

A Girt Loin and a Lit Lamp

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Date: 12 April 2026

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[0:00] Luke chapter 12, verses 35 through 40. Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord!

And ye shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so blessed, are those servants.

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 have suffered his house to be broken through. Verse 40, be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when you think not.

The Son of Man, Jesus, when he comes back, it's going to be at an hour when we think not. He's telling us to be prepared in this. And I just want to speak from this thought, a girt loin and a lit lamp. Would you help me pray? Lord Jesus, I thank you for the word that you've given me. I pray, Lord, do you anoint my lips to deliver it in a way that could be understood today. God, I pray you bless the ears to hear it.

[1:23] In Jesus' name I pray, amen. Amen, you may be seated. Jesus encouraging his disciples to be prepared and to be ready for when he return for them is the context of what we just read.

Really, that should be all of our goal. All of us should have that purpose right now in this life that we're living is to be ready and to be prepared for when Jesus comes back.

In fact, the five-fold ministry that God spells out in his word, the five-fold ministry is pastors, teachers, evangelists, prophets, and apostles.

Those ministries, those are, the Bible calls them gifts from God to the church. And the whole purpose is for the ministry to edify the body.

It's the body of Christ, the people that come and call this place their church and are a part of this. It's our job to edify the body and to get us to the place through the word of God, teaching the word of God we would be ready and perfected for when God would return for his church, his bride.

[2:36] And in the context of the scriptures, you see words like a wedding and servants and being, if we wait for him. I'm not going to go into all the details of how weddings were back then, but the bridegroom would come and everyone would have to be waiting and watching to know when the wedding would start and be able to go into the wedding and celebrate with the bride and the bridegroom.

And so he's teaching us. This is about being ready and being prepared. And it's an encouragement. He's encouraging his disciples.

You've got to remember, Jesus was going to be going away for a while. And he's going to be returning. He sent his spirit back through the Holy Ghost, right, in Acts chapter 2.

But it's going to be a minute still before he comes back. We don't know the day or the hour, but we know the season. We've taught a lot about that here. And so we know that it's coming soon and we want to be ready.

And he says, let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. What does it mean to make sure your loins are girded about and to have your light burning?

[3:50] To us today, what Jesus says to his disciples, well, that large crowd watched and listened. That may seem strange to us. That's strange terminologies. But it made sense to them in that time.

And with just a little bit of studying, you can find that people in the Bible days, both men and women, they wore long robes that reached down to their ankles. And I'm thankful, right, Trevin, for modern Western influence, blue jeans and boots.

You know, it's, I'm very thankful for the modern Western influences of clothing choices that I'm not wearing a robe down to my ankles right now. How about you, Mario?

You okay with that? You okay with some jeans versus a robe? So I'm thankful for that. But these long robes were clothes of the day of that time for both men and women.

There were a clear distinction between a woman's robe and a men's robe and the way they were designed and the way they looked and things like that. But they were similar in that they were long and flowing and they were down to their ankles or feet.

[5:00] And so these robes were great for them at that time, good for their daily life, but often those robes would get in the way. They would be a hindrance in a way.

And especially if you needed to move quickly and with purpose, that, you know, you would have to figure something out because you can't really, I don't know, I've never tried it, but maybe the ladies in here have had a dress or a skirt on that long and tried running out.

It seems like it would be difficult. But to gird your loins, you would need to reach down and gather up the loose hanging part of the robe and tuck it up and pull it between your legs.

Tie it around your waist with a belt or with a sash, which back then was called a girdle. So that's when the Bible says gird up your loins, it's talking about gathering up that excess robe that's down there that would trip you up and to tie it around you so you can get ready to move quickly and do something, right?

And sorry we're getting a first century fashion lesson today. But to gird up your loins means to get ready. It means to prepare yourself to be able to move quickly.

