

# “Practical Eschatology: What's the Next Eschatological Event?”

For the week of April 18, 2021

## Second Coming of Christ

The second coming of Christ is referenced many times in Scripture, with over 1,500 passages in the Old Testament and one out of every 25 verses in the New Testament mentioning Jesus' return. The large amount of material devoted to this important event highlights what God says in Amos 3:7: “Indeed, the Sovereign Lord never does anything until he reveals his plans to his servants and prophets.”

### Matthew 24 Overview

Matthew 24 and 25 are often called the “Olivet Discourse” because Jesus gave this teaching on the Mount of Olives. Given to His disciples, the purpose was to give a prophetic overview of the events to occur shortly and in the distant future. Let's focus on Matthew 24.

1. Stay focused on the mission.

Read Matthew 24:1-14. What is the mission that we are to remain focused on? Why is there urgency in sharing the Good News with others?

One sign that will precede Christ's return is that the gospel will be proclaimed to all nations (Matthew 24:14). Has the gospel been proclaimed to all nations? Why or why not?

Are people accountable to God whether they have or have not heard about Him? Read Deuteronomy 4:29; Ecclesiastes 3:11; and Romans 1:20-32 to assist in your answer.

2. The Great Tribulation will precede the end.

The Tribulation is a future time when the Lord will accomplish at least two things of His plan: 1) He will complete His discipline of the nation of Israel (Daniel 9:24), and 2) He will judge the unbelieving, godless people of the earth (Revelation 6-18). The length of the Tribulation is seven years. The phrase “Great Tribulation” refers the last half of the Tribulation.

Read Matthew 24:15-22. Jesus describes a time of unparalleled disaster. How does He instruct people to react to it?

What promise is given in verse 22?

3. Christ will return.

a) Publicly

Read Daniel 7:13; Matthew 16:27, 24:27-30. Why is it important that Christ's appearance will be public and will not only be evident to those in hiding that day but to every human being on earth, including His enemies?

b) Suddenly

Read Matthew 24:36-44. How is it beneficial that the exact day of Christ's coming is not known? How does this help unbelievers? How does this help believers?

c) Bodily

The return of Christ is a literal event, in which Christ will return the same way that the disciples saw him go to heaven. Read Acts 1:9-11 and describe how Jesus ascended to heaven. Describe what you think it will look like and sound like when He returns.

4. Believers will be resurrected at Christ's return.

Read Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. How are these passages a message of hope for Christians? How do these passages offer no hope for unbelievers?

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What happens to believers when they die? At death, the body awaits the resurrection of the last day, but the soul goes to be at home with the Lord. Read Luke 16:19-31 and 2 Corinthians 5:8 for more insight.

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5. We are called to faithfulness now.

Read Matthew 24:45-51. What is the main lesson of the story Jesus tells in this passage? What is verse 51 describing?

What specific ways are we, as believers, to remain faithful today in 2021?

Describe how each of these spiritual disciplines help you to remain faithful:

- Prayer
- Word of God
- Serve
- Fellowship

How are you doing in each of these disciplines? Is there a “next step” you need to take in any of these disciplines? What is it?