

Jesus Will Return

Jesus promised to return in glory and power.

Lesson Focus

Jesus said his followers should be ready because one day he is coming back in the same way he left—in the clouds. With a loud command, the voice of an archangel, and the trumpet of God, Jesus will come in glory and power. All believers will be gathered to him for all eternity. This is part of God's plan for the Consummation, the seventh C of history.

Key Passages

Matthew 24:44; Acts 1:9–11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17

Memory Verse

Philippians 3:20–21 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

The Bible is the history book of the universe—from beginning to end. It started in Genesis with the Creation (Genesis 1:31). Man fell into Corruption—sin—by disobeying God’s command (Romans 5:12). The world had fallen into wickedness and disobedience, so God sent a Catastrophe—the worldwide flood as punishment (Genesis 7:23). Noah’s descendants again disobeyed God. As a result of man’s sin at the tower of Babel, God sent Confusion on their language, and they were scattered all over the earth (Genesis 11:9). Man could never obey God perfectly. That is why God sent his perfect Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16), to die on the Cross so that all who believe in him could have eternal life. Jesus was buried and rose from the grave, conquering death and making a way for sinners to be reconciled to God (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).

God has also told us about the Consummation, the end of history as Jesus returns in glory as the conquering King to fulfill God’s plan for the restoration of the universe. Jesus told his followers to be ready for his return (Matthew 24:44) when he would take them to be with him in the place he prepared (John 14:1–3).

The Bible tells us that as Jesus’ disciples watched him ascend back to his Father, he was taken up into

a cloud. Two angels appeared to the disciples and assured them that Jesus Christ, whom they had just watched ascend, would one day appear again in the same manner (Acts 1:9–11). The Apostle John confirmed this in the book of Revelation when he wrote that Jesus is coming back in the clouds. And when he returns, every eye will see him, even those who pierced him (Revelation 1:7). The Apostle Paul wrote that the Lord will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God! The saints of God will meet the Lord in the air and then be with him always (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).

What joyous news this is to those of us, who by God’s mercy, have been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:3). The realization that our Savior will return for us one day should motivate us to live in eager expectation of his return. Because of the joy we have in Christ, we are to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions. We are to live righteous lives as we look for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ (Titus 2:11–13)!

The book of Revelation ends with Jesus’ promise, “Surely I am coming soon.” And as we mature in Christ, our response will align with the Apostle John’s, who replied, “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20).

Historical/Apologetics Background

The church has been waiting for Jesus to return for over 2,000 years. Unfortunately, some, in eager anticipation of that day, have tried to predict the date of Christ’s return. Whether by applying complicated mathematical formulas to numbers in the book of Daniel, searching the secret “Bible codes,” or by supposed direct revelation, hundreds over the years have predicted the date of Christ’s return. Here are just a few of them within the recent past:

William Miller, a Baptist preacher from New York, stated in 1842, “My principles in brief, are, that Jesus Christ will come again to this earth, cleanse, purify, and take possession of the same, with all the saints, sometime between March 21, 1843, and March 21, 1844.” When this did not happen, he then recalculated and determined the correct date to be October 22, 1844. This date became known as “The Great Disappointment” by the Millerites (his followers) after Jesus

failed to return. Thousands of them had sold their possessions and were awaiting the coming of Christ.

The Watchtower Society (Jehovah’s Witnesses) have predicted that Christ would come in 1914, 1918, 1920, 1925, 1941, 1975, and 1994. When he failed to return each time, they reinterpreted these dates to refer to “spiritual” events in heaven.

Hal Lindsey, author of the book *The Late, Great Planet Earth*, predicted no less than four times a date for the return of Christ: 1981, 1988, 2007, and 2040.

Edgar Whisenant wrote a book entitled *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Is in 1988*. When that prediction failed, he “recalculated” and came out with revised predictions of 1989 and then 1993. The year 1988 was a popular choice because it was 40 years, or one “generation,” after the founding of the modern nation of Israel in 1948.

