

# Are you Ready■

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon from Luke 12 emphasizes the importance of being ready for the return of the Lord, highlighting the need to watch, be faithful stewards, and avoid complacency or mistreatment of others. The message stresses the imminence of Christ's return, urging believers to be prepared at all times and not be caught off guard. It calls for a focus on faithfulness, wisdom, and readiness for the Master's return, emphasizing accountability and the need to be actively serving and watching for His coming.*

**Scripture:** Luke 12:35, Luke 12:42, Luke 12:45, Luke 12:47, Luke 12:40

**Topics:** "Readiness for Christ's Return", "Faithful Stewardship"

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## Description

This sermon from Luke 12 emphasizes the importance of being ready for the return of the Lord, highlighting the need to watch, be faithful stewards, and avoid complacency or mistreatment of others. The message stresses the imminence of Christ's return, urging believers to be prepared at all times and not be caught off guard. It calls for a focus on faithfulness, wisdom, and readiness for the Master's return, emphasizing accountability and the need to be actively serving and watching for His coming.

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## Transcript

of Luke 12, Luke 12 35 through 48. Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning, and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master when he will return from the wedding, and when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master when he comes will find watching.

Assuredly I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch or come in the third watch and find him so, blessed are those servants. But notice that the master of the house had known, if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Then Peter said to him, Lord, do you speak this parable only to us or to all people? And the Lord said, who then is that faithful and wise steward whom his master will make ruler over his household to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

But if that servant says in his heart, my master is delaying his coming and begins to beat the male and female servants and to eat and drink and be drunk, the master of that servant will come in a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour when he is not aware and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant who knew his master's will and did not prepare himself or do according to his will shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few.

For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required. And to whom much has been committed, to him they will ask the more. So clearly he's speaking about the second coming, about the return of the Lord, and the whole passage I suppose if you put a heading over it would be imminence.

Imminence is a big word and it means simply that something can happen at any moment. It can happen unexpectedly. There are three different words that sound the same but are spelt slightly different, just one letter different, and some people get them all messed up and confused.

I'm not going to get into a grammar lesson this morning, but imminence means that he can come at any time. Now this is the one of the many doctrines that is being undermined and being attacked at a phenomenal rate these days. There are entire books written against the idea of imminence, and I'm not going to get into the reasons for that and why that is.

There's all sorts of stuff behind it. But the majority view in evangelical Christianity today is that Jesus's return is not imminent, is not at the door. It cannot happen at any time.

They discount the idea based on all sorts of extra-biblical stuff, but you cannot deny it based on Scripture. And for those who are interested, I wrote a couple of articles a few years ago, and I can make those available to you, in which we simply went through all of the Gospels, all of Paul's letters, the book of Hebrews, the book of Revelation, John and Peter, and in every one of the New Testament books, there is this idea that Jesus is coming, is at the door, and that he is coming as a thief in the night. And we'll see that idea here in a moment.

And so in order to discount the idea that Jesus can come at any time, you have to throw out huge portions of the New Testament. It's as simple as that. There is no way you can come to that idea by simply studying the Scriptures, by simply reading the Scriptures.

Now, having given you that introduction, let's look at the passage and let's see what Jesus says. Now, the challenge with the passage is that Jesus uses a few parables in the passage. And you remember that there are problems in interpreting parables.

They are probably sometimes more difficult to interpret than prophecy is. And prophecy is difficult to interpret, because sometimes prophecy is literal, and sometimes it is figurative. The same problem applies to parables.

Sometimes the parable can be interpreted in its detail. In other words, you can break down the various components of the parable and put a meaning to it. And sometimes you cannot.

The problem is, when you try and take a parable, and the parables that Jesus uses here are not intended to be broken down. They have one message. They have one message.

And most of the parables are designed to work that way. There is a bottom line. The details cannot be interpreted, because they are simply there to lead the hearer to the bottom line.

Remember we spoke about a joke, and I know that this is a weak comparison, but it's the only way I can illustrate it. I'm not good at jokes. I can never remember jokes, and I have a weird sense of humor.

