

“Now and Not Yet”
Looking for Jesus Sermon Series #2
Matthew 24:1-14
Cross Community Church, Savannah, Ga.
July 19, 2026

- Looking for Jesus #1 “The Great Why” Matt. 24:1-6/Daniel 9:20-27 July 12, 2026
- Looking for Jesus #2 “Now and Not Yet” Matt. 24:1-14 July 19, 2026

***24** Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. ² But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”*

³ As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” ⁴ And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. ⁵ For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

⁹ “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

- Discussion Questions

How does understanding prophecy as 'now and not yet' change the way you approach current world events and your daily walk with faith?

In what practical ways can you 'see to it' that you are not alarmed or led astray in a world filled with competing voices claiming truth?

Jesus is more concerned with our perseverance than with us understanding every prophetic detail. How does this shift your focus in studying Scripture?

What is your 'focal point' during times of trial and uncertainty, and how intentionally are you fixing your eyes on Jesus rather than circumstances?

The sermon mentions that the church has always thrived under persecution. How does this truth challenge or encourage your perspective on current cultural opposition to Christianity?

When you consider the two commands 'do not be led astray' and 'do not be alarmed,' which one do you find more challenging to obey and why?

How does the reality that some prophecies have multiple fulfillments across history impact your understanding of God's sovereignty and timing?

What does it mean practically to 'faithfully prepare' for Christ's return while living fully engaged in the present moment?

The sermon emphasizes advancing the gospel to all nations as a key response to end times teaching. How are you personally participating in this mission locally or globally?

How does recognizing that we live in the time between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel's prophecy affect your sense of urgency in sharing the gospel?

- Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide: "Now and Not Yet"

Matthew 24:1-14 - Looking for Jesus Series

OPENING PRAYER (2-3 minutes)

Begin by asking someone to pray, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and help the group understand God's prophetic word with clarity and peace.

ICEBREAKER (5-10 minutes)

Question: Pastor Kevin mentioned that many of us have phrases we say to ourselves throughout the day. Share with the group:

- What phrase do you tell yourself most often during challenging times?
 - How does that phrase help (or hinder) you?
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SERMON RECAP (5 minutes)

Jesus gave His disciples a prophetic discourse about future events while emphasizing two key commands:

1. **Do not be led astray**
2. **Do not be alarmed**

The sermon explored the "now and not yet" nature of prophecy—some predictions have already been fulfilled, some are being fulfilled continuously, and some await future fulfillment. Jesus is more concerned with our perseverance and gospel readiness than with us understanding every prophetic detail.

KEY SCRIPTURES

- Matthew 24:1-14
 - Daniel 9:24-27
 - Revelation 6:1-17
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Understanding the Message (15-20 minutes)

1. **The Mountain Range Illustration:** Pastor Kevin used the image of layered mountains to explain prophecy. How does this visual help you understand why prophecy can be confusing when we're "in the middle of it"?
2. **Two Commands:** Jesus commanded His followers to "not be led astray" and "not be alarmed." Which of these two commands is harder for you personally, and why?
3. **Multiple Fulfillments:** The sermon explained that some prophecies have multiple fulfillments (wars, famines, earthquakes, false messiahs). How does understanding this "now and not yet" concept change the way you read prophetic scripture?
4. **Four Views Chart:** Look at the "Four Views of the End Times" handout. Where do you land based on what you've been taught? Has today's sermon challenged or confirmed your view?

Going Deeper (15-20 minutes)

5. **Labor Pains:** Jesus described the signs as "birth pains" (Matthew 24:8). What do you think He meant by this metaphor? How does it help us understand the increasing intensity of world events?
6. **The Focal Point:** Pastor Kevin shared how he gave Jennifer flowers as a focal point during labor. What does it practically look like for Jesus to be your "focal point" during the world's labor pains? Share specific examples.
7. **Prophetic Foreshortening:** The sermon mentioned that the destruction of the temple in AD 70 foreshadowed the end of the world. Can you think of other historical events that might serve as "foreshadows" of future prophecy?
8. **Two Promises:** Jesus gave two hopeful promises:
 - "The one who endures to the end will be saved" (v. 13)
 - "This gospel will be proclaimed throughout the whole world" (v. 14)

How do these promises encourage you when you look at current world events?

Personal Application (15-20 minutes)

9. **Faithfully Prepare:** What does it mean for you personally to "faithfully prepare" for Christ's return? What specific actions or habits should you develop?
 10. **Gospel Advancement:** The sermon emphasized that we have "the nations right down the road" in Savannah. Who are the people in your sphere of influence who need to hear the gospel? What's keeping you from sharing with them?
 11. **Not Being Alarmed:** When you watch the news or scroll social media, what current events tempt you most toward anxiety or alarm? How can you apply Jesus' command to "not be alarmed" this week?
 12. **Persecution and Perseverance:** The sermon noted that "the church has always thrived under persecution." How does this historical reality encourage you about the future of the church, even amid increasing hostility toward Christianity?
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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ **Prophecy is "now and not yet"** - Some has been fulfilled, some is being fulfilled, some awaits future fulfillment
- ✓ **Two commands: Don't be led astray, don't be alarmed** - These require intentional focus on Jesus and His Word
- ✓ **Jesus is more concerned with our perseverance than our prophetic precision** - He wants us faithful, not just informed
- ✓ **The focal point is Jesus** - Keep your eyes fixed on Him more than on the labor pains
- ✓ **The church thrives under persecution** - Tribulation advances the gospel
- ✓ **We know how it ends** - Jesus wins, and we win with Him

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Daily Focus Each morning, before checking news or social media, spend 10 minutes reading Scripture and reminding yourself that Jesus is your focal point. Journal about how this changes your perspective on the day's events.

