

Be Ready!

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Preacher: Tyler Bittner

[0 : 00] Luke chapter number 12. It's good to be in the Lord's house today. I appreciate Brother Jared. Some things moved around on the singing schedule, and it kind of worked out perfectly with our message today.

You found your place there in Luke chapter number 12. You can stand for the reading of God's word if you're able to. We're going to step out of our Luke series for the next few weeks, so this will be our last time in there.

We're coming into Palm Sunday next week, and then Easter, and then after Easter, we're kind of looking at a little different view from there. And I'm excited about that, excited about Easter Sunday. Hope that you're preparing for it, inviting somebody.

Planning on being here in the Lord's house, but we're here today in our series in the Gospel of Luke. And these are some tough verses and just some truths that we're wrestling with here. And I talked to Brother Garrett about it and trying to get his opinion on it. But I'm thankful that we're going to work through it together, and the Lord has something for us, I know. So you found your place there in Luke chapter 12. We're going to begin reading in verse 35 where the Bible says this.

[1 : 00] Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. And ye yourselves liken to men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Verily I say unto you that he, the master, shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meet, and will come forth and serve them.

And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, so come in the evening or come in the middle of the night, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

And this know that if the good men of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye, verse 40, excuse me, be ye therefore ready also.

For the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not. Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us or even to all?

[2 : 06] And the Lord said unto him, Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give him their portion of meat in due season?

Blessed is the servant whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if the servant saith in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the men servants and maid servants, and to eat and drink and to be drunken, the Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

And that servant which knew the Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did not commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes, for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

Brother Jared just sang a song, at the midnight cry, we'll be going home. But that's only if you're ready. And really what Jesus is calling us to, here in Luke 12, is to be ready.

Because it's going to happen. And we're going to get into this, but people say, well, when's he coming? It's been 2,000 years. He's coming. It says it over, and over, and over.

[3 : 44] And maybe it's not like waiting to buy your tickets for the last day. Free announcement right there. We can't wait and say, oh, I have time. Here's what Jesus says.

Be ready. We don't need to get ready someday. We need to be ready today. And that's what we're going to look at here this morning. Let's ask the Lord to bless our time. Father, thank you for your word, and thank you that we can open it.

Thank you we have our own copies. That we can dig in, and we can see what you have for us. But Lord, we ask now, that as we come here as a church family, that you would just quiet our hearts, and our minds, and the busyness of life, and the world around us.

And Lord, I pray that you would just take this text, Lord, and you would use it to remind us, and really to check inventory of our life, to make sure that we're ready. Lord, when you come again, I want to be ready.

I want to see you face to face, and to know that I've done everything I can to serve you. Lord, maybe there is somebody here today, that maybe knew the songs we sang, and knows some of the verses here in the word of God, but has never made it a personal decision, for you to be their Lord and Savior.

[4 : 50] Lord, I pray that today would be that day. Lord, I pray you would be with me now. You would just guide my thoughts, and my words. You would clear my mind. Lord, we ask all this in your son's precious name. Amen.

Thank you so much for standing. You may be seated. Who checked the weather app, before you came to church this morning? A few of you did. How many check the weather app, every single day?

Some of you just, man, some of you are just living life on the edge. I mean, that's like one of the first things I do, you know, and I remember checking last week, and I thought, wait, it's going to be 20 on Monday, and it's going to be 120 on Sunday.

What is going on here? And some of you might have, somebody in the family uses a different weather app. We got competing weather apps in the family, and we're like, what weather app are you using?

I mean, one of them will say, you know, it's going to be sunny all day, and another says scattered thunderstorms. So we're not sure to wear a jacket, or to bring sunscreen. We're not really sure what's going on there, and I love weather forecasters.

[5 : 52] I wish I had their job. I mean, they're never right, and they still have a job. I mean, because when they say, it's not going to drop an ounce, I mean, we're going to get stuck in a monsoon out here, and vice versa, when there's 90% chance of rain, not a drop falls.

I think we had a week like that a couple weeks ago. They say, it's going to rain every single day. It didn't rain any days at all, and it's just kind of what it is. But it's not just the forecast, the weather forecast that we check.

