

Have No Fear Jesus Is Coming

by Chris Famisaran

Good morning, everybody. You sound a little sleepy today. Speaking of sleep this morning was a struggle. I was at war with myself, and my alarm clock. About seven o'clock, the first salvo went off, Ding ding, ding, ding, ding. And I immediately slammed the snooze button. Closed my eyes. Opened them back up and I saw I had six minutes and 32 seconds left for that little snooze. And as I was laying down, I could feel the warmth of the blanket in the pillow. It was blissful. I closed my eyes and next thing I knew Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding. Ah, dread. I don't want to get up. It just feels so good. I don't know if you feel that way in the mornings, but sometimes I do. Especially when you don't get a good rest, sleep. It's a struggle. Amen.

Dread, fear, worry concerns thinking about what I have to do today, all the things I have to accomplish can make us a little bit stressful before our day even begins. And today's topic I think sometimes it brings a little fear to us when we talk about Jesus return. Or I would also say another way of calling this is eschatology, eschatology. Today we're going to go over a couple of verses. And mind you, I'm just going to give you a preview, there's plenty of things we could talk about. And I know we could go do a deep dive and we're going to try to do the best that we can on this particular topic, but I'm basically cramming six sermons into one right now. Okay, so we're just doing the bird's eye view of eschatology.

What is eschatology? Well, one could say, I think the Encyclopedia Britannica calls it the doctrine of the last things or somebody else wrote concerned about with the final events of history, or the ultimate destiny of humanity. Now as Seventh-day Adventists, we have a vested interest in this because for many years, hundreds of years, from even the very beginning of our existence, even going further back into the Millerite movement, we have been waiting and waiting and waiting. When is Jesus going to return? In fact, it's even in our name, seventh day, were Sabbath keepers. Adventist the advent of God, the return of God. So today, as we look at a couple of passages, let's go to Matthew 13. We're going to, we're going to study and see what Jesus has to say. So again, this is just a couple of verses. We're going to study about three, three or four passages together. And we'll just get a bird's eye view. So Matthew 13, verse 24, Matthew 13, verse 24, and we've already kind of touched base a little bit about this, where when we talked about the kingdom of heaven is like, Alright, Jesus is describing what does the kingdom look like?

It says, Jesus told them another parable. The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. And prior to as well he also talked about the parable of the sower and the four different types of seeds. But here he shares another parable. And verse 25, he says, but while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed seeds among the wheat and went away. And when the wheat sprouted, and form heads, then the weeds also appeared. The owner servants came to him and said, Sir, didn't you sow good seed in the field? Where did the weeds come from? Any enemy did this, he replied, and the servants asked, don't you want us to go pull them up? No, he answered, because while you're pulling the weeds You may uproot the

wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters first collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring them into my barn. Now let's jump ahead to verse 47. It says also again, once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. And when it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore, they sat down, they collected the good fish and baskets, but through the bad away, this is how it will be at the end of the age. And the angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace. where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have you not understood all these things? And Jesus asked, they replied, Yes. And he said to them, therefore, every teacher of the law, who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven, is like the owner of the house who brings out of his storeroom, new treasures, as well as old.

Now, when we look at this, these two parables, seems kind of harsh, right? But yet, what is the point that Jesus is trying to make? So obviously, there's a farmer who wants to grow wheat for his crops, whether it's to make money, or to be able to provide for his family, food, bread, right? And in the midst of it, there is somebody, the enemy, sometimes called the devil, who sews bad seeds. And what is Jesus trying to point here? What's the bigger picture in the theme of these parables? Now, what does the wheat and the tares, or the weeds represent? I'm sorry? Who? It represents us or the people. And in the church, their faithful, faith-believing, wheat Christians, and then there are some apparent Christians. And the challenge to this passage is that both are in the church. And one of the things that we sometimes have a hard time accepting is that even though we're in the church, we're not perfect. In fact, the parables of the weeds in the net affirm that the church and those who are participate in it are not perfect. Now, does anybody here have a perfect character unable to judge without, without? What's the word is that? I can't even remember right now... I'm a bad pastor.

