

August 30th, The Final Showdown
Part 5 in the series 'Ready for Anything'

What were some things from last Sunday's message that resonated with you?

What is the most important thing we as God's children must ultimately be ready for?

Was there anything from last Sunday's message that you wrestled with?

At the time of Jesus, the Jews were eagerly awaiting the Messiah who they believed would be a powerful leader who would defeat their brutal, tyrannical foreign oppressors, defeat injustice, and return their nation to a place of world prominence forever. Jesus' plan was to bring peace and justice to the entire world, for all time. But, that would require His willing submission to the most horrific injustice and evil imaginable. Jesus was crucified, but 3 days later He rises from the dead...

READ Acts 1:6-11:

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. **8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. **11** "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

What 'job' does Jesus give his disciples to do while they wait for His return?

What can we discern about Jesus' return from this passage?

All of those 1st century Jesus followers lived and died believing that Jesus might return at any time. But they also understood that if they didn't live to see that day, that they would simply return with Jesus when He came back, to rule and reign with Him.

READ: 2 Peter 3:8-13

8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. **9** The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some

understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives **12** as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. **13** But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

What reasoning does Peter give as to why God is seemingly taking so long to bring justice to the world?

What should we expect of the day of the Lord according to this passage?

What should we do in the meantime?

How do we live holy and Godly lives? How do we keep God's promises?

What will a new heaven and earth where righteousness dwells look like?

What's the difference between pursuing justice in the world in step with Jesus, and taking justice into your own hands?

How do you know if you're doing one or the other?

READ Matthew 6:9-13

9 "This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

10

your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

11

Give us today our daily bread.

12

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

How is God's Kingdom here on earth and His will here on earth as it is in heaven, the ultimate form of justice for our world?

Were the Jews who lived in the first century and rebelled against Roman oppression and injustice right in their fight against injustice?

Were they successful?

If you have time:

Shortly before his death and resurrection, Jesus spoke to his disciples using apocalyptic language about "things to come" including the imminent destruction of Jerusalem and the need for Jews to flee their homeland. (Apocalyptic writing and speech was a genre popular around the time of Jesus and commonly used for dramatic impact. The Book of Revelation is written primarily in the apocalyptic genre. In fact, the word apocalypse literally means "Revelation").

READ Matthew 24

What are Jesus' instructions to those living in Judea during the coming onslaught of injustice, violence, and brutality?