There's all kinds of forecasts we check. Maybe it's the economic forecast. I try not to check that, because that's bleak. You know, it just feels like, ah, this is bad. The country's in worse shape than I'm in.

Maybe it's the future of the country, the news. I mean, we look at what's happening on the world stage, and we're trying to kind of figure out, what's going on, and how's this going to affect me, and you know, we're feeling the pinch at the pump, so to speak, and of all these things, and we're trying to say, when's this forecast going to change?

And if you read the news, or watch it long enough, you're going to hear things like this. These are unprecedented times. It's uncertain. The future is unpredictable. We think and say things like this.

[6 : 55] I've never seen it this bad. Well, come to find out, if you study history, every generation has said this very same thing. In fact, this world's not going to get better.

The Bible makes it clear, that it's going to wax worse and worse, until the day that Christ comes, and yet, in the middle of all the uncertainty, in the middle of the competing, and differing forecast, Jesus reminds us, that we have something in the world, doesn't have, and we know Him as Savior. That not only do we have a Savior, who knows the future, here's the best part, He holds the future in His hand. That nothing is going to happen, without His say so.

And when it comes to the return of Jesus Christ, I just want to remind us, before we kind of jump into the text here, that we're not dealing with some minor doctrine, found in Scripture.

This is not some side issue, that really weird people get lost in the weeds, in the book of Revelation, and write really weird books about. Because they do.

[7 : 58] I don't know if you know this, but there was a book written, 88 Reasons Why Jesus Is Coming in 1988. Anybody ever heard of that book? He didn't come in 1988. But we get all weirded

out about it, and we're so worried about all of these things, and when we think of the second coming of Christ, it's not calling us to predict it.

Nobody knows when that's going to happen. The Father knows, He's going to tell His Son, to go get the children. We know that, but the idea, every time we see the second coming is this, be ready. It's coming. I remember when, I got old enough, when my parents would go run an errand, or go to dinner, they would leave me at home. And I'd say, what time, what time do you think you're going to be home?

Not because I cared about their safety. Not because I cared about what they were doing. I just want to know, how late can I wait, to start picking up the absolute disaster, that I made?

Anybody else ever operated that way? Okay. That's how it is. But that's not how we're supposed to live as believers. That's really not how anybody's supposed to live.

[9 : 05] And the point of this is, is Jesus is addressing a crowd, and there were believers there, there were unbelievers, and the theme is the same, be ready for it. And this theme of the second coming is, in 260 chapters in the New Testament, there are over 300 references, to the second coming of Christ.

When you kind of parse it out, it's about one in every 25 verses, in the New Testament, speak of this. So the return of Christ is, it's not just a possibility, it's a certainty.

And that's how it is portrayed, and that is how it is given, in the New Testament. As we've kind of made our way, here in the Gospel of Luke, and especially chapter 12, we kind of see this natural progression.

That Jesus is teaching about, living our life, not just for the here and now. A few weeks back, we looked at a parable he gave, about the rich fool, who was living life for himself, and life was good, and the harvest was great, in fact it was so great, he had to tear his barns down, and build bigger barns, to store all of his stuff.

And it just shows us a life, that it was lived for greed, it wasn't looking for the future, it wasn't planning for anything, but the here and now. And he said, hey let's just eat, drink and be merry, because this is all life is about.

[10 : 26] And then Jesus moved in, kind of addressing the believers, that many of them, would have not had a lot of things. Their harvest year, wasn't maybe that great. And because of that, anxiousness and worry, can begin to creep in our life.

And we can think, well what if I don't have enough? I'm trying to plan, I'm trying to do this, but Lord I have all of these things, and he reminds us, how much he loves us. He reminds us that our father, he cares for the ravens, and he cares for the lilies, and he knows what we need.

So instead of worrying about, what we're going to eat, what we're going to wear, and where we're going to go, here's what we need to worry about, here's what we need to focus on, him. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.

And I'm kind of building off of those two stories, and those two truths there, he says, here's how you should live because of that. You should live with readiness.

And readiness for Christ's return, here's what it does, it's an antidote for both greed and worry. It helps us to move past those, if we think about it this way, if I know he's coming, I don't have to cling to all the things here on this earth.