[6:08] There are a lot of examples throughout the Scripture of girding your loins. The prophet Elijah has a showdown on Mount Carmel where God sent fire down from heaven and consumed the altar and the sacrifice, proving to all the false prophets that there was only one true God.

And 450 prophets of Baal were defeated that day. And Elijah had just prayed diligently. He prayed seven times for rain to come and in the three-and-a-half-year drought for that country, in that area of that time, and a small cloud appeared and suddenly the heaven was black with clouds and the wind came and there was a great rain on the land.

And as the heavy rain began to fall, King Ahab, you have to go back and read to understand all this. I'm not going to go into it today, but he's got his chariot with his horses and he's on his way back to the palace in Jezreel.

It's about 15 minutes, or 15 minutes, it would be 15 minutes today by car. It was 15 miles. It was 15 miles away from where they were. And you got the heavy rain and the storm there.

And what did the prophet Elijah do in 1 Kings 18 and 46? It says, And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

[7:34] So he girded up his loins. He tucked up his long robe and so he could run freely without anything slowing him down.

And it says, The hand of the Lord was on him and he ran before the king's chariot through heavy rain, 15 miles, all the way to the palace, the Bible said.

And we're not going to learn about that today, but I'm pointing out something. The hand of the Lord was on him. The Bible says it took divine strength and supernatural endurance to do that.

But first, he had to gird up his loins. If Elijah didn't gird up his loins and prepare himself for that action, then God wouldn't be able to have used him in that manner.

Beside the whole point of that whole story and what the point of that story is, don't worry about that right now. The point I'm trying to make is Elijah had to gird up his loins.

[8:30] Elijah had to prepare himself of the things that would hinder him from being able to perform what God wanted him and needed him to do. But then, even in that case, Elijah still needed a supernatural intervention.

He still needed God's hand on him to be able to have the endurance and the strength to do what God was needing him to do in that moment. But it took Elijah doing something, but then God handled the rest and it became a miracle situation.

Last week was the celebration of the Passover. Passover, obviously a very significant event in the Bible. It was also during the celebration of the Passover way back in Egypt is what it celebrated for the Passover.

And that's a whole other lesson. But it was during the celebration of the Passover that Jesus was crucified and buried and raised again. We learned about that last week. But the Passover comes from way back when God delivered his people out of slavery and out of bondage in Egypt.

And it was the night before they were to leave Egypt and be free from the chains of bondage. And God told Moses, and Moses told the people to get your shoes on, to grab your stuff and gird up your loins and get ready to leave Egypt.

[9:50] And when they did, God did his thing. And they were miraculously delivered from the bondage of Egypt. And thus shall ye eat with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and ye shall eat it in haste.

It is the Lord's Passover. They had to sacrifice a lamb for every household and spread the blood of the lamb over the doorposts of the house. And when the death angel went through Goshen that night, and that last plague that God sent to Egypt, every household of the people of God that had the blood applied to their house, to their house, the death angel passed over.

And death did not come into that house, but only into the houses that did not do that sacrifice. And that sacrificed lamb where they had spread the blood over the doorposts to protect their home and their family from the death angel that would come in that last plague, they were to eat the lamb and to eat it with haste.

And that was the celebration of the Passover because the death angel passed over those houses. And that's what they celebrate always since the ancient times when God delivered them.

And it was that celebration of the Passover when Jesus was crucified and his blood flowed on a cross. He was the lamb for our sins. Amen. Thank God for that.

[11:09] Thank God for that. Let me just get to my point about girding up your loins. It's about our posture. It's about our action. It's about preparing ourselves to be used by God for God's purpose.

If Elijah didn't gird up his loins, God wouldn't be able to put his hand upon him and he would have never been able to have the endurance to do what God wanted him to do. It's going to take endurance. It's going to take strength and endurance for us to do what God needs us to do. It's going to take strength and endurance for us to live out the rest of our lives either until we die and hopefully we die right according to scripture or he returns for us.

