

SPECIAL LESSON

Bible Study: Honest Faith A Reflecting on Honest Faith and Christ's Return

Bible Study Preparation and Materials Needed:

Reflecting on: The Parable of the Unjust Judge

Scripture Reading: *Matthew 22:34–23:39*

Memory Verse:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind... and your neighbor as yourself.”

- Matthew 22:37-39

Bible Study Lesson

Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տո՛ւր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քո՝ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց, ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos, ee paneets yev kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

A Reflecting on Honest Faith and Christ's Return

As we come to the close of Lent and prepare for Palm Sunday, the Church gives us a powerful Gospel reading from the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus is speaking in the final days before His crucifixion, and His words are bold, honest, and full of love. He reminds us that faith is not about pretending to be holy—it's about being transformed from the inside out. Jesus teaches us how to live now as we await His return, which is a key part of our Christian hope. The Second Coming of Christ isn't just a distant idea; it's meant to shape how we think, act, and love today. On this Sunday, the gospel reading is from Matthew 22:34–23:39. Although this passage does not directly speak about the second coming it guides us in understanding what we must do to be ready for Christ's return.

Q: *When you think about Jesus's return, how does that make you feel—hopeful, nervous, or something else? Why?*

Read from the Gospel: Matthew 22:34–23:39

The lawyer tried to challenge Jesus, hoping to trap Him with a tricky question. But Jesus answered with clarity and authority: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind... and love your neighbor as yourself.”* (Matthew 22:37–39)

This wasn't just a good answer—it was a complete summary of what it means to live faithfully.

So, how does this related to Christ's Second Coming? Jesus is telling us that the best way to prepare for His return isn't by trying to predict the future or obsessing over signs, but by living a life rooted in love—love for God and love for others. When He returns, He won't be impressed by how many followers we had on social media or how successful we looked on the outside or what clothing we wore. He'll be looking for hearts that were faithful—hearts that loved deeply, served quietly, and lived sincerely.

For you, that might look like inviting the classmate who always eats alone to sit with you, forgiving someone who hurt you even when it's hard, or putting down your phone to truly listen to a friend in pain. These small, everyday choices are how we stay spiritually awake. They're how we prepare for Jesus—not just someday in the future, but starting right now.

Jesus delivers a very clear and powerful message in Matthew 23 as well, through one of the most intense sermons in the Gospels. He calls out the religious leaders for being fake—for saying the right things but not living them. He says they are like “whitewashed tombs”—pretty on the outside but full of death and decrepit bones on the inside (23:27). Jesus isn't being offensive here, even though it might sound like it—He's showing us how dangerous it is to pretend to be holy while ignoring the condition of our hearts.

As we think about the Second Coming, this warning matters more than ever. Will Jesus find us spiritually awake or spiritually asleep? Will we be living to impress others, or living to honor Him?

Think about this: Have you ever posted something online to seem like you have it all together, but inside you were falling apart? Jesus already knows what's going on the inside, and He's not looking for a performance—He's inviting you into real transformation. Honesty is what God is looking for in us. For us to stand in front of Him as bare as we can be, without any layers that make us seem something that we are not.

Q: *Are there areas in your life where you act more religious than you really are inside? What can help you be more authentic?*

Near the end of this reading, we come across a powerful and emotional moment. Jesus cries out, *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”* (Matthew 23:37)

At first, this image might seem unusual—Jesus comparing Himself to a mother hen. But it's a beautiful and deeply meaningful picture of His love. He's not angry here—He's heartbroken. He's expressing the pain of being rejected by the very people He came to save. His arms were open, but they turned away.

This isn't just about the ancient city of Jerusalem. It's about all of us. Jesus still longs to gather His people—to protect, comfort, and carry them through life's struggles. He doesn't force us, though. Just like the chicks have to run to the hen to be protected, we also have to be willing to come to Him. That's what He wants—not to punish us, but to save, heal, and protect us. And when He returns at His Second Coming, that longing will be fulfilled. For those who love Him, it will be a reunion, not a reckoning.

Think about how you respond when life gets overwhelming. It's easy to run to social media, binge-watch videos, distract yourself with friends, or even hide away completely. But Jesus gently says, come to Me instead. Let Me protect you. Let Me be your shelter. The Second Coming is the final and perfect expression of that invitation. But it begins now—every day, in the quiet moments when you turn to Him.

Q: *What do you tend to run to when life gets overwhelming? How can you turn to Jesus in those moments instead?*

Q: *How can we connect this with Christ's Second Coming?*

This image of Jesus longing to gather His people like a hen gathers her chicks points us directly to His Second Coming. His desire to protect and embrace us hasn't changed—it's just waiting to be fully realized. When Christ returns, He will finally gather all who have turned to Him, bringing them into His eternal protection, peace, and joy. The sorrow in His voice in Matthew 23:37 reminds us that now is the time to respond to His love. His Second Coming won't be a surprise for those who already live close to His heart—it will be the homecoming they've been waiting for.

Summary

Jesus is coming again, and for us Christians that's amazing news. But until that day, He calls you to live a life that's real. Christ is not coming to scare us, but to invite us into deeper love, humility, and truth. The best way to be ready is to live each day with sincerity, not show; with love, not fear. Real love for God. Real care for others. Real humility. Don't wait for a distant future to start living like Christ is King. Start now. Let your faith be more than just a label—make it your way of life. And when He comes, you won't need to be afraid. You'll be ready.

Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesheree, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sasanetsayts yev voghormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyghees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.