We're not perfect, right? And unfortunately, because of our human thinking, we're not able to see through everything. And it's one of these things that we have to be able to continue to minister to one another, and be faithful, but let's focus let's not judge one another. Let's love one another, continue on and and grow and help one another. But the weeds and the wheat affirm the fact that until Jesus comes, while we may not be perfect, when we look to Jesus, as Bill talked about, it is faith in Jesus that saves us, amen.

Now let's jump ahead to Matthew 19, verse 30. Matthew 19 I just added this a little bit before prior to in Matthew 19. We're actually going to talk about Matthew 20. But in 19, there's a rich man who comes to Jesus and he's trying to figure out like, you know, hey, how can I inherit life? And what can I ultimately do and of course Jesus says, you know, hey, you know, love God, by heart, mind, soul, strength, mind, love your neighbor as yourself, right? But this guy, he wanted to go deeper. And so Jesus tells him go and sell everything and help the poor and be of service to others. And this guy, it broke his heart, because he loved his wealth. And you know, today's age, maybe had a really nice Lamborghini or he had a 10 Bedroom, Bathroom mansion, and he didn't want to give all of that up. And after Jesus closes this parable, Peter asks, and Well, I mean, Jesus, we've given everything up for you. And Jesus response and before we go on to that parable, it says, but many who are first will be last and many who are last will be first. Jesus has given a little bit of a hint of what's to come to next. And he shares a parable. For the

kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner who went out in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius and how much is it denarius worth? a day's labor, okay? And so he agreed to pay the denarius, he sent them into the vineyard at about nine in the morning, he went out, he saw others standing the marketplace, doing nothing. He told him, You also go and work in my vineyard, and I'll pay you whatever is right. And so they went. I just realized he didn't tell them. He would pay them in denarius. He only just said he would pay them for what that's right for what's right. Interesting. He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon, he did the same thing. About five in the afternoon, he went out and found Still others around he asked them, Why have you been standing here all day doing nothing? And the answer because no one's hired us. He said to them, You also go and work out in my vineyard. And When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, call the workers and pay them their wages beginning with the last ones hired. And going on to the first, the workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came each received a denarius. So when those who are hired, received first expected to receive more, but each one of them also received a denarius. And when they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. Those who were hired last worked only one hour, they said, and you've made them equal to us who only worked an hour you, sorry, who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day, but he answered one of them. I am not being unfair to you. Friend, Didn't you agree to work for denarius, take your pay and go, I want to give the one who was hired last and same as I gave you? Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous. And then he flips it around. So the last will be first. And the first will be last. Now in this in this parable. Something to keep in mind too is Israel is sometimes referred to as a vineyard. So Jesus is directly talking to the people there. No, they know what Jesus is talking about. In fact, you can go to Isaiah five, where it refers to Israel as a vineyard. And again, Peter asks, hey, what's in it for us? We've been working hard for you. They spent three years with Jesus. And as you look towards the, as you continue read in the New Testament, in Acts and so forth, you realize that their life is not necessarily going to be comfortable. And other than John, they don't die a natural death.

And so Jesus does answer Peter. And he kindly reminds him that, hey, we're not doing the work, God's work for money. Our reward is not a financial reward. And so when Jesus shares this parable, when you look at the context of this parable, he flips the order of instead of paying the people he hired first he pays the people he hired last first intentionally. And as you go down the line, the people who got hired at the beginning of the day are probably trying to do the math in their head. Well, okay, so if the first guy I mean, the last guy who got hired only worked an hour and he got a day's wage, I've been working 12 hours, so 12 times, that's basically two weeks of pay for one day, right? And so he's probably rubbing his hands. It's gonna be a big payday for one day's work. And yet, when he gets his money, he's only given a denarius. Feels cheated. Jesus, I slaved under the hot sun. My mouth was parched. I probably got delirious, I got tired, but nevertheless, I was faithful. Hmm. But yet, the landowner He's like, No, I'm just gonna give you a denarius. He was being fair and true to his word. I think sometimes there's a cautionary tale, especially for those of us who have been in the church, maybe a while longer than others, maybe our whole lives. Because when we get to church, we sometimes maybe expect things to go a certain way. Maybe we get a little entitled. And yet, it shouldn't be what