[11 : 41] I don't have to build bigger barns, and rent more storage units, and if I know he's coming, I don't have to fear tomorrow. The certainty that he's coming, should buoy our hearts.

And here's the main idea, that we kind of see through this text. that being ready is not knowing, it's not about knowing when he's coming, but it's about living in such a way, that it wouldn't matter if he came today.

That if we saw Christ face to face, we could stand before him, knowing we have lived our life, in a way that is pleasing to him. As children of the Father, we are called to serve him.

So if you're taking notes here today, here's the question we can answer through this text. How do we live ready for Jesus' return? He's calling us to be ready.

He said it over and over, be ready, be ready. If he's calling us to be ready, what does it look like? And Jesus gives us some clear pictures here, of what it does. And if we're going to live ready, it's going to show up in certain ways.

[12 : 46] Number one, we're going to live a prepared life. We're going to be prepared. Look at verse number 35. Let your loins be girded, and your lights burning.

And ye yourselves liken to men that wait for their Lord when he will return from a wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.
Now sometimes when Jesus starts giving kind of these illustrations and these parables, to us we think, what is he talking about? I mean, we're talking about robes and lights and servants. But to the crowd that was gathered, to his disciples that were there, they would have understood immediately what he was saying. These were things they would have dealt with in their own everyday life. And really, the idea that he's painting right off the bat is being ready for Jesus is not some casual, relaxed way of living.

No, what he's showing us in these opening verses, it's a picture of alertness. It's a picture of intention. It's a picture of readiness. See, the idea is not just being awake.

[13:59] It's being prepared for action. Don't you love when somebody calls you in the morning and you answer it? I mean, you have to say hello like three times before you answer. You're like, hello, hello, hello.

Because you don't want to know you were maybe just kind of dozing. I'm the only person that's ever done that. And it still doesn't work out and they say, preacher, did I wake you up? Like, no.

Listen, I might be awake, but I'm not ready to do anything. Oh, no, I'm just getting up. No, I'm not. I'm just laying there. I'm just being super lazy.

I was awake. It really, the call didn't wake me up, but I wasn't ready to do anything. If it would have been something ready to go, I would have said, well, I'm going to, actually, I need to get ready. I haven't really done that.

But see, in this culture, Jesus was painting something they would have understood and he says in verse 35, let your loins be girded about. The idea was that they would wear these long robes.

[14:55] We talked about this in our study in Peter a couple weeks ago. That the men would wear long, flowy robes. They would come down to their ankles. And the thought is this. You couldn't do a whole lot of activity in that kind of garb.

That didn't lend itself to work. It didn't lend itself to action. What they would have to do is they would have to kind of pull the robe up and gird it within their belt. So they would be able to do things.

You couldn't move freely. You couldn't run. You couldn't serve effectively until you were girded. And what Jesus is showing is that's the kind of readiness that he calls us to live by.

Not this passiveness. Hey, I'm awake. I'm here. It's Sunday. I'm in church. It's not just about doing certain things in the Christian life. It's about preparing for it and being ready and being active about it.

It's about being intentional about the things of God. It's a life that is positioned to respond in a moment's notice. You ever see when they call on the, when a firefighter, they get a call?

[15:56] I mean, they can be playing cards, eating, they've been sleeping, but as soon as that call comes, I mean, they're closed. All their gear is ready to go and they jump right in. I mean, they're out of that firehouse in no time. Listen, that's the picture that Jesus says, that's how you should live.

A servant in these days, they couldn't say, well, I don't feel like serving today. That wasn't an option. That was their job. That is who they were.

You say, well, preacher, what does it look like to have our loins girded about? I think for us today, it looks kind of like making time with God a priority and not an afterthought.

Sometimes we just read our Bible when it's convenient. Sometimes we read it and we don't even know that we read it. You ever driven somewhere and thought to yourself, how did I get here?

You're like, hopefully I was awake the whole time.

But sometimes that's how we treat our relationship with God. We're kind of on cruise control. It's just kind of an everyday normal thing and we're not really pouring into it and being intentional. Maybe being ready, it's keeping short accounts with God when it comes to our sin.

