

:: summary

Eschatology (from Greek word meaning "last") is the theological term used for the study of last things - future and final events in history before God's plan of redemption is fully realized. Unlike human beings who can only guess at the future (even with good scientific modeling), God perfectly knows the future. In Scripture, God has given us details of major events yet to come including the second coming of Jesus Christ. Because God is perfect in knowledge and cannot lie, we have certainty about what lies ahead and we can live in confident trust and unbounded hope.

:: explore and discuss

We have completed the first week of Seeking God. Because Christian community accelerates spiritual growth, we are encouraging all groups to take time to check in, encourage and pray as you continue seeking God.

How are you doing at being alert to God's nudges, drawing near to him in prayer and reflection, allowing his word to strengthen your faith and vision for life, or in another way?

Describe your experience so far. Easy? Hard? Have you experienced something new or a spiritual roadblock or challenge? How does that shape your seeking for this next week?

Read Exodus 12:11 and Luke 12:35-40

In commanding the Israelites to institute the Passover meal (Exodus 12:1-16), God says the Israelites are to eat the meal with "your cloak tucked into your belt," (v. 11) ready to move quickly as God leads them out of Egypt. In Luke 12:35 Jesus' phrase "be dressed ready for service" expresses the idea of perpetual readiness dressed in a similar fashion with a belt girded around the waist.

Based on these two texts, how serious would you say Jesus is in telling us to be ready? Using your godly imagination, what might Jesus have had in mind about *how* we are to be ready?

Pick either the parable of the master at the wedding banquet or the parable within a parable of the thief and explain how the parable would have been a practical help to those listening about readiness when you do not know when he will return?

Read the Words of Jesus: Mt. 24:30, of the angels of God: Acts 1:11, and of our ascended Lord: Rev. 22:20.

How will Jesus' second coming be different from his first? How do you envision this event?

:: make it personal

The apostle Paul, writing to believers in Philippi declares, "*We are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior*" (Phil. 3:20). How do the ideas in these two sentences relate to each other and how should they guide how we live?

In the message, Pastor Mike described three ways of eagerly waiting for Jesus to return: 1) making up your mind to stay focused and be ready, 2) living in confident trust and unbounded hope, and 3) staying true without wavering. Pick one of these and describe how it might look in your life.

:: pray

For each other as you continue seeking God this week. Ask God to show you meaningful ways to live in readiness for the Second Coming. Pray for freedom from fear and worry over events in our world.