we can get even more it's yet what can we offer to God and how can we serve God? So what's the main point? All the workers receive the same wage, no matter how long they work, and the beauty of that is God's grace doesn't just go towards the people who who have been in for the long haul, but even to the very end, sorry, got to stay on the camera. God's grace extends to even those who just joined the church at the very end. Amen.

So God's grace is for everyone. First shall be last and last shall be first. You could also look at this as Hey, you know, maybe Matthew is talking about the problem of or not the problem but the issue with the Jewish believers of the Gentiles joining the church, or maybe even today, we have people joining the church, and maybe they have new ideas. Maybe they look differently, they act differently, they talk differently, they believe differently. Maybe they don't dress appropriately for the Sabbath. Mercy. You ever visited another church? Not here because we love each other. We do. But have you ever visited another church and not felt welcome? Don't name the church, please. I remember visiting one church probably about 12 years ago, it was a very well renowned church. And when Lisa and I walked in, we're not greeted, and okay sometimes look It happens, right? But yeah, it just felt uncomfortable. Didn't felt like we were welcome. And it bothered me, yeah, shouldn't we be here to greet and say hello, and to find out who are you? Where are you from? Fastest way to, to kill a church is to feel unwelcome because if there's no love, and there's no acceptance, and there's no desire to get to know, why should they want to stay around. And so as a culture, one of the things that I appreciate about Downey churches this culture of getting to know and, and and finding out who, who we are loving one another, and in doing life together. It's not about us. It's about Jesus in the mission field.

Now, in Matthew, let's jump to Matthew 24, one of the most famous passages in all of Scripture as well. Talks about the Second Coming, but it begins with a question. Matthew 24 and unfortunately, again, just gonna remind you, I can't get everything today. Okay, but we'll try to we'll hit the key parts. Jesus in verse 24, Chapter 24, verse one, it says, Jesus left the temple and was walking away, when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. He said, Do you see all of these things Truly, I tell you, not one stone will be left on one another. Everyone will be thrown down. Now in the minds of Peter and all the disciples and everywhere else Jesus informing the disciples that the temple will be destroyed is unthinkable right, because this is the center of their faith life, they worship together, they congregate. And to think that yes, this place is going to be destroyed. And maybe immediately they think back well remember the first time that the temple was destroyed, they either had to flee or some were taken captive, is that what Jesus is thinking? And, we realize, wow, what what is Jesus trying to say here? I thought about it, too. What if this church here this sacred place, this beautiful building that I love to worship. And what if it just disappeared? Or maybe a meteor just came in and destroyed it? What the church continue? Yes, right. In fact, the last year and a half is a testing testament to that, right? We adapted so we started meeting online, we continue to worship what can you do continue to pray, we had small groups and where we could we would try to help a minister and do outreach. And so, the church, my friends, well, I love this space, and I love being here on Sabbath. The church is so much more. And for Jesus trying to imprint on the disciples mind is like, Look, it's so much more than just this place. Our

faith, this set of experiences should not just be limited to Sabbath morning. But it should be also in Saturday afternoon, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Now as Jesus continues, as Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to me, he says, Hey, when will this happen? Tell us, please. And what be the sign of your coming? And of the end of the age? So many of us have probably been asking this question, some longer than others. I've been asking this question for 30 years when I became more conscious about reading scripture, right and growing up in the church. When God? And you know what's frustrating in this passage is sometimes I realize, Jesus is a little he's a little vague about his return. Now he points out, he points out that there are some signs, for instance, a nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom, there will be rumors of wars. Has there been any wars recently? Has there been famine? Have there been earthquakes? You'll feel that one last week or earlier this week? And then you'll be handed over persecuted and put to death. You'll be hated by all nations, because of me, excuse me... I have a frog in my throat. And he continues and he shares things that really have, in some respects has always kind of been around. I don't, there's some there's some quote up there that there's only been a limited amount of time where there have been been war. In many respects, there's, there's regular there's been there's been famine, there's been strife. People are at war with each other. And in verse eight, it says all of these are the beginning of birth pains, if not the immediate, but the beginning, right? Because a woman has a baby, it's the beginning of both, you're going into labor.