Harold Camping, an American Christian radio broadcaster, famously predicted that Jesus would return on May 21, 2011. Followers of Camping donated millions of dollars to purchase radio ads and billboards to warn people of the coming apocalypse. When the day passed without the predicted return, Mr. Camping “recalculated” the date to be October 21, 2011, again a failed prediction.

In an interview in 2012, World Bible Society President F. Kenton Beshore stated that Christ’s return will occur sometime between 2018 and 2028.

As you can see, there have been many attempts to set a timetable for Jesus’ coming, and they’ve all

been wrong. To some people, the failed predictions are proof that they don’t need to take Jesus’ return seriously—kind of like the boy who cried wolf. But Jesus clearly said about his return, “Concerning that day and hour no one knows” (Matthew 24:36). We can be sure that Jesus will return, but he has not revealed to us the time when this will happen. So, when you hear people set dates for Jesus’ return, don’t believe them. The only way anyone could correctly predict the exact date of the second coming is if Jesus himself was wrong.

Review Questions

K-1st Review Questions

1. Is the Bible the history book of the Christians, the Hebrews, or the universe? *History book of the universe.*
2. How many C's tell us what happened from the very beginning of the universe to the very end? *Seven.*
3. The first C, Creation, describes how everything was created by God to be very what? *Good.*
4. Which C describes how God sent a worldwide flood to punish a sinful world? *Catastrophe.*
5. What entered God's very good creation in the second C of Corruption? *Sin and death.*
6. Which C describes how Jesus came to earth as a man, born as a baby: Christ, Cross, or Consummation? *Christ.*
7. Where did God judge sin by confusing the language of the people: garden of Eden, Israel, or the tower of Babel? *Tower of Babel.*
8. Which C speaks of Jesus' death to pay for our sin? *Cross.*
9. Which C describes God's plan for the end of history when he will create a new heaven and new earth for all believers: Creation or Consummation? *Consummation.*
10. What did Jesus tell his followers to be ready for? *His coming back; his return to earth.*
11. What did Jesus say he would go to prepare for his followers? *A place in heaven with God.*
12. When Jesus went up to heaven, who appeared and told the disciples Jesus would come back in the same way that he left? *Two angels.*
13. Will Jesus return to earth in the clouds, the stars, or the wind? *Clouds.*
14. Jesus will return in glory and what: fire, power, or thunder? *Power.*
15. What instrument will sound to announce Jesus' return? *Trumpet.*
16. Who will meet Jesus in the air: all believers, all people, or believers who have died? *All believers.*

Pre-K Review Questions

1. How many C's of history tell us what happened from the very beginning of the universe to the very end? *Seven.*
2. The first C, Creation, tells how everything was created by God to be very what? *Good.*
3. What entered God's very good creation in the second C of Corruption? *Sin (and death).*
4. Which C tells how God sent a worldwide flood to punish a sinful world: Corruption or Catastrophe? *Catastrophe.*
5. Which C tells how God judged sin at the tower of Babel by confusing the language of the people? *Confusion.*
6. Which C tells about Jesus coming to earth as a man, born as a baby: Christ or Consummation? *Christ.*
7. To pay for our sins, Jesus died on a what? *Cross.*
8. God's plan for the end of history when he will create a new heaven and new earth is called: Creation or Consummation? *Consummation.*
9. What did Jesus tell his followers to be ready for? *His coming back; his return to earth.*
10. What did Jesus say he would go and get ready for his followers? *A place in heaven with God.*
11. When Jesus went up to heaven, who appeared and told the disciples Jesus would come back in the same way that he left? *Two angels.*
12. Will Jesus come back to earth in the clouds, the stars, or the wind? *Clouds.*
13. What instrument will sound to announce Jesus' return? *Trumpet.*
14. Who will meet Jesus in the air: all believers, all people, or believers who have died? *All believers.*

In the Clouds Snack

Materials

- ☐ Whipped cream topping
- ☐ Chocolate pudding or gelatin dessert
- ☐ Optional: additional toppings (e.g., sliced strawberries or bananas, blueberries, crushed graham crackers, chocolate chips, or mini cookies)
- ☐ Bowls or cups
- ☐ Spoons

Instructions

Before class, prepare separate bowls of toppings, such as sliced fruit or berries, graham cracker crumbs, chocolate chips, mini cookies, etc.