Amen. It's going to take strength and endurance to do that. It's going to take the hand of God in our lives but it's also going to take us girding up our loins and preparing ourselves and posturing ourselves and doing what we need to do to be able to make ourselves readily available for God to work in our lives.

Amen. If the children of Israel didn't make themselves ready and the deliverance of the Lord would have to come another day for them. I'm telling the disciples of Jesus Christ in Houston, California today, we have to gird up our loins.

[12:21] We have to position ourselves to be used by the Lord. We have to take action to prepare ourselves for the service of the Lord. Don't let there be any loose ends that is going to tangle you up in what God wants to do in your life and in your family's life.

Amen. Tie up the loose ends. Prepare yourself for the service of the Lord. 1 Peter 1 verse 13 says, Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind.

Be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is one of the clearest examples in the Bible that we have today.

Get rid of all the distractions. Get rid of all the doubts. Get rid of all the fears and anxieties. The things that would trip us up. The things that would cause us to cease. The things that would restrain us from walking in the way that God would want us to walk.

Peter says, To gird up the loins of your mind. Pull together your thoughts. Discipline your thinking. Get rid of all the mental loose ends and the things that we deal with. Tie it up and bring it into captivity.

[13:30] Amen. Tie up and bring it into captivity sinful imaginations and thoughts that would trip us up. Be mentally alert. Be focused. And be ready to run the race that God sets before us.

Amen. As disciples of Jesus Christ. Amen. Just like Elijah. Gird up your loins for the Lord will be upon you and you can run this race of life with endurance and strength and make it.

Amen. Prepare yourselves. Prepare your mind for action. And let me tell you a secret about living for God. You are in a spiritual battle every single day of your life.

When you make the decision to repent of your sins and you make the decision to repent of your old lifestyle and say, you know, I've had enough of that lifestyle.

I've had enough of the way I used to live. I'm interested in trying. That didn't really work so well for me. It was fun sometimes and I got pleasure out of some of those things but it didn't really work out

too well for me and I don't see it working out too well for the people around me either that live in that lifestyle but I want to go a different direction and you know what?

[14:38] Let me give God a try. You know, let me open this book and see what this has to say. Amen. Let me come to church and hear what the Lord has to say for my life and I'm going to try something new and that's what repentance is.

I'm walking away from an old life and I'm picking up a new life in Jesus. Amen. That's repentance but when we repent and then we're baptized in his name and that blood that was shed for our sins is applied to our life and it washes away our sins.

Amen. It covers our sins to the point that God, the holy God that we sing about today does not see the sins anymore. It just sees the covering of Jesus. It sees the blood covering of Jesus and when the time comes for judgment and for us to be judged for the things that we've done in our bodies and in our lives all God, that holy God is going to see is the covering of Jesus, the blood that Jesus shed and covered our sins.

Amen. We have to be prepared for that. Amen. And then we have to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Amen. We have to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. We have to be baptized with water and spirit and that's the secret of living for God that you're in a spiritual battle.

When you make up your mind and you decide I'm going to repent, I'm going to be baptized in Jesus' name, I'm going to seek after the gift of the Holy Ghost because it's promised to me and I want it and I need it to live the life that God wants me to live.

[16:02] Don't think for a minute that the devil is going to be okay with you trying to do that. Don't think for a minute that the devil is not going to try to attack.

See, everyone in the world they have problems just like people in the church. People in the church have problems too. The Bible says it rains on the just and the unjust. The same.

So our brothers and sisters in the world that have not come to Jesus they experience traumatic things, they experience hardships, they experience struggles and things and there's no separation from that from the people in the church except that we have God.

Amen, that's the difference is that we have a hand that we can hold on to. We have that, if we would gird up our loins and prepare ourselves, we have that supernatural hand that can be upon our lives. We're going to have to go through things.

We're going to have to go through struggles. We're going to have to, maybe, I hate cancer.