[17:04] Listen, I'm thankful that I'm saved by grace. I'm thankful that all my sins are under the blood. But here's the reality that I still struggle with sin. I still deal with it on a daily basis.

I'm looking forward to a day when I don't. I'm looking forward to a day when all things are made new and all things are passed away and sin is no more. But until that day, even those that know Christ as their Savior, we need to ask for forgiveness.

Listen, when I see the Lord face to face, I don't want there to be a laundry list of things for weeks and months and years that I just said, I'll take care of that later. That's not being ready.

That's not ready to move into action. I think it just means starting each day aware that you belong to Him. You read the New Testament.

Almost every letter you read, almost every book you read, you're going to see them introduce themselves in some form or fashion of this. Paul, a servant of God. Peter, a servant of God.

[18:05] Jude, a bondservant. Listen, all of these men that wrote the Scriptures, all of those that serve God, they realize this, we're just servants. We have a master that loves us and we have given our life to serve Him.

See, what Jesus is saying, listen, you don't need to live your spiritual life just half-dressed. I mean, you're kind of ready to do something, but you're hoping nobody calls. You ever been there? You're like, I'll help them if they call, but you're praying, Lord, please don't let them call me. That's not how Jesus calls us to live. And we may, it's not that we're saying no to serving God, we're just saying right now is not a good time.

I think if we're not careful in our minds, we can say, well, I didn't say no, I just said not now. The idea is, I'll get serious about serving God when I get this taken care of and when the kids get a little bit older and when this happens and that.

No, no, here's what Jesus says, be ready right now. It's not a wait for later, I'll deal with that sin eventually. It's not that big a deal. No, it is a big deal. We're going to celebrate Easter in a few weeks and we have to celebrate that because Jesus Christ took our sin debt on the cross of Calvary.

[19:19] This sin is a big deal and we shouldn't live just in a habitual state of it. No, a life that is prepared says this, I want to be right with God today.

I mean, we understand in our other relationships, whether it's your marriage relationship, whether it's with kids, whether it's with your boss. Listen, when there's a short account and things are, you know, things are on the table, it makes that relationship a lot better.

There's not this overwhelming cloud that's following. No, we don't live, we don't wait until a crisis comes to get our life in order. I think we see it all around our world.

Listen, we don't need to wait for that. Listen, Jesus says, just be ready. Be ready. We don't want to try to find the Lord when difficulties come. No, we live in a way where nothing needs to be cleaned up if he came back right now.

That's what he tells us to keep the lights on, to keep them burning. They were waiting for the Lord to return in verse 36, like a master that went away for a wedding.

[20:27] Listen, I love weddings for cake and that's about the only thing I like. I'm thinking, how long is it going to be until the cake? You know, that's like, we should reverse it and just eat the cake first, say congratulations, and then leave.

You know, we're not there for them anyways. But when you study this culture, weddings, they didn't last like 30 minutes to an hour and had some cake. I mean, sometimes these were week-long processes.

I mean, it was a giant celebration and the whole village would be involved and sometimes if you had family in another village, you'd have to travel to it. And the thought here is these servants, their master, went to a wedding.

He doesn't know when he's coming back. You know, there's no timetable for these type of celebrations. But we find that they are ready. They're not waiting for him to come back.

They're ready for him to come back. And that's when it comes to the second coming of Christ. God does not call us to be waiting on him. He calls us to be ready for him.

[21:30] Because when the master came home, they weren't asleep. They weren't half-dressed. They weren't kind of ready. No, they were ready to open the door. So how do we live ready for Christ's return? Number one, with a prepared life.

And then number two, we live with a forward focus. With a forward focus. So these men and these servants that would have been waiting for him to come, verse 37 says, blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching.

So the master, the idea is the master returns late at night. It's been a long journey. He didn't just get in his car. He didn't have a little car that drives itself.

No, this would have been a difficult task. It would have been hard to get to. And when he comes home, the doors open immediately. This would be awesome. I'm going to teach my kids this. When I walk them, they just, yeah, I mean, how cool would that be?

You ever been somewhere where they like, they treat you real fancy? You think, man, I'm super out of place here. But that was their job. I mean, he's about to step to open the door himself and here comes the door.