During class, set out bowls of toppings for students to share. Pass out bowls or cups of pudding or gelatin dessert and a spoon to each student. Have students add a few toppings to their bowl then cover it with whipped cream to resemble a cloud. Before eating the snack, use the Suggested Discussion below.

Suggested Discussion

- ?** What do clouds have to do with today's lesson? *Jesus ascended (rose up) to heaven in the clouds, and the angels said he would return in the same way.*

Jesus went to heaven through the clouds, and he will return to earth in the clouds.

- ?** What else will happen when Jesus returns? *The voice of an archangel and the sound of the trumpet of God will be heard. Believers will be caught up to meet Jesus in the air.*

Jesus promised to return in glory and power, and he told his followers to be ready. Let's pray and thank God for the promise of Jesus' return and then enjoy our cloud snack as a reminder of how he will come back.

Come On In Games

We recommend that you work with sets of 10 cards at a time then add on the next 10 until the order of all the cards has been memorized.

We have provided a pronunciation guide for the books of the Old Testament. This document can be found in the Teacher Digital Resources.

Allow students to refer to the Books of the Bible Poster during the games.

Bible Book Match

Teams flip over flashcards to make matches.

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards
- ☐ Tape or poster putty

Instructions

Print two sets of flashcards on card stock. Lay the flashcards out on the floor facedown or attach them to the

wall. Divide the class into two teams. Teams will take turns choosing two flashcards, turning them over to see if they match. If they do not match, flip the flashcards back over. Teammates can help each other decide which flashcards to choose. You may want to have the whole class play this game together.

As students find matches, discuss each Bible book (give a few details from the back of the color flashcards, if available).

Bible Speed Round

Teams race to get their sets of Bible books in order. How fast can they go?

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards
- ☐ Timer

Instructions

Print enough flashcards for each team to have a set. Mix up the flashcards in each set. Divide students into teams

and pass sets of flashcards to each team facedown. Set the timer for an appropriate time. Tell the groups to begin. Each group should work together to put their flashcards in order. Check the order by reciting the books of the Bible together using the poster.

You may play this with each team working on the same set, or you may choose to give each team different sets to work on. Check the order of all the teams' flashcards by reciting each set out loud.

Flashcard Take Away

Start with all of the flashcards—but wait! Can students still say them in order when some are taken away?

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards
- ☐ Tape or poster putty

Instructions

Print one set of flashcards. Attach them in order on the wall as you recite them together. Choose a student to remove one card. Recite the books again. Continue to choose students to remove flashcards one at a time, reciting the whole list of books between each one. When all of the flashcards are gone, see if they can say the whole set together!

I Have You Have

Students will respond to each other with the name of the book on their flashcard in the correct order.

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards

Instructions

Print one set of flashcards. Have students sit around a table or in a circle. Pass the flashcards out to the students. The person with the first book will say the name of the book on his card and the next person in order will respond, for example, “I have Genesis, who has Exodus?” The person with the next card in order will respond with, “I have Exodus, who

has Leviticus?” You could play a variation of this by having the whole class ask the question. For example, the student says, “I have Genesis.” Then the whole class can ask, “Who has Exodus?” Continue through the set.

Each student will respond and repeat until everyone has repeated their card. Play with any set of 10 flashcards for an easy amount to remember. But if you have a larger class, add enough flashcards so every student has one or divide into groups.

Memory Verse Games

Allow students to refer to the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page during the games.

You may want to cover it up after a few weeks for more of a challenge.

Echo! Echo!

Do what I do—say what I say! Groups will echo each other as they recite the memory verse together.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page

Instructions

Divide the class into two groups. You will say a word or phrase of the memory verse while doing some sort of action—sit down, stand up, spin in a circle, touch your toes, etc. The groups will take turns “echoing” what you say and do as you recite the verse. Repeat several times. You can whisper, shout, squeak, etc. Switch around and let older students take turns leading.

