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Be Ready

LUKE 12:35-48

Introduction

- 1, There is a powerful truth which is repeated over and over again in the New Testament.
2. It is the fact that Jesus is coming back a second time.
3. Three hundred and eighteen times we find mention of Christ's return interspersed throughout the New Testament.
4. Jesus often spoke of His return:
 - a. In Mark 8, after telling His listeners that in order to follow Him they must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him, He then warns in verse 38, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (Mark 8:38)
 - b. In Mark 13, when Peter, James, John and Andrew asked Him about the time of the Temple's destruction, part of that discussion included these words, "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven." (Mark 13:26-27)
 - c. In the upper room, on the eve of His crucifixion, Jesus said to His disciples, "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." (John 14:3)
5. The apostle Paul wrote of Christ's return:
 - a. "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the

Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.” (Philippians 3:20–21)

b. He encouraged the Christians in Thessalonica with these words:

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18)

6. In the beginning of the book of Revelation, John writes:

“Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”” (Revelation 1:7–8)

7. Today, we come to our Lord’s teaching on His second coming here in Luke’s gospel.

- a. Two weeks ago, we looked at His warning against material greed through the parable of the Rich Fool.
- b. Last week, we examined His teaching about why we should not worry over material things.
- c. Today, in this same section of teaching, Jesus challenges us to be ready for His return.

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I. How Are We To Be Ready?

A. LIKE FAITHFUL SERVANTS (VV. 35-38)

“Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps lit. Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks.” (Luke 12:35–36)

1. We are to be like those servants who were waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast.
2. Their long robes were to be pulled up and tucked under their belts, so that they could move quickly to do whatever was needed.
3. Their lamps were to be trimmed and filled with oil so that the house would be filled with light.
4. Regardless of when he returned, whether it was . . .
 - a. “the second watch” (9 p.m. to midnight)
 - b. “the third watch “ (midnight to 3 a.m.). . . they were to be ready to immediately open the door for him when he returned from the wedding feast.
5. Their attitude was to be one of joyful expectation with an eagerness to serve.
6. This is to be our attitude as we await our Lord’s return.

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7. Jesus inserts an interesting twist in His description of the master’s return (vv. 37-38).

“Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at the table, and will come up and wait on them. Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.” (Luke 12:37-38)

8. Imagine this master joyfully serving his servants, bringing them food and filling their cups.
9. In Luke 13:29, Jesus described this marriage supper of the Lamb, “And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 13:29)
10. John also describes this great feast in Revelation 19:6-9,

“Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the

sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ ” (Revelation 19:6–9)

11. You and I will be blessed to be a part of this great feast, if we are ready.
12. Are you active today, serving Christ? Are you ready?

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B. LIKE A WATCHFUL HOMEOWNER (vv. 39-40)

“But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.” (Luke 12:39–40)

1. Jesus’ coming will be like a thief in the night.
2. The apostles did not miss this point and neither should we.

- a. Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:2-4:

“For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief” (1 Thessalonians 5:2–4)

- b. Peter in 2 Peter 3:10:

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.” (2 Peter 3:10)

- c. John in Revelation 3:3; 16:15:

“So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.” (Revelation 3:3)

“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.” (Revelation 16:15)

3. The point is that Jesus return will be unexpected, just like a thief in the night.
4. Many will be unprepared, but not the faithful.
5. They will be prepared because they have obeyed His word and are “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,” (Titus 2:13)
6. The question for each of us here today is this, “Would Jesus consider us to be prepared?”

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II. The Consequences Of Our Readiness

A. THE SERVANT WHO PREPARED FOR HIS MASTER’S COMING (vv. 42-44)

“And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.” (Luke 12:42–44, ESV)

1. Peter spoke up and asked Jesus if what He had been saying applied to the twelve only or “to everyone else as well?” (v. 41).
2. The answer which Jesus gives indicates that the parable wasn’t just addressed to the twelve but to all of us who exercise any authority over God’s people. **(Read vv. 42-44)**
3. The faithful servant of Christ chooses to honor and serve the Lord.
4. Because such a servant is faithful and conscientious in those

responsibilities assigned here in this life, that servant will be promoted to even greater responsibilities in the life to come.

5. Jesus does not tell us the nature or extent of this eternal authority, but we know from what we have already seen that it be joyful beyond measure.

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B. THE SERVANT WHO IGNORED HIS MASTER'S COMING (vv. 45-46)

“But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and put him with the unfaithful.” (Luke 12:45–46, ESV)

1. We know that not all servants are faithful and wise.
2. The servant Jesus described here thought he had plenty of time before his master returned.
3. He chose to use his power and the opportunity afforded him to his own advantage.
4. According to Jesus, he was a lazy, drunken glutton who was abusive, beating both the men and women under his charge.
5. Not only did the servant dishonor his master, but he despised the kindness and grace which his master had shown him.
6. Because of his cruelty, Jesus described a grisly end for him.
7. In 1 John 3:10, John said, “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.”

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C. PUNISHMENT WILL BE JUST (vv. 47-48A)

“And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few.” (Luke 12:47–48a)

1. Long ago as Abraham was pleading with God to spare the righteous souls in

the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, he asked this question, “Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25, NIV84)

2. Because God is just and because He does what is right, Jesus lets us know that each individual will be judged based upon his or her response to the knowledge and revelation each one has received.

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Conclusion

1. Jesus concluded His teaching with an important truth, “From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.” (Luke 12:48b)
2. You and I have been given much:
 - a. We have the Word of God at our fingertips in a translation we can read and understand.
 - b. Many of us have grown up having this Word taught and preached to us.
 - c. We have various books and publications which help us better grasp the message of Scripture.
3. Jesus is coming back, and He tells us to be ready. Are you ready?
4. Are you living your life only for today, with no thought of His return, or the judgment you will face?
5. Are you living your life thinking you have plenty of time? You may have less time than you think.
6. How can we be ready?
 - a. Obey the gospel, become a Christian by putting Christ on in baptism (Galatians 3:27).
 - b. Immerse yourself in God’s Word. Live out its precepts on a daily basis.
 - c. Share the message of salvation with those around you.
 - d. Live your life in joyful expectation of our Lord’s return.