

A Sure Hope

he's coming back

Start Here

Imagine your child is performing a five-minute piano solo with the national orchestra in front of 10,000 people. They are very nervous, terrified of making a mistake in front of the crowd. Imagine the emotions you would feel when the concert begins. With each phrase your child plays, you hope they hit the right notes. You are not able to enjoy it because your heart is beating, your palms are sweating. The final note is played and the performance is perfect. Your child gets a standing ovation.

Imagine watching your favourite football team playing in the final of the World Cup. You're desperate for them to win. But they are losing 1-0 at half time. As the second half nears the end, your team is still struggling. You watch anxiously, and with every pass and kick, you hope for a breakthrough.

There are only two minutes left, and the opposition fans are already celebrating. You feel dejected.

Then out of nowhere, your team manages to score two goals in one minute. You and your fans celebrate as your team lifts the cup.

- When you watch the recorded footage of the football match or recital, how would your emotions be different from when you were watching live? Why?
- Do these stories remind you of an experience from your own life?
- How does your experience change when you know from the beginning that there will be a positive end?

Explore the Word

Read Revelation 21:1-5. This passage gives a glimpse into what the end of our story is as the people of God.

- Where will God's home be in eternity? How does that make you feel?
- What will there no longer be in heaven? How does this give you hope?
- What do you look forward to being made new?

This wonderful description in Revelation will come when Jesus returns and establishes his kingdom. His return is promised to us throughout the scriptures.

Read these examples:

- Acts 1:11
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
- Revelation 22:12-13

Main Idea

As we journey in this world, we face many uncertainties, loss, and pain. When we're in the middle of the story, the pressure can feel overwhelming.

However, since we know without a doubt that Jesus will return and make all things new, we can live with hope whatever our circumstances. This truth changes how we walk through life. The difficulties of this life do not have the last say. We know the end of our story: Jesus wins and we will reign with him forever.

As believers, we long for his return and we want to be ready for that great day.

Discuss

Read Romans 8:18

- How does knowing Christ will return help us handle uncertainties and suffering?
- How can we be ready for his return?

Practice Together Now

We learn to live with hope when we bring the return of Christ to mind in the midst of the burdens of this world. Practice these three steps.

1. List some of the current uncertainties or even impossible situations that cause people anxiety in our world today.
 - Choose to thank God for the sure victory in Jesus, and that one day there will be no more tears or pain.
2. What area of your own life is causing you anxiety? How might Jesus' return encourage you in this area now? Where do you currently need the hope of God wiping away your tears and pain?
 - Pray together that in the midst of these situations you will experience the hope of all things being made new.
3. The early church lived with the expectation of Christ's return and prayed for it.
 - Join now in this simple but powerful prayer from Revelation 22:20, "Come, Lord Jesus."

Review your Practice Daily

- As you watch or hear news of suffering and trouble in our world, make it a practice to pray, "Come, Lord Jesus."
- Use Romans 15:13 to pray into the areas you each identified as needing hope.
- Verses to meditate on
 - John 16:22
 - Romans 8:18-24
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:23
 - Revelation 1:7