I understand that. But when you tell a joke, somebody who can tell a joke well—and I'm not talking about one-liners and, you know, stand-ups, that kind of stuff—but someone who can tell a joke well tells you a story. And sometimes it's a long story, and in the story he's building a platform for the bottom line, for the punchline, we call it.

And so he's leading you along. He's building ideas in your mind, and then he hits you with a punchline. And it's all about the punchline.

Now if you're analytical like I am, and you start going back and saying, well, what did this mean in the story? It obviously just all falls apart, because everything in the story is totally irrelevant, because it's simply there to build a crescendo, to build up to the punchline. And the parables are very much in the same vein. The detail sometimes—some of them, remember, some parables, the parable of the sower is intended to be interpreted in detail.

But most of the other parables are not intended that way, and so the details are simply there to lead you to the bottom line. And of course the bottom line in these parables is that he is coming at an unexpected time, and you need to be ready. And so unlike a joke, here Jesus gives us the punchline first.

Then, and many times he does this, then he tells us the stories. So here's the punchline, here's the bottom line, here's what it is all about. Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning, and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master.

That's the bottom line. He's now going to support this with the parable. So let's have a look at this, because this is not parable.

This is Jesus' statement, and he says, and again he's using an analogy, and that's where we have the problem. So you have the parable, and you have an analogy. The analogy is part of what he is teaching.

This is doctrine, if you will, and then the parable is also analogy, but it is not doctrine. You see the problem. So he's using the analogy here of your waist girded and your lamps burning.

Now clearly, it doesn't mean that you're not allowed to wear braces, but you must wear a belt. I mean, I can imagine some crazy people building a whole doctrine on that, because the Bible says you must have your waist girded, so you must wear a belt. That's clearly not what it's saying.

It's not saying you have to walk around with a flashlight, but he is saying what we need to do is we need to be ready. We need to be ready. When they girded their waist those days, remember that they wore these loose garments, and the garments would get in your way, if between your knees, if you were running or you're going to work hard.

You're going to do something seriously. So if you were going to do something like that, then you would gather up all of the loose stuff, and I just watched Dina come down the stairs this morning and trip on her dress. That would be what would happen.

So what do ladies do when they come down the steps? Well, they pull up their dresses. They gather up their garments. Now the men, if they wanted to do something important or serious that needed exertion, would take then the garments and they would tie it together so that they don't flap around, so they don't get in the way.

You do this when you're going to on a journey. Remember that when Israel leaves Egypt the night before, they are told to have their staffs in their hand, their canes at the ready, and to have their waists girded. In other words, be ready to move.

The same thing. And Jesus, I believe, has the same picture in mind. When they had that last Passover, he says to them, have your waist girded.

You're going to move out. Here he's saying the same thing. Have your waist girded, because you're going to move out.

Jesus is coming. And then have your lamps burning. In other words, don't go to sleep.

Don't put your light out. Now he explains that, and he says, you yourselves be like men who wait for their master. Again, this is a transition between teaching and the parable.

Be like men who wait for their master. Are we waiting? Most Christians are not waiting. They're just getting on and living their lives.

In the next few weeks we'll get to, in the book of Peter, 2 Peter chapter 3, we'll get to the section where people will be saying, where is the coming of the Lord? Everything has been the same for 2,000 years. He hasn't come. He's not coming.

And that's exactly what people are saying right now. In fact, in this last week someone left a comment on one of the videos, I don't remember which video, but left a comment saying exactly that. I had the grace not to respond and say, you've fulfilled Scripture.

But what this person said is, you've been saying he's been coming for 2,000 years, and this apparently is a Christian response. Where is he coming? No, be ready. Be like men who wait for their master when he will return from the wedding.

Here's the analogy, or the parable. When he will return from the wedding. Why the wedding? Now you see, here's where we get into trouble.

If you're going to try and interpret the details here, you're going to get into all sorts of difficulties. Because when you talk about the second coming and the wedding, you immediately think about the wedding feast of the Lamb. So he's gone to the wedding feast of the Lamb, but how can he have the wedding feast, but the servants are still waiting for him? Can you see it doesn't work? Because that's not the point.