Cancer's, I don't even want to like to talk about it but we, you know, we lost a nephew when he was five years old to leukemia and this is, some of you, maybe, Mario, you went to my cousin's church there in Chowchilla.

[17:15] I don't know why this is not even in my notes but a five-year-old lost to leukemia, that was his son. He's a pastor of a church living for God, being faithful, doing everything that this Bible says but still, we have to experience the things of life.

This is, we have to remember that we were kicked out of the Garden of Eden because of disobedience to the Word of God and we're living a curse and we're not going to escape the curse, we're not going to escape the things of life but the difference is if we will prepare ourselves to allow God's hands to be upon us then we can survive anything that comes in this life and we can leave through all the mess of this world and all the curse of this world and everything that we have to deal with and all the struggles because how sin entered the world, we can leave this world with salvation and the promise of eternal life if we're faithful to the things of God.

Amen. That's the difference between the church and the people in the world is they don't have that hope. They don't have, they're going to go through all the struggles of life just like we do but at the end it's not going, there's no hope for that, for that situation.

The difference is we can go through those things with a hope at the end. Amen. That everything will be taken care of at the end. Praise God. I thank God for that. But we have to be spiritually prepared. We have to be armed spiritually because you're in a spiritual battle every day of your life and the devil doesn't want you to succeed in living for God. As soon as you start making the, Isabel, I hope I'm not embarrassing you, but Mario, you've made a decision within the last year and a half.

[18:50] Isabel, you're making a decision now. You're coming more consistently. Don't think that the devil is going to sit by and be okay with that. The devil wants your soul. The devil wants to see all of us burn in hell.

He's evil. He's the one that brought sin into this world. He tricked us into allowing sin into this world. He wants to see our families destroyed.

He wants to see marriages destroyed. He wants to see kids lost. He wants all the perversions and all the ugly, nasty things that are going on in this world because of the devil and because of sin.

And he wants us to be separated from a holy God, a God of holiness and righteousness and pureness and light. He wants us separated from that.

He's going to do everything he can. As soon as we decide, I'm going to live for God, amen, it's going to seem like life gets even harder. It's because we're going to be challenged.

[19:45] We're going to be challenged. But if we will gird up our loins and remove the things that we can and allow not to put extra hindrances on ourselves because we've got enough issues already and do what we have to do to prepare the opportunity and create the conditions that God's hand could be on our lives like it was for Elijah.

And if we do that, we'll have the endurance and the strength to last through and live for God. Amen. Amen. I'm so far away from my notes. But that's why it's important to be in church on Sunday so you can hear the word of the Lord.

It's why it's important to have your personal devotions in your private time with your family and so hear the word of the Lord. Hear it, study it, and apply it to your life. Gird up your loins.

Jesus said, let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. I think it's simple to understand today that in this world there's real light and there's real darkness.

And we know that this world needs, what the world needs is a lot more light. The world doesn't need any more darkness. There's plenty of darkness in this world.

[21:06] What the world needs is the light. And we know that. And Jesus said in John chapter 8 verse 12, then spake Jesus again unto them saying, I am the light of the world.

He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life. Amen. Jesus is the source of all spiritual light. He said, if we will follow after him, then we're not going to walk in darkness.

But we will have the light of life. Without the spiritual light of Jesus, the world is in total darkness.

The world, without the light of Jesus, the world is in sin.

Without the light of Jesus, there's confusion. There's spiritual blindness because they're in darkness. They can't see spiritually. The darkness is so thick and there's spiritual blindness all over the face of this world.

All the people that don't know Jesus, they don't have the real light and they're walking in darkness.

But when we have Jesus in us, we have the light in us and we're able to let our light shine.

[22:14] Amen. Light defeats darkness. Light brings sight. It gives us guidance. No more walking in darkness when we have the light of Jesus. Amen. And so Jesus said, He is the light of the world and if you follow Him, you will not walk in darkness but you'll have light of life.

