

LifeSharing Lesson 1 “Getting Ready For The Rapture—Don’t Be Left Behind”
Matthew 24:36-44

1. What has been one of the biggest surprises to happen in your life?
2. Why do health inspectors often do surprise visits to restaurants instead of calling in advance to make sure they are prepared?
3. What do you think God is attempting to do in the life of every person?

Matthew 24:36-44 (New International Version, ©2010)

The Day and Hour Unknown ³⁶ “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, ^[a] but only the Father. ³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

4. In the above verses, Jesus is talking about the event that we call the rapture. How is the rapture different from the second coming of Christ. See the passage below on the second coming:

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 (New International Version, ©2010)

⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might

5. With so much being at stake in the rapture, why do you think God just doesn't tell us when it's going to happen so that we can all be ready?

6. What appears to be the difference maker for those who make the rapture and those who do not?

7. Knowing that the rapture can take place, and your loved ones may be left behind, how should that motivate us in our Christian walk.

8. What does it mean to be ready in Matthew 24:44?

Life-Sharing Lesson 2 “The Pain & Agony Of Christmas” Matthew 1:18-25

1. When was a time you tried to do the right thing, only to have someone else accuse you of intentionally doing something wrong.

Matthew 1:18-25 (New International Version, ©2010)

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about^[a]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet^[b] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^[c] because he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”^[d] (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

2. Mary had been told by the angel Gabriel, that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and that she would have a son. She was to name Him Jesus. Mary then left Nazareth in Galilee went to a small town in the hill country of Judea and stayed with her aunt Elizabeth and uncle Zechariah for 3 months. When she returns home, she is 3 months pregnant. What agony did God allow to enter her life because of this?

3. The facts were all against Mary in terms of her unfaithfulness. How is it possible that we can have all the facts before us, and still be wrong about another person's behavior?

4. How does our misreading the facts cause agony in other people's lives?

5. Why do you think God did not tell Joseph what God was doing from the very beginning to keep Joseph from being in agony over Mary's news of being pregnant?

6. We often want God to show us some kind of a sign when something bad is going to happen to us or come into our lives. Why doesn't God do this for us?

7. How does Joseph keep his own hurt and pain, from lashing out to destroy Mary? What does it mean to be a "righteous person" in verse 19?

8. Why can we not use our own pain, as a reason or justification to seek to destroy another person who has greatly hurt us?

9. The angel came to Mary in secret. The angel came to Joseph in private in a dream. Neither of them can prove God actually spoke to them. Why do you think God did this in such a private manner which undoubtedly caused them both a lot of pain and agony and stares of disapproval from others?

10. This Christmas who caused you pain, that you need to turn over to God and allow yourself to be reconciled to the other person.

LifeSharing Lesson 3 “Why Does God Choose The Wrong Kind Of People”

Luke 2:1-20

1. When was a time you were chosen for something and you were surprised to have been chosen?

Luke 2:1-22 (New International Version, ©2010) Luke 2 The Birth of Jesus

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

2. Why do you think Luke gives us this information on the other rulers?

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

3. Why does God not make better provisions for Mary and Joseph in the above Scripture passage since he knew they would be going to Bethlehem?

4. Why does God not always provide a small miracle when we get into a jam? Is it always God's will for us to have the very best as His children?

5. God bypasses the important people listed in verse 1 and 2 and sends the angels to talk to the shepherds. Why does the Lord bypass the important people and go to the shepherds who were the despised members of the society?

6. Why is it hard to predict who God is going to choose for a certain task?

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

7. What can we learn about angels from this passage of Scripture above?

8. What is the good news for the world as far as the first Christmas is concerned from the angel's announcement?

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

9. Do you think the people believed the shepherds, and what they told them about the angels? Why or Why not.

10. Would you believe a group of homeless people and dope dealers if they had told you angels from God had come to give them a message for the rest of the world? Why or why not?

11. If you had been Mary, what would the shepherds words have done for you?

12. How do you think this experience changed the shepherd's view of God?

13. How does God calling you, change your view of God?