Why does he say a wedding? Because when they went to a wedding, it would be a protracted time, and it would be an undetermined time. Sometimes it would be three days, sometimes a week, and sometimes if there was a lot of money and a lot of food and wine, it would be longer than seven days. So there was no knowing when he was going to come back.

That's the point about the wedding. It's got nothing to do with a marriage feast. Simply, he's gone, and his return is unknown.

So he will return from the wedding that when he comes and knocks, they may open to him immediately. Simply, they're ready for him. You see, now, if he arrives in the middle of the night, he's going to speak about that in a moment, what would the logical thing be to do? Oh well, you know, he hasn't come, you know, he may come tomorrow or the day after.

Let's go to bed. Let's ungird ourselves, put our pajamas on. I don't know if they had PJs those days.

Certainly turn the lamps down, because we don't want to be wasting oil, and let's go to sleep. And if he comes, he'll wake us up. But you can see that these are ready, so the moment he knocks on the door, they're there to open the door for him.

They don't have to gather their garments together. They don't have to fumble to try and get the—and I don't know how they started the lamps, they didn't have zippos or matches—but trying to get the lamps burning. No, the lamps are ready.

Their clothes are ready, and when he knocks on that door, they're there to open the door for him. That's simply what he is saying. They open to him immediately.

Blessed are those servants whom the Master, when he comes, will find watching. What are they watching for? They're watching for his return. They're watching for all sorts of stuff today.

Unfortunately, a huge percentage of Christians today are watching for the Antichrist. They're more concerned about the Antichrist than they are about Jesus. Entire books are being written about how to recognize the Antichrist.

But we don't need to recognize the Antichrist. We need to recognize Jesus. And if you know Jesus, you'll recognize the Antichrist.

You'll know the fake if you know the real thing. And so the whole idea of studying the Antichrist, and where will he come from, and is Obama the Antichrist, or is Trump the Antichrist, or is Biden the Antichrist, or is Henry Kissinger the Antichrist, and the list goes on and on and on and on. Folks, I don't care who the Antichrist is.

I care about Jesus, and I want to be ready when he comes. And when he knocks on that door—and obviously it's not, you know, when the trumpet sounds, I want to recognize that trumpet. We're so concerned about watching for all sorts of stuff, and we're not watching for Jesus.

But when he comes, we'll find them watching. Assuredly, I say to you, that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. Now here's part of the parable that cannot be interpreted.

There are preachers who do interpret this, and they say, well, when Jesus comes at the marriage feast of the Lamb—because remember that once he comes for his church, soon after, immediately after that will be the marriage feast of the Lamb, irrespective of where you put the rapture. We all agree that that's the next step. Then he will serve us.

I don't buy that. There is no other scripture that says he will serve us. And when I look at who he will be—you see, he came once as the servant.

When he comes again, he's not coming as a servant again. He's coming as the bridegroom, and he's coming as the king and as the Lord. He's not coming to serve.

He's done that. He finished his service when he ascended on high. Now, of course, he's still serving in the sense that he's ever living to make intercession for us, but there is no scripture other than this verse, which is a parable, that says that he will serve us.

Rather, what should happen and what will happen is we will serve him. We will bow before him in worship and adoration. Folks, heaven is not about us.

It's about him. It's not about our enjoyment. It's about his being glorified and being worshipped forever.

Yes, we're the beneficiaries of heaven. We enjoy the blessings of being in his presence and not having sickness and death and all of those wonderful things, but he is the focus of everything, not the church. And so, what does this verse mean then? He's simply saying that when he comes and we are ready, he will be happy.

He will be pleased with those who are ready and waiting for his return. And I believe that in telling this part of the parable, this is simply a way of saying that he will be so happy, because it's unrealistic, folks. Remember that the servants he's talking about here are slaves.

Do you really think that a master is going to come and then he's going to sit his slaves down and he's going to feed them? Well, I suppose that would happen in a rare occasion. I don't think that that's the point. The point is he's simply saying that if we are ready when he comes, he will be happy.

He will be pleased, and he will pour his blessings on us. This is not about eating and drinking. This is about his approval.

Well done, good and faithful servant. And so he expresses his approval in the parable by serving them. Jesus will express his approval of us in a different way.