And when you have the Holy Ghost inside of you, you have Jesus inside of you, the light inside of you and you become the light to the world around you. Amen. That's what, it's in my notes every time I open I say, we want to be the light of this city.

Amen. We want to be the light of this city. We want to be the, we want to be the, the, oh my goodness, the lighthouse house of this city that there's a light shining all around in every direction of this city and if there's anyone, anyone in darkness that, that takes their, lifts their head enough from, from all the, all the heaviness and the darkness around them and they're just able to lift their head up enough and, and to, to just look for light somewhere.

I hope that they find it here in, in us while we're here in Houston. Amen. And I believe they will if they come. Amen. Light brings sight and it gives us guidance.

And when you have the Holy Ghost inside of you, you have Jesus inside of you. In Matthew 5, 14, verse 16, 14 through 16, it says, ye are the light of the world. This is Jesus speaking.

[23:42] First he said he was the light of the world and now he's saying you are the light of the world. A city that's set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel or, or a container but on a candlestick and it giveth light unto the house.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. In order to let your light shine, you have to have the light.

And we know Jesus is the light. So here it is. This is what we need to know today. Exodus chapter 27, verse 20. In 21, Exodus chapter 27, verse 20, it says, And thou shalt command the children of

Israel that they bring the pure oil olive beaten for the light to cause the lamp to burn always. To cause the lamp to burn always. They needed pure oil in the, in the, in the, to bring that, to cause the lamp to burn always.

What is it talking about? In the tabernacle of Moses. Again, a whole other story that we don't have time to go to, but we'll teach from it one day. There's, it was, it was, God gave, after God delivered the people out of, out of Egypt from the bondage I talked about through the Passover and all that, that miraculous thing, and they went through the Red Sea, God parted the sea and they went, and then they settle somewhere and, and, and Moses goes up to the top of the mountain and God begins to speak to Moses and he gives Moses the plan of a tabernacle.

[25:17] This is going to be a church, okay, a temple, it's a tabernacle, it's a place where God's presence is going to dwell because God wants a relationship with us.

And so he gives Moses the tabernacle plan and says, build this house like this, and there are certain furniture pieces in the house and they all represent and mean something spiritual and one of those things was a golden lamp stand and it's what provided all the light for the tabernacle, the whole house of God was lit if there was light in the house of God, it was from the golden lamp stand and God told them to use pure olive oil for the light.

It wasn't a candlestick holder, it was oil inside the lamp stand and burned oil and it was to be pure olive oil for the light and to never let the light burn out.

24 hours a day, seven days a week in the house of the Lord, there was to be the light burning to keep the oil flowing in the lamp stand. And so they had to make sure the oil never ran out and the light burned always.

All through scripture, oil represents the Holy Ghost. Amen. In the New Testament, it's the Holy Ghost. Amen. And the Bible says that we are the tabernacle because now the dwelling place of God is in us.

[26:37] Amen. Amen. It's through his spirit in us. It's not in this building. When we leave here, there's, I mean, God's presence fills everywhere. But the Shekinah glory of God is meant to be inside of us.

Now, we're the living sacrifices and we're the tabernacle of God. Amen. We're vessels. The Bible says, speaks to us as vessels that hold something and it's to be his spirit.

And so they had to make sure the oil never ran out and the light burned always. All through scripture, it's the oil that represents the Holy Ghost. And the point we need to get is that we have to have the Holy Ghost. We have to be filled with his spirit.

And when we are, then we can keep the commandment to let our lights burn always. Amen. To let our lights burn always. The tragic thing in life is to have an ungirt loin, an unlit lamp.

Now is not the time to spiritually, be spiritually sloppy or spiritually unprepared. We're getting close to the end. And we have to have our loins girded about and we have to prepare and posture ourselves to let God work in our lives in miraculous ways.