[22 : 34] It's open. The lights are burning. The house is clean. The servants are ready. They are excited and they are prepared to welcome their master back. And they ask, how was your trip?

Did everything go well? Was it everything that you thought it was going to be? But then at the end of verse 37, something completely unexpected happens. The Bible says this, Verily I say unto you that he shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meet and will come forth and serve them.

So they're excited and they're ready for their master to return. But when he gets home, he says, man, it was a great trip but I want you to sit down and I'm going to cook something for us. I'm going to feed us.

I'm going to take care of us. I want you just to relax. I want you just to enjoy the blessings of being in my house, of being under my care.

And when they would have heard this, when Jesus said this, they thought, whoa, that's not how this works. I mean, I think we can understand this even in the 21st century. Masters don't serve.

[23 : 41] Servants serve. That's how it works. That's how it's pictured really in different spots of scripture. But here's what Jesus does. That he flips that entire picture on its head to show them something much deeper.

Here's what he wants them to see. Here's what he wants us to see. His heart. That's what he's showing us here. Because the master is Jesus. The one that is on a journey.

The one that is going to prepare a place for us. He's the one that is pictured here. And he loves his servants deeply. And his heart is towards them.

I mean, we saw this even when he was on this earth. You read John chapter 13 there in the upper room at the Lord's Supper. The Passover. What did Jesus do?

He gird himself. And he got on his hands and his knees. And he washed their feet. That he loves them deeply. That his heart is towards them.

[24 : 43] And I don't want us to run past this. These servants did nothing to earn this privilege. They weren't on some scale as long as you serve really good then you're going to get really good things.

No. Here's what it was. It was a blessing that was just given to them. And everything that we have in Christ. And the fact that we read those verses at the beginning of the service in John chapter 14. Because he's preparing a place for us it has nothing to do with us. But it has everything to do with him. That we have a God that loves us. That desires fellowship with us.

And these servants are not being honored because they're perfect. Here's why they're being honored. Because they were faithful. That's what God's looking for. It's required in a steward that he be found faithful.

That's what God is looking for. And the simple thought here is when we live with a forward focus the master, Jesus is going to be delighted in those that are ready for him.

[25 : 42] They were excited about it. They were looking forward to it. And it points us back to his heart in John 13. But here's the one here's the beautiful thing. One day we're going to sit at his table.

We're going to feast with him. What a day that will be. You say, what's going to be there? Well, Chick-fil-A. Texas Roadhouse Rolls.

HTO. And Blue Bell Ice Cream. With a little bit of coffee to top it off on the end. Listen, I don't know what's going to be there. But here's the beautiful thing. We're going to sit around the table with him. That he's invited us into the family. Listen, we're just servants. But he says, no, you're not just servants. You're my family. That we're heirs with Christ. That we're join heirs.

That everything that Christ is set to inherit, so are we. What a beautiful thing. I'd be excited about that. I think we should live a little bit like, you know what, I think I'm going to be ready for that.

[26 : 40] If you had some great person come and say, hey listen, I'm going to come pick you up and I'm going to drive you here. I'm going to, you're going to do all this thing where I take you on a world tour. You can eat whatever you want. Say, I don't know if I'll be ready. I'll, I'll, if it happens, it happens.

You would prepare for that. You would live with a forward focus. And see, when we begin to live this way and we, we know the Lord is our Savior and we're living not just for the here and now, it just

simply looks, we're not living for the weekend anymore.

We're not living for a paycheck. We're not living for a vacation. No, here's what we're living for, eternity. That's, that's the view that Jesus calls us to have.

It looks like choosing obedience even when it's costly. These servants, you know what it costs them? It costs them sleep. It costs them all these things. But they were willing to be obedient. And one day it's going to come to pass, listen, you think, well nobody down here seems to know that I do anything.

He does. We're not serving to be seen of men. We're serving because God has called us to. It means investing in people instead of, instead of just possessions.

[27 : 48] These servants weren't ready in the middle of the night so their neighbors could see them. Their neighbors are sleeping. No, they're ready because that's what was expected of them. That's what the master had taught them. That's what the master wanted them to do.

And when we live with this forward focus, we stop asking, what do I get out of this? And we start asking ourselves, what would please him when he returns? That's the thought that Jesus is teaching here.

