

**Deeper Applications“Signs of the Seasons”
Looking for Jesus Sermon Series #6
Matthew 24:32-35
Cross Community Church, Savannah, Ga.
August 16, 2026**

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| • 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 |
| • Looking for Jesus #3 “Peace Has an Enemy” | Matt. 24:15-22 | July 26, 2026 |
| • Looking for Jesus #4 “Seen by Some; Seen by All” | Matt. 24:23-28 | August 2, 2026 |
| • Looking for Jesus #5 “Signs of the Time” | Matt. 24:29-31 | August 9, 2026 |
| • Looking for Jesus #6 “Signs of the Seasons” | Matt. 24:32-35 | August 16, 2026 |

³² “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁴ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

- **Main Idea: Christians should confidently watch the signs of Jesus’s return**

Summary

What does a fig tree have to teach us about the return of Christ? More than we might expect. Drawing from Matthew 24:32-35, we explore one of the most vivid and practical illustrations Jesus ever used to prepare his followers for the future. Just as a farmer reads the budding branches of a fig tree and knows summer is near, we are called to read the signs of the times with confidence rather than confusion or fear. The fig tree carries deep significance throughout scripture, representing abundance, divine blessing, and the prosperity of God's people. When Jesus says 'from the fig tree learn its lesson,' he is not

introducing a new prophecy but reinforcing what he has already told us: do not be led astray, and do not be alarmed. The central spiritual insight here is that God cares enough about his children to prepare them for change before it arrives. He tells us beforehand so that when seasons shift, we are not caught off guard. Whether we are in a season of learning, living, leading, or leaving a legacy, the same God who holds the future holds us. Heaven and earth will pass away, but his words never will. That unchanging truth is the anchor we need for every uncertain season ahead.

Discussion Questions

Jesus tells his followers 'See, I have told you beforehand' -- in what ways have you experienced God preparing you for a season of change before it arrived, and how did that preparation shape your response to the transition?

The sermon draws a parallel between reading the signs of the fig tree's seasons and watching for the signs of Christ's return -- in what practical ways should this kind of watchfulness shape how you live your daily life right now?

Camele and Christian both described lives of chaos that were transformed through surrender to Christ -- what does their testimony reveal about the relationship between obedience and peace, and where in your own life might deeper surrender lead to greater peace?

The pastor identifies four different interpretive camps regarding 'this generation' in Matthew 24:34 -- how does the way we interpret prophetic scripture affect the urgency with which we share the gospel and live on mission?

Solomon writes in Ecclesiastes 3 that there is a season for every matter under heaven -- how does recognizing the season you are currently in spiritually, relationally, or vocationally change the way you approach your responsibilities and relationships?

The sermon contrasts worrying and praying, suggesting you cannot truly do both at the same time -- what specific anxieties are you currently carrying that you need to surrender to God in prayer, and what would it look like to fully release them?

The fig tree throughout scripture symbolizes divine blessing, abundance, and spiritual vitality -- what does it mean for your own life of faith to be a fruit-bearing tree rather than one that has leaves but no fruit, as Jesus found in Mark 11?

The pastor describes baptism as a step of obedience that God honors with blessing, suggesting some blessings may be withheld until that step is taken -- what steps of obedience do you sense God calling you toward that you have been delaying, and what might be waiting on the other side?

Jesus assures his followers that heaven and earth will pass away but his words will not -- how does the permanence and reliability of Scripture anchor you when the circumstances of your life feel unstable or uncertain?

The sermon challenges listeners to be patiently watching, eagerly preparing, and urgently working in light of Christ's return -- which of these three postures is most difficult for you personally, and what would it look like to grow in that area this week?

Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide: The Signs of the Seasons

Based on Matthew 24:32-35

Overview

In this message, Pastor Kevin walked us through Jesus' parable of the fig tree from the Olivet Discourse. Jesus calls his followers to watch the signs of the seasons with confidence, neither being led astray nor alarmed by what is to come. Just as a farmer reads the signs of the natural world to know what season is approaching, Christians are called to read the signs of the times and be prepared for Christ's return.

Core Idea: Christians should confidently watch the signs of Jesus' return.

Opening Question

Think of a time when you could sense a major change coming in your life before it actually arrived. What were the signs? How did you respond?

