

## **August 26**

### Mark 13:1-8

This is the first of three readings on Jesus' teachings about the end times, when the world as we know it will come to an end.

#### *Question to Consider:*

Some people spend a lot of time thinking about the end times, studying events, and trying to figure out when the world as we know it will end. Do you think about the end times very often? Why, or why not?

#### *Prayer:*

Almighty God, I believe that you are in control and that ultimately you will prevail. I place my hope in you and I pray for strength as I face challenging times. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

## **August 27**

### Mark 13:9-13

This is the second of three readings on Jesus' teaching about the end times. In these verses, he teaches that those who love and follow him will face persecution.

#### *Question to Consider:*

Jesus makes it clear that choosing to follow him can come at a high price. Does that impact your desire to follow and serve him?

#### *Prayer:*

Loving God, I pray that my faith remains strong, even if times get tough. Please guide and strengthen me so that I love and serve you not only when times are good, but also when challenges abound. I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

## **August 28**

### Mark 13:21-27

This is the third of three readings on Jesus' teaching about the end times. In these verses, he teaches that there will be false prophets trying to lead us away from him.

#### *Question to Consider:*

It is not difficult to find people teaching about Jesus and contradicting one another. What method, or methods, do you use to distinguish between those who are teaching the truth and those who are not?

#### *Prayer:*

All-knowing God, please help me to be discerning and to recognize when someone is speaking falsely about you. Help me to listen well, turn faithfully to your inspired word (the Bible), and continually turn to you in prayer. I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

## **August 29**

### Matthew 24:37-44

In these verses, Jesus teaches that we are to always be ready for his return.

#### *Question to Consider:*

Jesus says he could return at any time and that we should always be ready. How do *you* prepare for the return of our Savior?

#### *Prayer:*

Father God, I know that Jesus will return and that I need to be ready. Help me to be prepared, to live my life in a way that always says to Jesus, "Come, Lord." In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

## **August 30**

### Matthew 25:1-13

Jesus teaches a similar lesson in this parable, that we should always be ready for his return.

#### *Question to Consider:*

Does it seem right to you that the ones with extra oil refused to share it with those who had not brought extra? What do you believe Jesus is saying here?

#### *Prayer:*

Gracious God, my prayer today is the same as it was yesterday. I pray that I will always be prepared for the return of Jesus. In His name I pray, Amen.

## **August 31**

### Matthew 25:14-30

In this passage, Jesus uses a parable to teach about using the gifts God has given to us.

#### *Question to Consider:*

Think of the gifts that God has given to you. Can you think of at least one way that you could use one of your gifts differently to better serve God and your neighbor?

#### *Prayer:*

Loving God, I seek your guidance as I use the gifts you have given me. I pray that the day will come when I hear those precious words from you, "Well done, good and faithful servant." In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.