So we live with a prepared life. We live with this forward focus but he doesn't stop there. Jesus reminds us this, that we need to live with a sense of urgency. You ever try to get your kids ready in a quick time?

Like, hey, we got to get out of the house. We're running late. Isn't that how it goes? We had a little kid like that when we played tee ball.

I was like, hey, when you come around third base, you got to run home as fast as you can. He's like, I'm like, all right. But listen, we need to be urgent about what God has called us to do.

[28 : 53] Verse number 39, the Bible says this, and this know that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not suffered his house to be broken through.

Be therefore ready also for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when you think not. So Jesus gives us kind of a weird picture and he starts talking about this guy breaking into the house.

And thieves these days and in this time period, they didn't, they didn't like break the door down. No, they would generally do is these, these homes would have been made of mud and different things. They would have just dug a hole in the side of your house. That's wild to me. Can you imagine just sleeping there tonight at your home and somebody just, just comes in like the Kool-Aid man just coming right through the, right through the, the wall.

Like what in the world? Now if you know that person was coming and they're like, hey, I'm going to come rob you at two o'clock, I'm going to dig a hole in your wall, you're going to be sitting on the other side of that with a shotgun. Why?

[29 : 50] Because you're prepared. If you know a thief is coming to your house, you're going to be ready. The, the, the picture is this, that there's no warning and there's no announcement. Everything's going to seem normal.

We, we even think it to ourselves and I think if we're not careful as, as believers, we, we would say, oh, I know Jesus is coming back, but we're not living with that sense of urgency. If you, if you read some of the New Testament passages about it, the Apostle Paul lived with urgency.

You think, man, how was Paul so effective? He was urgent about the master's business because Paul said this, we, which are alive and remain. Here's when Paul thought Jesus was coming, when he was alive and he lived like that and his ministry looked like that.

But the, the picture that Jesus paints here is this family's asleep, the house is quiet and all of a sudden the wall is broken through and that's how Jesus is going to come back. as Bible believers, we should believe in the imminent return of Christ.

And the language here, it carries this idea of something sudden and decisive. It's not a gradual, it's not a delayed process. There's no easing into it. When Jesus comes, it's going to be immediate, it's going to be final and there's going to be no time to prepare in that moment.

[31 : 08] Because we celebrated Christmas, the coming of Christ, the first coming. Listen, when he came the first time, he came on mission to seek and to save that which was lost. But when he comes again, that's not how he's coming.

He's coming as the king of kings. He's coming as the Lord of lords. He's coming as the judge of all the earth. That's who he is. And people say, well, we don't have time to get ready. Oh no, we have

had time to get ready.

The Lord's not slack concerning his promises. Some men count slackness, but he's willing and rather that all should come to repentance. You know why he hasn't? He hasn't come back because he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

That's the only thing that's holding him back. Everything is already in place for that. And all throughout scripture, we see this imagery that Jesus is coming and he's going to come like a thief in the night.

You know, sometimes you may get something stolen and you don't even know it was stolen. I remember when I was in high school, I heard a knock on my door and it was like 6.05 and I was not alert. I was not addressed.

[32 : 10] I was not awake. My dad's like, who's at the door? And I run down there. It's the Flower Mound Police where I grew up. And they said, we found your truck. What?

Looked out there. Sure enough, my truck was not out in the driveway anymore. They stole it. They didn't tell me they stole it. I slept like a baby that night. Get up in the morning.

They took it. I went over. They said, it's over here. I drove over there. They took my own gardening, my dad's gardening bricks and took the wheels off it and it was just sat in this lady's driveway. She's trying to get to work.

I was like, well, they would have told me. I would have just let them take it much nicer instead of ripping it all apart. That's the idea. That Jesus is not a thief, but he wants us to picture that's how quickly it's going to happen.

That's how unexpectedly it's going to happen. And here's what urgency does. It changes how you respond to things right now. He said, if you would have known somebody's coming to steal your hat, you would have stayed watch all night.

[33 : 11] You would have been ready for that. And here's what it means to us. It means that we don't delay obedience. There's a lot of things we think, well, I don't know what the Lord wants me to do. We do.