Now, what are the key verses here that we have to be mindful of is verse 14, where it says, one of the key things when it comes to when Jesus will return is that and this gospel of the kingdom will be preached to how far? the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will what? it will come. Now it's probably hard for Peter and James and John and all the disciples at that time to think what you mean we all of the world has to know. Now, even within the last, let's just say 10-20 years, with the rise of the Internet. Now it's literally possible for everybody, for the most part, to understand and see and hear the gospel. Right. There are some people who are just there. They're in some Valley in the middle of a country where, you know, they may not have heard it, but guess what, God has the ability to reach them. Even so as we've, we've talked about in the past, without with God, anything is possible. So all of the gospel has to be preached around the world.

The other thing is in verse 27, for as lightning that comes from the east is visible, even to the west, so will the Son of man be when Jesus comes in in verse 30, then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and glory. And so as we read these signs, the role of it is such that yes, it's a reminder that God is coming. And one of the things about Jesus not being deliberate because if our if Jesus were to tell us look, I'm gonna come September 27 2021, okay, and we knew that, what do you think our reaction would be? We'd be ready well, we'd all say hallelujah. Let's just say he changes it to September 27 2041 And we know it's often the distance. And along the way, sometimes maybe our, what's the word, our motivation? May wane and dip, right? In our, in our faith life sometimes we have challenges and sometimes that faith it's, it's challenged. I think Jesus is now intentionally a little vague

because in order for us to be able to be constantly vigilant and aware, to be ready to continue to study. Now the root theme of the chapters of 24 and 25 is that, be watchful, and be prepared. Now, we don't know exactly when Jesus is going to come, in fact, even in verse 36, but about that day or hour, no one knows not even the angels in heaven, nor the sun, but who? The father, only the father knows. And yeah, brothers and sisters, I know sometimes it's it can be vexing, it's like God, why, when? When are you coming? I asked that every day. And I pray every day, Lord, please come soon.

But until then, until Jesus comes, what do we do? In chapter 25, there are three parables, the parables of the 10 virgins. And just to kind of highlight that, in the parable of the 10 virgins, there are 10 virgins, five were faithful. Five, were not five were prepared. They had all of their oil ready to go. And then the other five, they kind of dozed off. And when the bridegroom came, they weren't ready. You also have the parable of the bags of gold, which we recently talked about, not one of our stewardship. Small groups were the first two servants they were, they were, as soon as they received their money, they were diligent, and they took care of they got things done. And then there's finally the third parable of the sheep and the goats. Let's go to verse 31, Matthew 25, verse 31.

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all of the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne, all of the nations will be gathered before him, he will separate the people from one another, as a shepherd separates the sheep and the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. And then the king will say to those on his right, come, you are blessed. Come you who are blessed by my father, take your What? inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world, For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, and I was a stranger, and you invited me and I needed clothes, and you clothed me, I was sick. And you looked after me. I was in prison, and you came to visit me? In verse 37. It says, then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you something to drink? When do we see you a stranger and invite you in? or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you? The king will reply, Truly I tell you, whatever you did, for the one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. And when you read chapters 24 and 25, I don't think you can separate them, you have to read them as a combined unit. Because while in the beginning of chapter 24, talks about the signs and the role of signs and of when Jesus will return. Knowing is important, but we're not called to just know. We're also called to be ambassadors for Jesus. And in verse in chapter 25, talks about the fact

Okay, so we know Jesus is coming. Be faithful. Watch, be prepared, know your scripture, right? Understand what God is trying to tell you, and be ready. But when it talks about the bags of gold is also a reminder that hey, when God gives you an opportunity to be able to minister and to share the good news of Jesus with others, don't bury your talent in the ground. Share it with others, that the growth of the church and the people the church in the believers will grow. And it also is indicative of in this ministry that we're called to do. In the last part, the third parable of what are we called to do, to administer and to care for others? As believers, we can have all the knowledge, but if we don't have a love for others, what's the point if we're only looking out for ourselves?

