

STUDY NOTES

ADVENT 2018

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Advent: The Hope of the Return of Jesus” on 12/2/18 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 21:25–36

THE HOPE OF JESUS’S RETURN

The first time Jesus arrived to earth, he came as a baby in a quiet suburb of Jerusalem. In this passage Jesus promises a very different second coming. It will be obvious that Jesus has arrived, because his second coming will be on a cloud in great glory.

The incarnation, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus give us the hope of the return of Jesus.

- *How has Jesus proven to be faithful to his promises—both to the world and to you personally?*

THE SIGNS OF JESUS’S RETURN

Jesus gives some signs that we should look for in order to be reminded that he is returning. These signs that Jesus tells us to look for include divided nations, wars, and rumors of wars. He says to look for changes in nature, like earthquakes and changes in the moon and stars. Every generation sees these things. Every generation that has ever lived has seen war and natural disasters. It should remind us that Jesus’s return is imminent.

- *What is your experience with people looking for signs for Jesus’s second coming?*
- *In what way is looking for Jesus’s second coming a good thing? In what ways does looking for Jesus’s second coming become unhealthy?*

THE RESPONSE TO JESUS’S RETURN

Jesus says that there will be two responses to his return. People will either “faint with fear” (verse 26), or they will stand “straight up” knowing their complete redemption is near (verse 28). For the Christian, Jesus describes how we should respond in verse 34: “Watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.” Jesus isn’t describing a single event in someone’s life where that person seemed unprepared, but he is describing a habitual practice of being unprepared for Jesus’s return.

Christians will be “surprised” when the second coming actually happens, but they should not unprepared.

- *How does Jesus give you hope to stand before him, no matter what your practices look like?*

ARE YOU READY?

Much like in sports or in music, the way someone practices is the way in which that person will end up playing. It is this type of habitual living to which Jesus is referring. How you practice living your life now is the way that you are preparing for Jesus’s return. To give examples, Jesus specifically calls out some common behaviors that people turn to when they don’t find their hope in Christ—drunkenness and materialism. So the question we should be asking, is what are we practicing to be ready for Jesus?

- *If Jesus showed up today, how would he find you?*
- *What practices would you like to take away from your life? What practices would you like to add to your life?*
- *Pray with each other that you would practice being ready for the return of Jesus.*