Key Takeaways

1. The Teacher Is the Season Jesus used the fig tree as a guest instructor to reinforce what he had already been teaching. Just as the budding of a fig tree signals that summer is near, the signs Jesus described signal that his return is near. God has built into the natural world lessons about spiritual realities.

2. The Topic Is Significant The deeper subject of this passage is not just prophecy — it is God's care for his children. Jesus told his followers about coming events beforehand so they would not be led astray or alarmed. God prepares his people for change before change arrives.

3. The Time Is Short Jesus said that when all these signs take place, the generation that witnesses them will not pass away before everything is fulfilled. Whatever the precise interpretation, the point is clear: once these events begin, they will unfold quickly. This calls us to be patiently watching, eagerly preparing, and urgently working.

Scripture for Further Study

- Matthew 24:32-35 — The parable of the fig tree
 - Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 — There is a season for everything
 - Psalm 136:1-3 — God's steadfast love endures through every season
 - Acts 8 — Philip and the Ethiopian; spontaneous obedience through baptism
 - Matthew 24:44 — Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour
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Discussion Questions

Getting Into the Text

1. Read Matthew 24:32-35 aloud together. What is Jesus asking his followers to pay attention to, and why does he use a fig tree specifically to make his point?
2. Jesus says in verse 33, "when you see all these things." Why do you think the word "all" is significant? What happens when we try to interpret only parts of what Jesus described rather than looking at the complete picture?
3. Pastor Kevin described four general camps for interpreting the phrase "this generation" in verse 34. Which view do you find most compelling, and why? What questions does each view raise for you?

Going Deeper

4. Pastor Kevin noted that Jesus told his disciples about coming events "beforehand" so they would not be caught off guard. What does it say about God's character that he prepares his people for change before it arrives? How have you experienced this in your own life?

5. The fig tree was a symbol of abundance, divine blessing, and peace in the culture of Jesus' audience. Knowing that, how does it change the way you hear Jesus say, "Learn its lesson"? What might he be communicating beyond just a lesson about seasons?
6. Pastor Kevin described seasons of life — learning, living, leading, and legacy. Which season do you feel you are currently in? How does your current season shape the way you think about Christ's return?
7. He also said, "I cannot pray and worry. If I pray, I quit worrying. If I worry, I quit praying." Do you agree with that statement? What makes it difficult to choose prayer over worry in practice?

Personal Reflection

8. Is there an area of your life right now where you sense God is releasing you from something familiar and preparing you for something new? What does it look like to trust him in that season of transition?
 9. Matthew 24:44 says we must be ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour we do not expect. On a personal level, what does it mean to be ready? What might need to change in your daily life to reflect that readiness?
 10. Pastor Kevin said we are called to be patiently watching, eagerly preparing, and urgently working. Which of those three comes most naturally to you? Which is the greatest challenge, and what is one step you could take toward it this week?
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Practical Applications

This Week, Choose One:

- **Read and Reflect:** Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 slowly each morning this week. At the end of each day, write down one way you saw God at work in the season you are currently in.
- **Pray for the Unprepared:** Make a list of three to five people in your life who are not yet ready to meet Christ. Commit to praying for them by name every day this week. Consider whether God is calling you to have a conversation with one of them.
- **Study the Signs:** Read through Matthew 24 in its entirety this week alongside one of the parallel passages — Mark 13 or Luke 21. Note what each account emphasizes and bring your observations to share with the group next time.
- **Obey the Next Step:** During the sermon, Pastor Kevin pointed to the Ethiopian in Acts 8 who asked, "Is there any reason I should not be baptized right now?" Is there a step of obedience God has been calling you toward that you have been delaying? Identify it and take it this week.