Egg Hunt

Hunt for all the parts of the memory verse hidden in the eggs! This game can be played all year round. The plastic eggs just happen to be great little containers that can be hidden easily.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Strips of paper
- ☐ Plastic Easter eggs

Instructions

Write the memory verse on strips of paper with one or two words on each strip. Put one strip inside of each plastic Easter egg. Hide all the eggs around the room.

Have the students search for the eggs and bring them back to the table. They will open the eggs and work together to put the verse in the proper order.

For a larger class, prepare more than one set of eggs (sorted by colors for different teams). Students can work in teams to collect and construct the verse.

Follow the Leader

Follow the leader around the room. Say the verse and do the motion before moving on.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Follow the Leader Cards
- ☐ Tape

Instructions

Print and cut out the Follow the Leader Cards. Tape each one to a chair or table and randomly place them around the room. You will lead the students around the room and stop at each card. Read the card and lead the children to do what the card says while reciting the memory verse. Then move around to the next one. You may want to repeat this activity or have students take turns leading.

Freeze!

Stomp like a dinosaur or spin in circles, but when it's time to freeze, get ready to say the memory verse.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page

Instructions

Students will move around the room in a specified action you give, such as crawling, skipping, turning in circles, galloping, walking in giant steps, etc. Then when you say, "Freeze!" the students will stop and freeze in position. Recite the memory verse, then begin again with a different action. You may need to show them how to freeze and hold a position.

Funny Voices

Recite the memory verse together using different voices. Be squeaky like a mouse or whisper as quietly as you can. How many voices can you do?

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Funny Voice Strips
- ☐ Container

Instructions

Print and cut out one set of the Funny Voice Strips and put them into a container. Choose a student to draw out a strip and lead the whole class in reciting the memory verse using that kind of voice. Have fun with it and repeat several times choosing a new voice each time!

Sneaky Stickies

Students will try to be sneaky as they cover up the words and pictures of the memory verse!

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Sticky notes

Instructions

Open the Flip Chart to the Memory Verse Page. Recite the verse together then choose a student to place a sticky note over one word, phrase, or picture on the Flip Chart. Recite the verse again, including the part that is covered up. Continue to choose students to place stickies, one at a time, reciting the whole verse between each turn—including the words/pictures that are covered. When all of the words/pictures are covered up, try to say the whole verse together!

Lesson Review Games

These games are written for team play, however, they can easily be adapted for smaller classes.

Allow students to refer to the Flip Chart during the games.

Basket Toss

Students give the correct answer and toss the beanbags. Each basket has greater points.

Materials

- ☐ Review Questions
- ☐ One beanbag for each team
- ☐ Three laundry baskets or boxes
- ☐ Masking tape

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use masking tape to make a tossing line. Bring in three baskets or boxes. Set the baskets in a line, with each one a little

farther from the tossing line. Label the baskets with 5, 10, and 25 points so the farther away it is the higher the score.

Divide the class into two or more teams depending on size. Have the teams line up at the tossing line. Take turns asking the first students in line from each team a review question. When a student answers correctly, he will have a chance to toss a beanbag into a basket then go to the end of the line. If the beanbag misses, there are no points scored. If someone does not answer correctly, he may ask his teammates for help. Keep track of the scores on the board. Continue until all the questions have been answered. Repeat questions if necessary.

Board Game

Teams will answer questions and make their way to the Finish on the Game Board.

Materials

- ☐ Review Questions
- ☐ Game Board (provided in the Teacher Kit)
- ☐ Dice, numbered cards, or spinner
- ☐ Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into teams. Team members will take turns answering the review questions. If they answer correctly, they will roll the dice, spin, or draw a numbered card and move that number of spaces on the Game Board. Follow the directions on the spaces to move ahead, fall back, or switch places with another team. If someone does not know or does not answer correctly, he may ask his teammates for help. Alternate between teams as long as time permits, repeating questions if necessary. The first team to make it all the way to the end wins.

Bowling

What do you do with extra water bottles and softballs? Go bowling, of course. Students will answer questions then bowl for points.

