

Guidelines for Leaders:

If you aren't doing so already, encourage everyone in the group to read and answer the questions before your meeting. There is more than enough material in these questions to fill up your whole discussion time. So, consider these three suggestions for group discussion:

- *First, choose just one of the 2 Introduction questions.*
- *Second, choose no more than 4 or 5 of the Understanding questions.*
- *Third, be sure to allow enough time for the Application, which is where we really seek the impact of the sermon on our daily Christian lives. The Application is also a great opportunity for group prayer.*

Introduction:

1. Where do you see yourself ten years from now?
2. When you think about the future, what comes to mind? Do you believe humanity is getting worse and worse, OR refining and improving over time? Why?
3. When did someone surprise you by returning unexpectedly OR when did you surprise someone else by returning unexpectedly?

Understanding:

4. A skeptic claims "Ha! It's 2,000 years and Jesus *still* has not returned." Read 2 Peter 3:3 & 3:8. How could you counter the skeptic?
5. Do you have reluctance or embarrassment to talk about the return of Christ? Why or why not?
6. Someone claims, regarding Jesus' return, that the most important thing is "Here are the dates and signs you need to know". Based on today's scripture and teaching, how would you answer them?
7. In the light of today's teaching, what is the true value and priority of hobbies and vacations?
8. Some people use verse 11 to argue that Bible study is a waste of time. Is their argument valid? Why do you think so? What do you think this verse really means?
9. Read verse 9. How does this verse apply both for the U.S. and for a country where people are being imprisoned for following Christ? What promises are valid for BOTH countries?
10. When Jesus says "only the Father knows" in verse 32 about when he is coming back, some argue that this shows that Jesus is always less than the father. Why are they incorrect?
11. How does the return of Christ give us hope in any suffering we go through? Can you name some specific types of suffering people are undergoing that Jesus will have the final word on?
12. Pastor Dave said about Christ's return: "there is a God, and there is a day that you'll stand before him, and he's not playing games." Read the fearsome description in Isaiah 13:6-10. How does what Jesus did on the Cross rescue us from this? Do you see anything in this passage that echoes events that happened on the day Jesus was crucified? Who *should* be afraid of what it says in this passage? What is their remedy?

Application:

13. At the end of today's passage Jesus says: "Watch!": Because when Jesus talked about his return, it seems like he wanted to inject our lives with a sense of urgency—like *this day counts*. In what areas of your life can you enhance your sense of urgency?
14. Is there something in your life right now that, if Jesus were to return tonight, you would be ashamed of that thing? Some habit you have; some secret sin you indulge in; something that you carefully hide from other people? Will you let Jesus pull you out of the darkness into the light?