Option 2: Gospel Conversation Identify one person in your life who doesn't know Jesus (perhaps someone from another nation or background). Pray for them daily and look for one opportunity this week to have a spiritual conversation or invite them to church.

Option 3: Prophecy Study Using the "Four Views of the End Times" handout, spend time this week reading through the referenced scriptures. Write down questions you have and bring them to next week's discussion.

Option 4: Anxiety Audit Keep track this week of what triggers anxiety or alarm in your heart. Each time you feel anxious, pause and pray Jesus' words: "See that you are not alarmed" (Matthew 24:6). Replace the anxious thought with a truth about Jesus.

PRAYER REQUESTS & CLOSING (10-15 minutes)

Group Prayer Focus:

1. **Boldness:** Pray for boldness to share the gospel with those who don't know Jesus
2. **Perseverance:** Pray for endurance for any group members facing trials
3. **Focus:** Pray that Jesus would be our focal point amid world chaos
4. **Missions:** Pray for the mission team from Pensacola ministering in Savannah this week

Individual Requests: Take time for each person to share and pray for one another.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week, we'll continue in Matthew 24, looking at verses 15-28, which include Jesus' warning about the "abomination of desolation." Come prepared to discuss what that means and how it applies to us today.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

"But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." - **Matthew 24:13-14 (ESV)**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- "Four Views of the End Times" handout (available at church)
 - Book of Daniel (especially chapters 7-12)
 - Book of Revelation (especially chapters 6-19)
 - Joshua Project website (joshuaproject.net) - to learn about unreached people groups
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- 5 Day Devotional

Leader Tip: Don't feel pressured to cover every question. Choose the ones most relevant to your group's needs and allow the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. The goal is meaningful conversation, not completing a checklist.

- **5-Day Devotional: Looking to Jesus in Every Season**
- **Day 1: The Anchor in Uncertain Times**
- **Reading:** Matthew 24:1-8
- **Devotional:** Jesus warned His disciples of wars, famines, and earthquakes—events that would shake the world. Yet His command was clear: "See that you are not alarmed." In our current age, we face constant news of global unrest and personal trials. The labor pains Jesus described continue, intensifying as history unfolds. But Christ offers us something the world cannot—an unshakable focal point. When Jennifer was in labor, she needed something to focus on beyond the pain. Similarly, we need Jesus as our focal point amid life's turbulence. Today, identify what causes you alarm. Consciously redirect your focus to Christ's sovereignty. He knows the end from the beginning, and you are secure in His hands.
- **Day 2: Guarding Against Deception**
- **Reading:** Matthew 24:4-5, 23-26
- **Devotional:** "See that no one leads you astray" stands as Jesus's first imperative in this discourse. Throughout history, false messiahs and deceptive teachers have emerged, leading many away from truth. The antidote to deception is not merely skepticism but deep rootedness in God's Word. When you know the genuine article intimately, counterfeits become obvious. Jesus emphasized that His return will be unmistakable—global, not local; visible to all, not hidden in secret places. Spend time today examining what voices influence your thinking. Are you anchored in Scripture, or swayed by popular opinion? Commit to knowing Jesus so well that no imitation could fool you. Let the Bible be your truth center for every decision.
- **Day 3: Perseverance Through Tribulation**
- **Reading:** Matthew 24:9-13
- **Devotional:** "The one who endures to the end will be saved." Jesus promised not an easy path, but a victorious destination. His followers would face hatred, betrayal, and persecution—yet endurance remains our calling. Throughout church history, persecution has never extinguished faith; instead, it has spread the gospel like scattered embers igniting new fires. The early church fled Jerusalem under persecution, carrying the gospel to Judea, Samaria, and beyond—exactly as Jesus predicted. Your trials today, whether relational struggles, health battles, or spiritual opposition, are opportunities to demonstrate enduring faith. Don't seek comfort above faithfulness. When love grows cold around you, let yours burn brighter. Your perseverance testifies to Christ's sustaining power and draws others to the hope you possess.
- **Day 4: The Gospel Mission Until the End**
- **Reading:** Matthew 24:14; Acts 1:8

- **Devotional:** "This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." This promise reveals both God's timeline and our assignment. The end awaits global gospel saturation—and we participate in hastening that day. You don't need to travel overseas to reach the nations; they live down your street. Seven languages in one apartment complex, Muslims and Buddhists as neighbors—the mission field has come to us. Jesus is more concerned with your gospel readiness than with you understanding every prophetic detail. Today, ask God for one person to share Christ with this week. Faithfully prepare by knowing the gospel clearly. The Ancient of Days will return, but until then, we advance His kingdom one conversation at a time.
- **Day 5: Now and Not Yet—Living in Hope**
- **Reading:** Revelation 6:1-17; Revelation 21:1-5
- **Devotional:** The prophetic landscape resembles layered mountains—some peaks already climbed, others still ahead. Jesus's prophecies contain both immediate and future fulfillments, a "now and not yet" reality. The temple was destroyed in 70 AD as He predicted, yet a greater destruction and restoration await. We've seen wars, famines, and earthquakes for two millennia, yet the final tribulation remains future. This tension defines Christian living—enjoying present mercies while anticipating complete restoration. One day, no more cancer, no more dementia, no more broken relationships. Until then, we faithfully prepare and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. What mountain stands before you today? Remember: you cannot see what's beyond it, but God does. Trust His timing. Live with resurrection hope that transforms present suffering into purposeful endurance.