Materials

- ☐ Review Questions
- ☐ Six to ten empty water bottles
- ☐ Softball or other small playground ball
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Dried corn or beans (optional)

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Pour a small amount of dried corn or beans into the bottom of each

water bottle and tighten the lid. Set out the water bottles on one end of the room. Use masking tape to form a "lane."

Divide students into teams. Have students line up. Ask the first student a review question. If he answers correctly, let him roll the ball toward the bottles. Each bottle that is knocked down is worth 1 point. A strike (knocking down all the bottles) is worth 20 points. Take turns asking questions of each team. If a student gives an incorrect answer or does not know the answer, he can ask his teammates for help. Keep track of the scores.

Football Frenzy

Who can score the most touchdowns?

Materials

- ☐ Review Questions
- ☐ Football Cutouts, one per team
- ☐ Tape or poster putty

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions. Print and cut one Football Cutout for each team. Color them different colors for each team, or have teams choose and write a name on their football. On the board draw 6 vertical lines and label them 50, 40, 30, 20, 10, and End Zone to represent yard lines on a football field. Make the lines long enough so there is room for the footballs to be placed along them with room in between. Divide the class into teams. Place

each team's football at the 50-yard line using tape or poster putty on the back.

Alternate asking review questions to each team. If the answer is correct, move the team's football to the next yard line toward the End Zone. If the answer is incorrect, the team's football stays where it is. If a student is unsure of the answer, he may "pass" the question to a teammate to answer. Only one pass per question is allowed, and this does not affect the order of the questions being asked on the team.

When a team's football reaches the End Zone, they have scored a touchdown worth 6 points, and the team's football is placed back at the 50-yard line on the next turn. Keep track of scores on the board.

Continue asking questions and moving the teams' footballs until all the questions are asked or for a set time. You may repeat questions as necessary. At the end, the team with the most points wins.

Musical Questions

When the music stops, who will answer the question?

Materials

- ☐ Review Questions
- ☐ Chairs
- ☐ Worship music
- ☐ Different color/style chair, masking tape, colored paper, etc.

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions. Set up chairs either in a circle or in two rows back to back so students have room

to walk around them. Mark one chair as the "question" chair (use a different color/style chair or mark it with tape, a paper question mark, etc.)

Instruct students to walk in front of the chairs when you play the music. When the music stops, they will race to find a seat. The student in the question chair answers a review question. Continue playing music and having students change seats until all the review questions are answered.

Racetrack

Who will reach the checkered flag first?

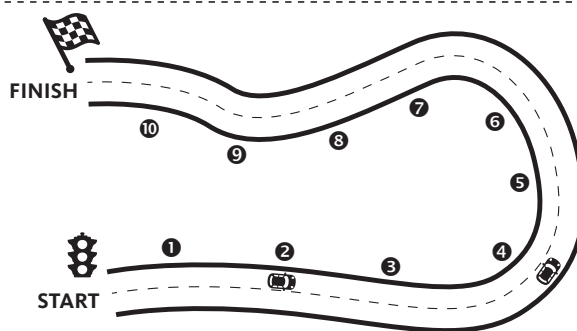
Materials

- ☐ Review Questions
- ☐ White board or chalk-board
- ☐ Markers/chalk
- ☐ Optional: paper cutouts for each team (cars, animals, circles, etc.), tape/poster putty

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions. Draw a racetrack on the board. It may be as simple as a straight horizontal path or a curvy circle. Label "Start" and "Finish" (with a checkered flag) at either end of the track. Add numbers along the track (e.g., 1-10) at equal intervals between Start and Finish. The numbers will be used as placement points for the racers as they progress along the track.

Divide the class into teams. You may draw a different symbol (e.g., stick figure, circle, X or O) to represent each



team at the Start, or use paper cutouts as team markers and stick them to the board with tape/poster putty.

Ask the first team a review question. If they answer correctly, move their marker or redraw their symbol along the track at #1. If they answer incorrectly, give the next team a chance to answer and move to the first number. If they do not know, give the answer and ask that question again later. Continue to alternate asking review questions and moving teams' markers along the racetrack according to the numbers along the track. The first team to reach the Finish wins!