

The Final Countdown

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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Based on the sermon by Pastor Mirek Hufton

1. SERMON RECAP

Pastor Mirek Hufton opened Matthew 24 to walk the congregation through the unmistakable signs that signal the nearness of Christ's return, anchoring the message in the supernatural reality of Israel's rebirth as a nation, the explosive increase of knowledge, and the growing tide of lawlessness and spiritual falling away. He challenged the congregation to recognize that prophetic scripture is not merely interesting information but a life-shaping force that shifts how believers prioritize their time, money, and energy. He closed by calling every person in the room to examine whether their life is genuinely oriented around Jesus and his coming kingdom rather than the comfort of their decades on earth.

2. KEY SCRIPTURES

Zephaniah 3:9

"For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one accord."

John 14:3

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

Isaiah 66:8

"Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children."

3. ICE BREAKER

If you could visit any place in the world that holds deep historical or spiritual significance, where would you go and why?

4. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Establishing the Foundation

Pastor Mirek described prophetic scripture as having the power to "sift your life through the prism of eternity" and cited Romans 16:25, which says believers are established through the preaching of prophetic scriptures. How has understanding biblical prophecy, or the lack of it, actually affected the way your group members make everyday decisions? Do you think most believers treat end-time scripture as urgent or as distant?

2. The Miracle of Israel

He pointed to the rebirth of Israel on May 14, 1948, and the resurrection of the Hebrew language as fulfillments of Isaiah 66:8 and Zephaniah 3:9 respectively, calling these events nothing short of supernatural. What does it do to your faith when you see ancient prophecy fulfilled in documented modern history? Are there other moments in your lifetime where you noticed the hand of God moving in world events?

3. The Great Falling Away

Pastor Mirek referenced 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and shared the striking statistic that practicing Christianity in America has been cut by roughly half in just twenty years. He described this as the predicted apostasy, a stepping away from God's moral foundation that even reaches into churches. What do you believe is the single greatest factor pulling people away from faith today, and what responsibility does the local church carry in response to that drift?

4. Lawlessness and Love Growing Cold

He drew attention to Matthew 24:12, noting that the word "lawlessness" carries the same Greek root as apostasy, and that Jesus specifically warned the love of even believers, those with agape love, could grow cold. Have you personally experienced a season where your spiritual passion cooled in response to the noise and confusion of the world around you? What brought you back, or what is keeping you there?

5. The Role of the Church as Restrainer

Pastor Mirek suggested that the church, as salt and light, is the restraining force described in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, and that our witness in the world holds back the full unleashing of lawlessness. If that is true, what does it say about the weight of the church's responsibility right now? Does your group feel the seriousness of that calling, or does it still feel abstract?

6. Living for Eternity, Not Just for Here

He closed by sharing the example of a 300,000-member church in Brazil where the emphasis on prophetic scripture and eternal reward produces extraordinary generosity, unity, and mission commitment. He observed that many American believers tend to live primarily for their seventy or eighty years on earth. Honestly and without judgment, how much does the reality of eternity and Christ's return shape the way your group spends time, money, and energy week to week?

5. APPLICATION CHALLENGE

This week, each group member is encouraged to set aside fifteen minutes on a specific day they choose right now, before leaving this gathering, to read Matthew 24 in its entirety and write down two or three observations that feel personally relevant to their current season of life. Bring those observations back to share at the next group meeting. The goal is not to become a prophecy scholar overnight but to let the weight

of the scripture begin doing what Pastor Mirek described: pulling up tent pegs that have been driven too deep into the ground of this present life.

6. PRAYER POINTS

Pray for discernment against deception.

Pastor Mirek emphasized that Jesus' first warning in Matthew 24 was "Take heed that no one deceives you." Ask God to give each person in the group clarity of mind and a deep enough familiarity with the Word that deception, whether from culture, media, or false teaching, cannot gain a foothold.

Pray for the peace and witness of Israel.

He was clear that God's covenant with the Jewish people is inseparable from the prophetic timeline, and that support for Israel is inseparable from a biblical worldview. Pray specifically for the protection of the people of Israel, for peace in Jerusalem, and for the ongoing spread of the gospel among Jewish communities around the world.

Pray for those in the group, and in each person's circle of relationships, who are part of the falling away.

Pastor Mirek noted that the drift from faith is not a distant statistic but a reality affecting families, friendships, and congregations. Pray by name, if the group is willing, for people you love who have stepped back from genuine faith, trusting that God is not finished with them.

7. MEMORY VERSE

2 Thessalonians 2:3

"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition."

This guide was developed from the sermon "The Final Countdown" preached at this congregation. All scripture quotations are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.