And if he should come in a second watch or come in a third watch and find him so, blessed are those servants. So the second watch is from 10 o'clock till 2 in the morning. Three watches are four hours, beginning at 6, ending at 6. Remember the day begins and ends at 6. So the first watch is from 6 to 10, second watch from 10 to 2, and the third and last watch is from 2 to 6 in the morning.

That was the Jewish division of time. Romans divided into four watches of three hours. But Jesus is speaking in a Jewish context.

So the second watch is after 10. Now for us today, after 10 is no big deal. All of us except Henry are still watching television at 10.

Some are fast asleep by 10. Many of us are still awake at 10. But those days when the sun goes down, you've got a little bit of oil and a little bit of a light.

You can't do very much. And so pretty soon after the sun has gone down, you go to bed and you get up when the sun comes up. We live a unnatural life in that sense.

But so by 10 o'clock these guys are fast asleep. And certainly in the third watch, which is after 2 in the morning, none of us are still or should be awake still at that time of the morning. And so he is saying, is it

realistic for him to arrive at that time? Remember they have to walk in the dark.

They don't have cars with lights. They don't have public transport. They have to walk.

And it's very unlikely that anyone would go on a journey in the middle of the night. There's robbers and there's all sorts of other perils. And so they would generally plan their trip to leave when it's light and to get to their destination when it's light.

So it's unrealistic to expect him to come in the middle of the night. But he may come in the middle of the night, and that's exactly the point of the parable. So he comes at a time that we don't expect.

You see, here's the thing. We look at it and we say, well no, he can't come today because of signs, political stuff going on. Oh no, he can't come because we haven't had the mark of the beast.

He hasn't come because of this sign, or because of that sign, and the list goes on and on and on. The point is he comes when we don't expect. And so know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

This has got nothing to do with the previous parable about the master returning. He's now on another page. Again, a simple statement.

If you knew when someone was going to break into your house, what would you do? You would be sitting there waiting for him with a baseball bat. But I don't know if you've ever been burgled. We did.

We've been burgled. We didn't get a notice saying we're going to burgle your house at such-and-such a time. The thief comes at a time you don't expect.

Now again, here's the problem with the parable. Jesus is not a thief. We associate a thief with something that is bad and negative, you know, criminal or sinful.

Obviously it is that. That's not the point. The point is that the thief strikes when you don't expect him, and Jesus is going to come at a time you don't expect him.

And so if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, here's the bottom line. This is where he began.

This is where he's going to conclude this section. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. At an hour you do not expect.

We've spoken before about those who get into prophecy updates, and it's probably one of my many pet peeves these days. Christians flock to these sites by the thousands and thousands to hear the latest prophecy update, and a whole bunch of them bring out weekly prophecy updates, and they read the newspapers and watch the news, and then, oh you see here's a sign. You're wasting your time, because he's going to come when you don't expect it.

You cannot calculate. You cannot work out when he's going to come. We'll see next week, he says, well you know, you read the weather, you look at the sky, and you say, well you know, it's going to be a windy day tomorrow, it's going to be a hot day tomorrow, and I'll deal with that when we get there.

But even with the best weather forecasters, and the best computers and models, they only guess. They only have a rough idea. And we can have a rough idea, and my rough idea is that Jesus is coming is at the door.

It's very, very soon. But you're wasting your time to try and calculate the day or the hour, because Jesus said, don't do that. And I know people get around that, and they say, well we're not working out the day or the hour, we're just working out the month or the year.

Well obviously that's not the point he's making, is you can't calculate it. And so we're wasting our time trying to calculate it. The point is to be ready.

And I think that many Christians are so involved in trying to calculate and read the signs, that they are not ready. They've got all the knowledge, and they can they can they can interpret all of the political signs, and all the movements in the Middle East, and all the movements in Washington, and work it all out. But they themselves are not ready.

I think we've all been in a situation where you had to be ready for something, to catch a train or a plane, or be somewhere, and you make all the calculations. And I think I bored you before with, when I fly, spend hours calculating the exact time it's going to take me to get to the flyaway, and from the flyaway to LAX, and from there through TSA, and all of that. I think it was two, three years ago, I went on a trip to Australia, and I did all the calculations.