[27:51] Make sure that your light is burning. Be filled with his spirit. Keep the pure oil flowing and the light of the Holy Ghost burning. Amen. If you haven't received the gift of the Holy Ghost yet, which is the spirit of Jesus inside of you, there are only two things that you have to do to receive his spirit.

One is repentance and two is you have to have faith. Repentance is a complete turning away from sin.

It's a change of mind and direction. It involves getting godly sorrow and making a decision to hate sin and to stay away from sin.

So what's sin? Anything Jesus would not be happy about. Anything that goes against the word of God. The Bible says for a man to know good and do it not, it's sin.

Second Corinthians 7:10, for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation. Without godly sorrow, you cannot really truly repent.

[29:01] You have to have godly sorrow. God hates sin. We should look at what sin's done to this world and to our lives and we should hate it too.

We should be repulsed by it. Acts 3:19 says, repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Without genuine repentance, the heart, it remains unclean. And your heart, an unclean heart resists the baptism of the Spirit.

And without truly repenting, it's impossible to receive the Holy Ghost because you have an unclean heart. And that unclean heart, it resists. It's like water to the oil.

It's going to resist that. It doesn't mix. We have to repent of our sins and sinful life and decide to live for God. So that's repentance.

[30:04] That's one part of it. The second part is faith. Believing in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Trusting in his promises. I trust in every promise in this book.

I know that the promises of eternal life is going to come. I know these promises are true. And expecting to receive what he has provided. Amen.

He's provided his spirit. Expecting to receive that. The promise, the Bible, in Acts chapter 2, verse 38, it says, Repent, be baptized, everyone in the name of Jesus Christ for the mission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and the promises unto you and unto your children and to all those that are far off as many as Lord our God shall call.

It's a promise. It's a gift and it's a promise that he wants to give us. But it takes faith and believing and expecting to receive what he has promised and provided.

You have to believe that Jesus is the light and that he wants you to have him inside of you. And he wants you to be the light. And so the Holy Ghost, it's a gift from God.

[31:14] Faith is the hand that reaches out and receives the gift. It takes faith. It takes repentance and it takes faith. Hebrews 11 and 6, but without faith it is impossible to please him.

For he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. If you repent and seek the Holy Ghost, he will reward you with the gift of the Holy Ghost. First, you have to believe that there is a God. You have to believe that Jesus is our Lord and Savior and that you have to believe that he has something to give us and you have to believe that you can have it.

And so that's faith. That's faith. It takes faith for that. Mark 11, 24 says, Therefore I say unto you that what things soever you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them and ye shall have them.

Amen. Believe when you pray. What sort of things you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them and you shall have them. When you pray for the Holy Ghost, believe that you will receive and you shall have it.

[32:25] Amen. Let's all stand. In Luke chapter 12, verse 35, again, it says, let your loins be girded about and your lights burning. A girt loin and a lit lamp.

This is the biblical description of a, to have a girt loin and a lit lamp. That's the description of a ready for heaven.

Shining disciple of Jesus Christ. Amen. Position yourselves to be used of God and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Amen. And let your light burn always.

Today, if you've never received the gift of the Holy Ghost, I urge you to, to come to an altar today and repent of all, with all your heart, have godly sorrow for the things that you've done that you know doesn't please God.

And commit to God that you're going to change your life and you're going to go a new direction. And believe, have faith that God will fill you with his light. And he will. And if you've received him before, but your lamp is burning low, then I encourage us to come and renew yourself in him.

[33:35] Renew your repentance and faith and let the oil of the Holy Ghost be poured in fresh today. Just like, just like it was, it's a type and shadow in the Old Testament of the oil in the lamp.

It had to be filled every day. It was a commandment from the Lord. Make sure the oil is filled every day and that the light burns always. Amen. Amen.

So I invite you today, if you want the Holy Ghost, you haven't received the Holy Ghost, if you've had it before and you need renewal, I invite you to come and pray today before we leave. And let's, let's repent today before we leave.