

Lesson 1: The Master's Return

Reference: **Please Read:** Luke 12:35-40

Theme: Stay awake, be ready and watching for the Lord's return at any moment

Context: Knowing the signs of the times

Introduction:

The central point of this parable is about watchfulness, being alert and ready for the Lord's Return. Living in a state of readiness, eagerly expecting His return at any moment.

Be Ready

- The word "Ready" is used 3 times in this parable and "Watch, Waiting and Watching"
- To be ready is to be active, diligent and obedient to wait for the Master's return

In ancient times, the expectation of servants was to always be on call for their master's return in order to wait on him and care for his physical needs.

- The expression, "Keep your lamps burning" reinforces the sediment of staying awake
- It's harder to fall asleep when the light is on, it helps keep us awake
- We have to be prepared at all times and in every way, so as not to be caught off guard

Luke 12:38-39

"It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night."

- The goal is to "immediately" be ready when the Lord returns, not distracted or detached
- Half in the world and half in the Kingdom of God, being lukewarm- **Revelation 3:16**
- We are to encourage one another along these lines so none of us falls behind.
 - o **Hebrews 3:13; 10:25**
- The parallel passage in Mark 13:36, "...do not let him find you sleeping."
- **Please Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8**
- The key is to keep from being distracted by the world and our own agenda- **1 John 3:3**

Revelation 16:15

"Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed."

1 Peter 4:7, "The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray."

The Blessing of Being Ready- Luke 12:37

In Bible times, the host of the house would take on the role of a servant and serve his guests personally as a gesture of honor.

- This is what the Lord will do for us if He finds us faithful to the end- **Revelation 2:26-27**
- For every disciple of Jesus Christ, we yearn to be found worthy of these beautiful words

Matthew 25:23

“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant!’ You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”

- This is a choice that each individual Christian must make
- We can’t blame other people for our lack of preparedness; decisions we must make

The Day and Hour is Unknown- Luke 12:39-40

- God the Father in His sovereignty has hidden the day and hour of when Jesus returns.
- Curious minds want to know, like the early disciples, we all want to know the timing.

Acts 1:6-7, “So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.”

- There’s wisdom on God’s part in hiding the exact return of the Lord
- We all know about human nature, how we procrastinate until the last minute for things
- If we knew exactly the timing of Jesus’ return, we may live carelessly until the last hour
- Also Satan could coordinate his plans and strategies around that timetable
- For those living in darkness, this day will take them completely by surprise
 - **Please Read: Matthew 24:36-39**

Since God has hidden the exact time of Jesus’ return, anyone who tries to put a date on it is automatically in error, not even Jesus knows when, how are we going to know before Jesus?

- Plan as though Jesus is returning in 100 years, but live like He is coming tomorrow
- We don’t know the day or the hour, but we will know when it’s imminent

Matthew 24:32-34, “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.”

Facilitator Discussion Notes:

Question: “How would you define the word ‘Hope’ and what does it mean to us?”

- Unlike worldly hope that is based on luck, chance and fate- like winning the lottery
- Bible hope is something much more powerful and absolutely certain
 - o Colossians 1:27, “...*Christ in you, the hope of glory!*”
 - o The Bible calls it an anchor for the soul- **Please Read: Hebrews 6:10-20**
 - o Bible Hope is an eager expectation based on the integrity of God’s Word

Philippians 1:20

I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Question: “What does it look like when Christians are ‘Asleep in the Light’?”

- **Please Read: Matthew 25:1-13**
- It’s all about preparedness, being ready and alert
- Avoiding the pitfalls of distractions, desire for other things, deceitfulness of materialism
 - o As Jesus stated in the parable of the sower- **Mark 4:18-19**
- We are in the world but not of the world

1 Corinthians 7:30-31

“...those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.”

Question: “What is our response to the world who mock the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?”

- **Please Read: 2 Peter 3:3-18**
- Be endued with Power from on high – receive & maintain the Spirit Baptism- **Acts 1:8**
- Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit- **Joel 2:23-24; 1 Tim. 2:1-4; James 5:7-8**
- Fulfill the great Commission: **Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20**
 - o Proclaim the good news of the Gospel in **1 Corinthians 15:1-8**
 - o In Acts 17:30, God commands all people everywhere to repent
 - o 1 Corinthians 4:20, “*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.*”

Please Pray For One Another In Closing