We did all the packing, and it's got the lists of every detail that has to go with. We got everything worked out. And I eventually get on the bus, and I'm sitting at the bus, looking out the window.

I never shaved. You see, I did all the calculations, but I wasn't ready. You say, well, it's no big deal not being shaved.

Well, it's a 16-hour flight, 24 hours or more before the time I get to my destination, and I already haven't shaven for 24 hours, so I'm not going to look very good when they pick me up on the other side, and look good anyhow, but never mind. You see, you can do the calculations and still not be ready. And the point is not—he doesn't say do the calculations.

He's not saying read the signs. He's saying be ready. And so here's the point of imminence, is that it doesn't matter how long it takes to happen, it still is imminent.

It is still at hand. And we know about the next big one here in LA. For those who are watching from afar, what we mean by the big one is the next big earthquake.

Was it imminent six years ago? Could the next big earthquake have happened six years ago? Did you need to be ready six years ago with an earthquake kit, which none of us have, or very few. Yes, it could have happened six years ago. It could have happened five years ago.

It could have happened three years ago. It could have happened last night, and it can happen tonight. And the fact that it hasn't happened since—when was the last one, 94? Or was it 74? 94.

So since it hasn't happened since 94, does that mean it's not going to happen tomorrow? No. It's at the door. It can happen at every— any moment.

Can it happen? Can the next big earthquake happen before we leave this chapel this morning? Yes, it can. But you see, here's the problem. Not one of us believe it.

Not one of us believe it. We know it to be true, but we don't believe it. And I'm not going to embarrass you again by asking to tell me who has recently checked their earthquake survival kit.

How many have flashlights next to their beds? How many have an exit plan to get out of their house? Folks, we just don't believe it, even though we know it's true. And it's the same with the return of the Lord. We may know it's true, but we don't believe it, because we're not ready.

Because we're not ready. Notice that the second verse, I think, we dealt with. He says that when He knocks, they open immediately.

It's not, well, hold on, Master. We just need to sweep quickly, and we just need to fix the furniture a little bit, and oh, sorry, we forgot to feed the animals. We're just going to feed—just hold on.

No, when He knocks, you need to be at that door. And so many Christians are saying, well, when He comes, well, somehow I'll get time to fix the things I need to fix. There's going to be no time.

It's going to be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Be ready. Be ready, for the sun is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Then Peter said to Him, Lord, do you speak this parable only to us or to all people? So, again, does Peter get the message? No. Peter's more concerned, well, Lord, what about—this is not just—you remember when Jesus meets Peter at the lake in John chapter 21, after the resurrection, and Jesus questions Peter about his love. And Peter then says, and Jesus makes a prediction about the end of Peter's life, and then Peter's immediate response is, what about John? Same thing's happening here.

Lord, who's this for? Jesus is speaking to them. Folks, this morning He is speaking to you. He's speaking to each one of us.

But our concern is for those who are not here. We say, well, it's a pity so-and-so isn't here, because this message would be just for them. Lord, is this for us? Is this for everyone? And Jesus tells another one.

Lord said, who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his master—now remember, while this looks similar to the previous parables, this is again a totally different story. It has no connection to the others except the bottom line. Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his master will make ruler over his household to give them their portion of food in due season? So Peter's question is, who is this for? Obviously it applies to every single one of us, but Jesus is now going to specifically address leaders.

Now this doesn't mean that it doesn't apply to you if you're not in an official leadership capacity. If you're a mother today and it's Mother's Day, then you are a leader in your home. If you are a father, you're a leader in your home.

And He has given us areas of responsibility. Some have areas of responsibility in the church, and some have areas of responsibility in their homes. And so we are stewards.

Very important concept. The modern word trustee. He has given things into our hand to take care of, but we are not the owners, we are the stewards, the trustees.

A trustee does not own the trust, or the land, or whatever there's been in his trust. He simply takes care of it. And so he has given certain things into our trust, which means that the time will come when he will say, what did you do with what I've given you? He will make him, so the wise servant whom his master will make ruler over his household to give them their portion of food in due season.

So he has a job. A part of his job is to feed his fellow servants. Blessed is that servant when his master will find so doing when he comes.

