

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Ms. Dannels, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Douglas' mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:  
[www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com](http://www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com)
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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## “Like a Thief In the Night”

By Derek Long

The Bible plainly teaches there will be a second coming of Jesus (Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 9:28). The second coming is an event Christians ought to look forward to with eager anticipation (Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 3:12). Curiosity regarding the timing of the Lord's return consumes the thoughts of some who study the Bible. It appears some people search through the Bible and through the current events upon the world trying to piece together some sort of predictions relating to the Lord's return, etc. Jesus plainly tells us such efforts to predict the timing of His return are futile. Jesus says, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matthew 24:36, NKJV). A concept which is repeatedly emphasized throughout the pages of Scripture is the fact the Lord's return will come “like a thief in the night.” Let's examine some passages of Scripture which teach this.

- **Matthew 24:42-44** - “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (NKJV). **Luke**

**12:35-40** - “Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately.

Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (NKJV). Jesus teaches us to be watchful for the Lord’s return and to always be ready. He uses the illustration of a thief coming into someone’s house. If a person knew when the thief was coming, they would watch and be ready. The fact is Jesus’ return will take place when people do not expect it. Therefore, we must constantly be ready for the Lord’s return.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:1-6** - “But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us

watch and be sober” (NKJV). The terms “times and the seasons” would pick up either information regarding the exact time or the general timeframe of the Lord’s return. Paul reminds the Thessalonians they know there is no signs which tell them the Lord’s return is approaching. Rather, the Lord’s return will come like a thief in the night or like labor pains upon a pregnant woman both are things which happen unexpectedly. In fact, verse 3 reminds us people will say things like “Peace and safety.” The world may not be on the brink of some nuclear holocaust or such like as many seem to think. The way to respond to not knowing when the Lord will return is to constantly be in the light, constantly be watching and ready.

- **2 Peter 3:10** - “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up” (NKJV). Peter reminds us God’s judgment will come unexpectedly and will be accompanied by the destruction of the physical creation. In light of the fact, everything physical is going to be destroyed one day we need to be preparing to spend eternity with God in heaven (2 Peter 3:11-14).

Hopefully these passages help us see the futility of seeking to predict when the Lord will return but instead to always be ready!