- **Evaluate Your Season:** Using the framework Pastor Kevin shared — learning, living, leading, legacy — write a short reflection on what season of life you are in and what God might be calling you to focus on in this season. Share it with a trusted friend or your small group.
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Closing Prayer Focus

Close your time together by praying specifically for:

- Those in your group who are navigating a season of uncertainty or transition
 - Friends and family members who are not yet ready for Christ's return
 - A spirit of readiness, watchfulness, and urgency in your church community
 - Boldness to share the testimony of what Jesus has done in your life, just as Camille and Christian did through their baptism
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"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away." — Matthew 24:35

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Sermon: "The Signs of the Seasons" — Matthew 24:32-35

Day 1: Learning From the Seasons God Appoints

Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Devotional: Solomon reminds us that every dimension of human life unfolds within a season appointed by God. Nothing catches Him off guard. The farmer who reads the signs of the earth does not panic when winter comes, because he knows spring follows. In the same way, the believer who reads God's Word is not left unprepared for the changes that come. Whatever season you find yourself in

today — grief, transition, uncertainty, or joy — God ordained it and is present within it. Do not resist the season. Learn from it. God is teaching you something in it that only this season can produce.

Reflection: What season of life are you currently in, and what might God be teaching you through it?

Practical Application: Write down one thing you sense God is developing in you through your current circumstances. Bring it before Him in prayer and ask for the grace to receive it.

Day 2: Do Not Be Alarmed — God Prepares His Children

Reading: Matthew 24:3-8, 25-27

Devotional: Jesus told His followers what was coming before it arrived. He said, "See, I have told you beforehand." That is not a small thing. The God of the universe cares enough about His children to warn them, prepare them, and walk with them through difficulty. When the storms of life hit, we are not left in the dark. The Word of God is a lamp to our feet. We may not know every detail of what is ahead, but we know the One who does. He is not shaken. His throne is not moved. Because He is steady, we do not have to be swept away.

Reflection: Where in your life are you tempted to be alarmed or anxious about what is ahead?

Practical Application: Identify one specific worry you have been carrying. Write it down, pray over it, and consciously place it in God's hands. Return to it throughout the week and note how God meets you there.

Day 3: The Steadfast Word in a Shifting World

Reading: Isaiah 40:6-8; Matthew 24:35; Psalm 119:89

Devotional: Grass withers. Flowers fade. Nations rise and fall. Empires that once seemed immovable are now footnotes in history books. But the Word of the Lord stands forever. Jesus declared that heaven and earth would pass away before His words could fail.

This is not a small promise. It means that every word God has spoken about redemption, restoration, His return, and His love for you is as certain today as the moment He spoke it. When the ground beneath you feels unstable, stand on the Word. It is the one foundation that cannot be shaken, moved, or eroded by time.

Reflection: Which promise from God's Word do you most need to stand on today?

Practical Application: Select one promise from Scripture that speaks directly to your current need. Write it on a card, place it somewhere visible, and speak it aloud each morning this week as an act of faith.

Day 4: Watching and Working While We Wait

Reading: Matthew 24:42-46; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Devotional: The call to watch for Christ's return is never meant to produce passivity. It is meant to produce urgency. The servant who is found faithfully working when the master returns is the one who understood that watching and working belong together. We do not know the hour. We are not meant to. But we are meant to be found about the Father's business when He arrives. There are people around you who are not yet ready. There are neighbors, coworkers, and family members who have not yet had a life-changing encounter with Jesus. The time is short. Work with urgency. Love with intention.

Reflection: Who in your life is not yet ready for Christ's return, and what is one step you can take toward sharing the gospel with them?

Practical Application: Write down the name of one person who does not yet know Jesus. Commit to praying for them daily this week and ask God to open a door for a natural, honest conversation about faith.

Day 5: Public Faith — The Witness of Obedience

Reading: Acts 8:26-38; Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 28:18-20

Devotional: Baptism is a public declaration. It is not what saves a person, but it is the outward expression of an inward reality. When Camille and Christian stepped into that water, they were telling the world — and themselves — that Jesus is Lord of their lives. The Ethiopian in Acts 8 saw water and immediately asked what was stopping him from being baptized. There was nothing stopping him. Is there anything stopping you? Whatever your next step of obedience is — baptism, confession, surrender, reconciliation — God is not asking you to have it all together first. He is asking you to take the step. The blessing follows the obedience.

Reflection: What is the next step of obedience God has been calling you toward that you have been delaying?

Practical Application: Take that step this week. If it is baptism, speak to your pastor. If it is a confession or reconciliation, make the call or write the letter. If it is full surrender in an area you have been holding back, get alone with God and give it to Him completely.