



Daily Verse and Comment

[Matthew 24:36](#)

(36) “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

[Matthew 24:42](#)

(42) Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

[Matthew 24:44](#)

(44) Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

[Matthew 24:50-51](#)

(50) the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, (51) and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[Matthew 25:13](#)

(13) "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

New King James Version

Even though we look forward to Jesus Christ's return with tremendous anticipation, we do not know when it will be. We also do not know the date

of our own deaths, at which time our preparation ends. How much time do we, as individuals, have to prepare? Stephen was martyred by an angry mob shortly after the death of Christ and the founding of the New Testament church ([Acts 7:57-60](#)). While his age is never mentioned—perhaps he was called in his advanced years—he plainly had not lived many years in the truth, like the rest of the church at that time, before *his* time of preparation ended.

On the negative side, Ananias and Sapphira—who also would not have known the truth for long—had their time of preparation cut short by a foolish [sin](#) ([Acts 5:1-11](#)). Regardless of how near or far Christ's return is on the horizon, our lives could end at any point. Who is to say whether we have twenty more years—or one? The prophetic [parables](#) of Matthew 24 and 25 instruct us that "the end"—whether of this age or of this life—is entirely beyond our knowledge, so the wise will be setting their hands to the priorities of life while there is time.

In the Parable of the Rich Fool ([Luke 12:16-21](#)), Jesus describes a man caught up in the affairs of this life, enjoying the fruit of his labors, and telling himself to "take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry" (verse 19). God's response? "Fool! This night your soul [life] will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?" This man was entirely focused on the present, without any thought of preparation for the next life—or how long he had to live the present one.

Similarly, [God](#) says through the prophet Haggai, "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" ([Haggai 1:4](#)) Having a house—even a very nice house—is not the problem. God's rebuke comes in response to misplaced priorities. The peoples' focus was on their own comfort, while they neglected God's Temple. This question is distinctly relevant to us now, for, in the New Testament, God's Temple can represent either the entire body of Christ ([Ephesians 2:21](#)) or the individual Christian ([I Corinthians 3:16-17](#)). If we apply this admonition to today, it implies that the spiritual condition of the church as a whole, as well as our individual spiritual state, are higher priorities than our material situation. The "cares, riches, and pleasures of life" are what choke out the truth of God ([Luke 8:11](#), 14).

While we may have a general understanding of the future through the prophecies, the timing is a substantial variable that we cannot know until it is upon us. Even more uncertain is how long we each have to live. But by turning our focus to our spiritual condition—for we are the Temple of God's Spirit—and to strengthening the Body of Christ wherever possible, our priorities can be in alignment with God's. Whether or not we live to witness the [return of Jesus Christ](#) is inconsequential in the sense that we will be prepared either way.

— David C. Grabbe

To learn more, see:
[Our End Time](#)

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