Sometimes we just don't want to do it. Right now is not a good time. It's not delayed obedience. We don't put off repentance. We don't assume that we have more time. And that's why it's so vital that whether it's in a service like this, or it's in your own Bible reading time, or even the Lord can convict us in certain different ways, don't put it off.

Just deal with it right then. Lord, would you help me? Lord, would you forgive me? It means maybe speaking to somebody about Christ when the opportunity arises. Oh, I'll talk to him next week. No, today's the day.

Now is the time. It means making things right, maybe in a relationship, instead of letting things linger. Because if we're honest, sometimes we live like we have unlimited tomorrows, but we don't. We all like to think that. We don't want to think something can happen to me today, or something can happen to my family tomorrow, but the reality is we don't know. And before we move on, and we're going to hasten to a close here in a minute, I just want to, I want us to make this personal.

[34 : 23] what if Jesus came back before this service ended? What if the trumpet sounded before we made it to lunch?

I mean, what if today was the day when Jesus came back? Would there be anything in your life you need to make right?

Maybe you need to call somebody. Maybe you need to shoot a text to them. Maybe you need to ask the Lord to forgive you. The Lord is just reminding us we need to live with urgency because we don't know that we need to be ready.

So how do we know that we're truly living and we're truly ready for it? Jesus shows us here in verses 41 through 44. He says, we need to live as faithful stewards. There in verse number 42, He says, who then is a faithful and wise steward whom the Lord shall make rule over his house to give them their portion and meet in due season?

So He shows us what a faithful servant looks like. A steward is this. A steward's a manager. A steward doesn't own anything. He's the one that's running the household.

[35 : 33] He's the one that the master has left in charge. He's been entrusted with the responsibility but really, nothing in the house belongs to Him. He has a job that He's been called to do and as stewards, we don't get to decide what we do with it.

We're just called to handle it faithfully. And Jesus wants us to see that one day the master's going to come back and He's going to ask for an account. Hey, what happened when I was gone?

What did you do when I was gone? How did you take care of this? Why didn't you do that? And we won't have time to really dig in here but here's what we are. We're just stewards.

And I want to remind you that your time and your gifts and your opportunities, they don't belong to you. They've been entrusted to you. And the Lord wants to know this.

What are you doing with it? Here's what a faithful steward does. He invested. He works. He serves. He does that. And the scripture's very clear. We don't have time to go into all that. We will give an account.

[36 : 34] If we know Him as our Savior, not for salvation but for what we did for Him. What we did with what He entrusted us to. And the question is not how much you have, it's how faithful have you been with what you've been given.

That's what the Lord wants to know. How faithful are we? Listen, faithfulness is not flashy. It's consistent. It's obedient.

It's dependable. It looks like showing up when nobody else even knows you're there. Like doing right when it's inconvenient. Like serving without recognition. And Jesus makes it clear in verses 42 and 43 and verse 44 that that's not just for the here and now.

Faithfulness is going to carry into eternity. See, faithfulness is just going to show up in everyday ordinary parts of your life. It's not just what you do in church.

It's how you live everywhere else too. It looks like being faithful at work when your boss isn't watching. Listen, I know it's March Madness. It's the least productive week of the whole thing.

[37 : 42] So me and Brother Garrett, we just watch it together so we're unproductive together. But sometimes we just think, well, the boss doesn't know I don't have to do that. That's not what a faithful steward does.

It's not how we live our life. Faithfulness just means leading your home spiritually even when it's hard. Stewards show up consistently not when it's convenient.

That's not just talking about church. That's talking about our life. It's talking about every area of our life. It means using your time wisely and your gifts to serve and using the opportunities God has given you for His purpose.

And if Jesus evaluated your life today, would He find you faithful with what He has given you? I pray that He would. But now Jesus gives us a warning and we'll look at this quickly.

Verse 45 and 46. We need to live by guarding our heart. Verse 45. But and if that servant say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming and shall begin to beat the men servants and the maid servants and to eat and drink and to be drunken.

[38 : 44] The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him and an hour when he is not aware and will cut him in sunder and will appoint his portion with the unbelievers. So what Jesus does is He contrasts a faithful servant and an unfaithful servant.

