally. When we live faithfully, we experience the joy of partnering with God and hearing the words, "Well done."

REFLECTION QUESTION

How are you currently stewarding what God has entrusted to you?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Faithfulness, not fear, leads to a life that truly counts.

PRAYER

Lord, help me steward my life well. Give me courage to invest what You've given me for Your Kingdom and Your glory. Amen.



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Discussion Guide

Theme

Living prepared, faithful lives in light of Christ's return.

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You grateful for Your Word and Your faithfulness. Open our hearts and minds as we study Scripture together. Help us to hear what You are saying and give us courage to respond with obedience. Prepare us to live faithfully as we wait for Your return. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is something you prepare for well? What is something you tend to procrastinate on?

Scripture Focus

Matthew 24–25

Summary

Jesus teaches that while no one knows when He will return, believers are called to stay alert, wait faithfully, and steward their lives wisely. The signs of the last days are meant to prepare us, not frighten us. Faithful waiting involves obedience, readiness, and active trust. Living prepared leads to lives that honor God and impact others for His Kingdom.

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Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus emphasized readiness over knowing the timing of His return?
2. How can believers balance awareness of the end times without living in fear?
3. What does faithful waiting look like in everyday life?
4. Which servant in the parable of the talents do you most relate to and why?
5. How does understanding stewardship change the way you view your time, finances, and gifts?

Life Application

Identify one area where God is calling you to live more faithfully or intentionally this week.

Key Takeaways

- Faithful servants put God first and serve others while waiting for Christ's return
- Faithfulness to God requires both faith and action, not just good intentions
- God owns everything, and we are called to be faithful stewards of what He has entrusted to our care
- We cannot know the exact date of Jesus' return, but we can recognize the signs and be prepared
- The last word of history is not chaos but Christ – He will return victoriously and set all things right
- God's rewards involve greater responsibility and impact, not just ease and comfort

Ending Prayer

Lord, thank You for reminding us that You are sovereign and that our lives matter in Your Kingdom. Help us leave this time committed to living prepared, faithful, and obedient lives. Strengthen us to steward what You've entrusted to us and to reflect Christ in our words and actions this week. We trust You with our future and choose to follow You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.