

All the dead will be raised: ^{NIV} Acts 24:15

“...there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.” ^{NAS} John 5:28 “...an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, ²⁹ and shall come forth...”
No one will be missed; *all will be raised!*

All bodies will be changed: ^{NIV} 1 Corinthians

15:51-52 “...we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.” Now our bodies are perishing; *then they will last forever!*

Our spirits will return to their bodies:

1. **Believers:** ^{NIV} 1 Thessalonians 4:14
“...God will bring with Jesus those [spirits] who have fallen asleep in him.”
2. **Unbelievers:** ^{NIV} Revelation 20:13
“...Hades gave up the dead [spirits of unbelievers] that were in [it]...”

To each immortal body will return his/her soul and spirit – *from heaven or hell!*

All will be gathered and separated:

^{NIV} Matthew 25:31-32 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory... All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people...” The goats—*unbelievers* on the left, the sheep—*believers* on the right (vv. 32, 33)!

All will appear before Christ: ^{NIV} 2 Cor. 5:10

“...we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...” Our knowledge of that coming Day *should influence our thoughts, words, & actions!*

Every knee shall bow: ^{NIV} Philippians 2:10-11

“...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” “...not even a demon in hell will be able to deny the Lordship of...Jesus Christ” (Lenski, 792-793).

The final Judgment will take place:

^{NAS} Revelation 20:11-12 “...I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it... And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds...” ^{NIV} Romans 14:23 “...everything that does not come from faith is sin.” ^{NIV} Heb. 11:6 “...without faith it is impossible to please God...” Faith in Jesus is the key; *from faith comes works that are pleasing to God!*

1. **No faith, no works, no life:** ^{NAS} Rev. 20:15
“And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”
2. **Faith, works, life:** ^{NAS} Romans 8:1 “There is...no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” ^{NAS} John 6:47 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.” **READ 1 Corinthians 2:9.**

All will go to their eternal places: ^{NAS} Mt.

25:46 “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” So, with eternal bodies, each group will go to its place – *one so terrible, the other so wonderful!* Now, since Jesus has not yet returned – *but knowing He could come today* – let us ➔rejoice in our forgiveness *through Jesus* and ➔faithfully share God’s Holy Word with others!
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The Return of Jesus!

What will happen BEFORE and WHEN He returns?

Introduction

God created a *perfect* world but the people sinned, which brought *separation and death*, so God promised to send His Son to bring *restoration and life* for all people of all time!
^{ESV} Hebrews 9:28 “...Christ, having been offered **once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.**” So, *as Christians*, God has ➔made us sorry for our sins, ➔enabled us to trust in Jesus as our only Savior, and ➔caused us to eagerly anticipate Jesus’ Second Coming!

What Will Happen BEFORE He Returns?

When are the Last Days? The Concordia Self-Study Bible defines the Last Days as “**the whole period introduced by Christ’s first coming. These days are last in comparison to OT days, which were preliminary and preparatory.**” (1921) The OT focused on the Savior to come. Now, since the Savior has †come, †lived, †died, †risen, and †ascended, His Return is *soon* anticipated!

What will the scoffers say? They will mock us for waiting on Jesus. ^{NIV} 2 Peter 3:4, 8, 10 “They will say, ‘Where is this “coming” he promised?’”

But we are to remember this reality: “With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.” We live in “time” but the Lord does not; therefore, *TO THE LORD*, a thousand years are LIKE a day!

So Jesus’ delay in coming is not negative but positive! God is allowing more and more time for people to repent and believe, yet no one should delay because: “...the day of the Lord will come like a thief [at an unexpected time].”

What are the “birth pains”? They are Christ-claims, wars, famines, and quakes (Mt. 24:4-8):

1. **Many will claim to be “Christ”:** The internet lists 35 people who have made that claim, including Jim Jones, David Koresh, and others who are still alive and still leading people away from the truth (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_people_claimed_to_be_Jesus). Jesus said: ^{NIV} Mt. 24:5 “...many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”
2. **There will be wars:** Currently there are 27 wars taking place around the world (<http://www.globalsecurity.org>). Jesus said: ^{NIV} Mt. 24:6 “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.”
3. **There will be famines and earthquakes:** “The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that about 805 million...were suffering from chronic undernourishment in 2012-2014” (<http://www.worldhunger.org>). Many earthquakes occur worldwide every single day (<http://earthquake.usgs.gov>). Jesus said: ^{NIV} Mt. 24:7 “There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.”

SUMMARY: What do Christ-claims, wars, famines, and quakes indicate? Jesus told

us: ^{NIV} Mt. 24:8 “All these are the beginning of birth pains.” As birth pains indicate that a baby will soon be born, so Christ-claims, wars, famines, and quakes point to the closeness of Jesus’ Return!

How do Christians look like losers?

1. **Persecution:** Jesus said: ^{NIV} Mt. 24:9 “...you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death....” www.PrisonerAlert.com states: “In more than 40 nations around the world today Christians are being persecuted for their faith. In some of these nations it is illegal to own a Bible, to share your faith in Christ, change your faith or teach your children about Jesus. Those who boldly follow Christ—in spite of government edict or radical opposition—can face harassment, arrest, torture and even death.”
 2. **Decline, deception, selfishness:** Jesus said: ^{NIV} Mt. 24:10-12 “...many will turn away from the faith... many false prophets will appear and... the love of most will grow cold...” Now, think about today: ➔85% of churches in America are flat or declining, ➔false teachings are common, and ➔love of SELF is more common than love of OTHERS!
- SUMMARY:** Today is *not* a day to fear, but to be ever-ready for Jesus’ Return! By the Spirit working through the Word, GOD will keep us ➔aware of our sins, ➔sorry for our sins, and ➔trusting alone in Jesus as our only Savior! So let us remember who God has made us to be as believers in Jesus Christ: ^{NIV} Hebrews 10:39 “...we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.”

What Will Happen WHEN He Returns?

Things will be proceeding as normal: ^{ESV} Luke 17:26-30 “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.” So it is very important to remain READY by being *continually repentance* – ever sorry for our sins and ever trusting in Jesus alone as our only Savior!

Jesus will return: ^{NIV} 1 Thessalonians 4:16 “...the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God...” So when He comes, *everyone will know it!*

Some will rejoice; others will be terrified:

1. **Rejoicing Believers:** ^{NIV} Luke 21:28 “When [the signs of Jesus’ actual Return] begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” Sometimes this sinful world can be very difficult, so we will greatly rejoice when Jesus’ returns!
2. **Terrified Unbelievers:** ^{NIV} Revelation 6:16 “They called to the mountains and the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!’” Of those who keep rejecting Jesus, the Bible says: ^{NAS} Hebrews 10:31 “It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”