One that believes his Lord and trusts that He's going to return and prepares for it and prepares his heart for it. And now He shows us a man that says, well, He's not really coming.

Because this man didn't have an urgency and he really didn't believe that his master was going to come back at a certain time. He thought, hey, I'll get ready when I know He's coming. I'm going to live my life, but when I get wind that He's coming, then I'll change things.

But we don't know when He's coming. And this man, because he lived with this return in his distant thinking, the way he lived became all about him.

And it says He began to beat the other servants and to eat and drink and it was all about him.

Listen, this is not a lazy servant. This is an unfaithful servant.

[39 : 47] That he had the opportunity. He knew the master said, I'm coming back. But he didn't do it. This man's not having a rough season. Here's what Jesus is picturing.

This is someone who claimed to belong to the master, but his life didn't match up to it. See, his life told the story.

A changed heart produces a changed life. We can't say, I'm ready, but everything in our life doesn't look like we're ready.

Now sometimes, you know, it can look that way because we've let sin build up in our life. But sometimes it's because we don't really know and believe the master. We think that's just an old book.

They've been saying for 2,000 years, the world says, where is he? Where's the promise of his coming? He's not coming. We're just going to live. We're going to eat, drink, and be merry. But he's going to come.

[40 : 45] And what Jesus reminds us in these closing verses is that everything will be revealed when he comes. And because of that, we must make sure our life matches our profession.

because he would say, well, I'm in the house. I have all these things. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, they're going to be in that day, they're going to say, Lord, Lord, Master, Master, didn't we?

He said, depart from me. I never knew you. See, the truth will be known on that day. There will be justice. And because of that, we see in these last closing verses in verse number 48 that we need to live with eternal awareness.

Jesus kind of really lays this principle of accountability down. See, in this culture, and really in our culture, the more responsibility you have, the more that was expected of you. And the same applies to us spiritually.

That you can know all about the Bible. You can know the songs we sang today. You can know some of these verses. But here's what Jesus is saying.

[41 : 53] Have you prepared your life for that? Because we can't just live with a here and now. We need to live with this eternal awareness that it is appointed unto man once to die, the Bible says, and after this, the judgment.

That every single person will stand before the Lord one day and give an account. I'm thankful that when I stand before the Lord, my sins are under the blood. But there's going to be people there that say, well, I did all these things, but the Lord's going to remind us that you didn't prepare.

You just lived your life for yourself. You didn't do the things that I asked you to do. And it reminds us here in these verses, and we're going to, we don't have time to get into all this, but God's judgment is not random. He's not picking and choosing people to judge.

No, you're either prepared or you're not. You're either ready or you're living for yourself. And it's going to be precise. It's going to be just. It's going to be perfectly measured. And the idea is with greater knowledge, it brings greater accountability.

I mean, just bring it right here where we live. Think about how much you know about God. Many of you probably brought your own copy of the Word of God in here. The Gospel is clearly, you probably heard the Gospel clearly preached over and over and over.

[43 : 05] You have access to truth anytime you want it. We try to the best of our ability here at Central to faithfully teach and preach every single week. The short idea is this, we have been given much.

But for whosoever much is given, much is required. And see, eternal awareness takes how seriously you take your life here.

It means you recognize this, I will stand before God one day. We all will. But we need to live with that awareness. And that affects how you respond to truth.

It affects what you do with what you've been taught. It affects how seriously you take obedience. Listen, being prepared is not just hearing sermons, it's responding to them.

It's not just reading the Word of God, it's allowing it to transform your life. It's not just about knowing the truth, but actually living. It's not just about attending the church, but applying the truth to your life.

[44 : 08] That we have to realize that we're a sinner that needs saving and we call upon Christ because God's not going to ask us one day, what did you hear? He's going to ask this, what did you do with what you heard?

Because both of these men, these servants, the faithful and the unfaithful, they heard the master say I'm coming. One prepared and one didn't. That's what Jesus teaches us right here.

Here's what I want us to take home today. The goal isn't to be ready someday. The call is to live ready today.

He's coming. Are we ready? Would you stand with our heads bowed? Transcription by CastingWords Transcription by CastingWords