Now is there a connection between this and the previous parable? Yes there is, because the previous parable said, watch. Now what many Christians, or some Christians, not many, but what some Christians understand by that is, I need to sell everything and buy a trailer and go live out there in the desert, and I'm watching for the Lord to come. There are Christians that have sold everything and gone and lived in a commune because they're waiting for the Lord.

They're watching for his return. Now the second parable is the other side of the coin, and the second part of the parable says that blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Doing what? What the master has entrusted to them to do.

Elsewhere Jesus says, occupy until I come. Keep busy. Keep doing what you need to be doing.

So we can't just say, well, you know, I'm gonna just watch and wait for the Lord to return. No, he's given us a job, and part of our job is to preach the gospel. Part of our job is to feed one another, and we need to keep doing that until he comes.

Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you, that he will make him ruler over all that he has. So again, we've got to be careful, because it's a parable.

How do we interpret this? Now if you're going to interpret this literally, and I'm sorry about the the hermeneutics lesson, the interpretation lesson, but it's important. If you're going to interpret this literally, well, if you are a faithful servant, just look at the verse, he will make you ruler over all that he has. Now if the person next to you is a faithful servant, what's he going to make him ruler of? You see, if one gets all, then what do the rest get to? So the point is not that he's going to make him a ruler over everything.

The point is not even about being a ruler. He's going to reward him. That's all we can say, and if we look at all of the New Testament teachings, we don't know exactly what that reward is going to look like, and people have interpreted all sorts of things about bigger crowns, and more stars in their crowns, and bigger mansions, and a better seat at the marriage feast of the Lamb, and you can guess those things.

You can imagine whatever you like, but I don't believe you can form any kind of teaching as saying, well, you know, if you've done this, you'll get that. The point is he will reward faithfulness. He will reward faithfulness.

That's all this verse is saying, and if we are faithful and we are ready when he comes, he will reward us. And the same problem with the latter part of the parable. But if the servant says in his heart, my master is delaying his coming, and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, the master of that servant will come in a day when he is not looking for him.

See again, emphasizing the same thing, in a day he's not looking for him, and now when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. There's a very real sense in which

this is happening today. Christians are beating one another up, and remember the studies in the book of Peter.

It's amazing the parallels between Peter and this passage. The Lord delays his coming, and so we begin to turn on one another. I believe that this part of the parable is literal, because we have other scripture that tells us that this is going to be happening.

Matthew chapter 24 and 2nd Peter chapter 2. Christians turning on one another, beating their fellow servants, beating the male and female servants, and eating and drinking and being drunk. And Matthew says, with the unbelievers. Now the point here is they're living carelessly.

We find the same idea in Noah. They ate, married, gave in marriage, until the day that the ark was closed. They just carried on their lives.

I'm not sure that this is specifically a statement about drunkenness. It's a statement about being obsessed with this life, and not watching for the master's return. And that's exactly where we find ourselves today.

The master of that servant will come in a day when he's not looking for him. Now as much as there will be reward for those who are ready, there is judgment on those who are not ready. And I'm not going to analyze it again, because of the problems of a parable.

But I believe that the last word is important in this verse. He will appoint his portion with the unbelievers. What portion do the unbelievers get at the Lord's return? Hellfire.

Judgment. So I do believe that based on what Jesus is saying, is if you're not ready when he comes, and instead of being ready, you are beating up on your fellow servants, and you are becoming entangled with the stuff of this life. Remember Peter? We dealt with that this last week.

He will cut him in two, and appoint him a portion with the unbelievers. And that servant who knew his master's will, here's another level, and did not prepare himself, or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. Again, I'm not going to get into trying to interpret what he means by this, because again, it's the bottom line that's important.

So let's move on to the next verse, and put the two together. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. Didn't we see this on Thursday night again? Exactly the same idea.

The one who acts out of ignorance is going to be judged. He's not excused. Folks, this idea that ignorance is an excuse, is nonsense.

It doesn't work in a court of law. You kill another man, and they hold you up in court, and you say, well I didn't know. I didn't know it was against the law.

It's not an excuse. And there is no excuse before God. But the point is that the one who acted out of ignorance will be judged.