Now, how can we minister to others? In a couple of weeks, we're going to start a new small group series. And we're gonna start with... the title of the book we're going to be using is called the 12 People You Love, but we're calling the series, My 12 People. Why are we calling it that? Basically, just to give you a heads up, we're going to ask you to pray for 12 people, they're going to be four categories, your family, your friends, your church family, and those who are your unchurched friends, some of you are thinking pastor, I don't have three family members to pray, I don't have three friends to pray for, you can add me to that list. Okay. We'll talk more about that in a couple of weeks. But we want to give you an opportunity to be able to practice your faith, to learn how to minister to others. And it simply starts with the bedrock of prayer. And as we continue and dive in into this series will, it's not just going to be about prayer, we're going to talk about and give other tips to be able to minister to your friends, your family, your fellow church members to be able to support them, but especially how can we minister to our friends who are not even in the church. I'm so excited for this journey. Now if you want to do this. So if you want to get your book, please sign up because we only have a limited amount of books. Now we can order some more you can get it on a Kindle version. But if you want to be able to get a copy now, okay, folks, this is not just a small group series. It's going to be even deeper, dare I say. It's a philosophy of how we want to do ministry. As we move forward, we're not just here to meet brothers and sisters, we are here to share the good news. And be equipped. One of the things when I first came here was, Hey, I'm here to learn. But I want to be able to help educate, equip and empower you to do ministry. Amen. So, please, this is an invitation for you to be able to join us. And like Bill said, we got a Tuesday group, we got a Wednesday group, we got a Thursday group Friday and Sabbath. And if none of those times work, okay, I'm personally going to say I'm willing to set another time up, and I will meet with you so that you can have this opportunity to be able to grow. All right. I'll give you my word on that. Right. So if none of those times, let us know, and we'll work something out. Folks.

And this is when we talk about eschatology, and we were talking about the return of Jesus. Maybe some of you are struggling inside is like thinking, Pastor, I'm not ready. I've got too much to do. I'm not ready. I need to fix some things in my life. Before I even get close to God. Please let that not be a stumbling block. The best time is now. Just let go. And let God surrender your pride, surrender. Surrender the things that are holding you back and say, God, please come into my life. I want to live for you. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin says, above all, trust in the slow work of God. We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end, without delay. The journey begins today, with one small step and then another, and another, and another. May we be faithful, but until Jesus comes until that day, let us look with faith with courage. And let us support one another through prayer. May God be with you. Let us pray.

Father in heaven, thank you for the opportunity to come together today to worship and to study scripture. Lord, I know unfortunately, this is just an overview. Lord, help us as we read through these let's go back this afternoon or maybe sometime this week, to look at personally at an even deeper look of what you have for us to know and understand for our future. Lord, we've been asking for many years when Lord when will you return Until that day, give us strength, wisdom and courage to be faithful, to be true to you to be empathetic, loving and kind just as you were here on earth. And, Lord, for those who are struggling with the physical issue, Lord, maybe we're just some of us who just mentally emotionally just exhausted because

spiritually, Lord, maybe some of us are just asking why should I give you another chance, Lord, Lord, comfort, Grant wisdom, strength, joy and courage. And Lord, especially for those who are struggling financially, Lord, may You make an opportunity give them an opportunity to find work, and whatever else. The unknown struggle, Lord, be with that situation. In Jesus name, everybody said Amen.

Grace and peace, everybody. God bless y'all.