The one who acted knowingly will be judged even more. So this is not a matter of saying, well you get a free pass if you don't know. And there are many Christians, and many people who live in that mistaken idea.

Well, I don't want to go to church. I don't want to read the Bible, because if I know I'll become accountable. You're still accountable.

Romans is very clear. No one has an excuse. Everybody knows.

It's sufficient to be accountable. But clearly what I believe the parable is teaching us is that there are degrees of judgment. There are other scriptures that teach exactly the same idea.

What does that mean? Are there hotter areas in hell than others? I don't know. But I don't believe that this teaches purgatory. That some have a thousand-year sentence, and the others have two thousand-year sentence.

I don't believe that because the fire is eternal. What does it mean? It simply means that all are accountable. And if you acted in ignorance, you will still be judged.

Remember, it will be more tolerable. We've seen this in Luke chapter 11. We've seen this in Peter, the same idea.

It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than the cities in which Jesus preached. Does that mean that Sodom and Gomorrah get a free pass? No. They will be judged.

They already have been judged, and they will continue to be judged in the judgment. But the cities in which Jesus preached will be judged even harsher, because they heard and saw the Messiah. And so be beaten with fear in the middle of the verse, for everyone to whom much is given from him much will be required, and to whom much has been committed to him they will ask the more.

I think there's one more. That's the last verse. Here's the bottom line of this verse, and here's where it becomes very personal.

Every single member of this church, every single person who's been watching these videos, much will be required. There is no one in this congregation who can claim ignorance, say I didn't know. I didn't know what God expected of me.

I didn't know to be ready, because you've been warned. We have taught these things for 18 years. Are you ready? Let me get back to the earthquake kit.

I'm sorry it's a stupid illustration, but it just is so real. Are you ready? Have you settled your affairs? Are there people you need to ask forgiveness of? Are there sins you need to repent of? Are there people that yet need to hear the gospel that God has laid on your heart to speak to them about the gospel of Jesus? Are there changes that you need to make in your life in order to be ready? Make those changes today. Hebrews 3 and 4 says today is the day of salvation, and if he comes tonight, will you be ready? And so again, we can make all of this academic, and I know that we get a little technical in some of these messages, but I want us to get down to the to the bottom line now as we close, and the question is simply, are you ready right now? Are there issues you still need to resolve? Then you resolve them now.

I'm not going to make an altar call. You know I don't do that, but if you have to stay behind in your seat and fix things with God, fix them now. If there are things you have to sort out with your husband or your wife, with your children, with another brother or sister, fix them today.

We have no guarantee of tomorrow. He comes at a time we do not expect, and I'm not trying to threaten anyone into getting their lives sorted out. This is not what this is about, but it's just the reality that he comes at a time that we don't expect, and I don't know how many Christians are ready.

I don't know how many of those who are here this morning are ready. We need to be ready, because he comes when we least expect him. Father, we thank you for your Word.

We thank you, Lord, that you've not left us ignorant, that you've given us clear understanding and warning of the fact that your coming is at the door. Lord, it doesn't matter if you haven't come for 2,000 years, because your coming is still close. It is still imminent, and it is still at a time we don't expect.

Lord, the very idea that it's at a time we don't expect is hard for us to understand, because some of us, Lord, feel, well, we just don't feel he's coming. Many of us, Lord, just push the idea from our minds, because we know we're not ready. Lord, we pray that you would help us to be those who have our loins girt, our lamps burning, ready and waiting for the knock of the Master, longing, not just waiting, but longing to see him, to be in his presence.

Lord, we can preach, but you alone can send your Spirit to convict hearts, and you alone can empower us to make the changes we need to make. And so, Lord, I pray that you would help us, Lord, that this message and this time we spent, this hour we spent in this place, would not be a waste of time, but Lord, that it would work towards hearing those words, well done, good, and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord.

So, Lord, we pray that you'd help us, help us to understand, but above all, Lord, help us to believe, because we say we believe and we don't. Help us, Lord, to act on what we know and what we believe. I ask this in Jesus' name.

I pray that you'd go with us now, keep us, protect us, bring us together again safely on Thursday, we pray in Jesus' name.

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