

# Being Ready at All Times

by Erlo Stegen

---

*The sermon calls believers to live in constant readiness for the imminent return of Christ, emphasizing the need for vigilance and repentance.*

**Duration:** 48:09

**Scripture:** Matthew 24:36-37

**Topics:** "Evangelism"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being prepared for the return of Jesus Christ. She uses the analogy of a locked door to illustrate that once God closes the opportunity to make things right, there will be no more chances. The preacher highlights that the return of Jesus will happen suddenly and unexpectedly, comparing it to the twinkling of an eye. She urges the listeners to be ready at all times, as no one knows the exact hour of his return. The sermon also warns about the consequences of being left behind when Jesus comes, emphasizing the need to live a righteous life and be in a state of repentance.

---

## Transcript

It's about the coming of the Lord. And I'm so glad that I can speak about it today. When the Lord blessed His disciples, He lifted up His hands, and while He was blessing them, He was lifted up to heaven.

That in itself is a message, but we don't have time for that. And the disciples watched Him as He was lifted up into heaven and disappeared in the clouds. And two men appeared to them and said, Why do you stand here lifting up your eyes to heaven? This Jesus who has been taken from you, as He has been lifted up, He will return in the clouds one day.

And the second coming of the Lord was something very important to the early church, to the Christians at that time, and to the disciples. In fact, the disciples spoke much about the second coming, even more about His second coming than about His first coming to this earth. Many, many times more about the second coming than His first coming.

To them it was something wonderful, it was a topic on their lips all the time, every day they spoke about His coming. In fact, they didn't even expect that they would die before He would return. They were actually surprised and shocked when some among them started dying before the Lord had returned.

And then the servant of the Lord, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote to them and said, I don't want you to be confused about those who have fallen asleep. Because they were truly confused, because they had really believed that the Lord would return before any of them would die. And they couldn't understand how some of them could have died and He had not returned.

Jesus Himself, before He was crucified, told them about His coming again. Let's now read in Matthew chapter 24, verse 36. But of that day and hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark. And they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away.

So shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there will be two men in the field, one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill, one will be taken, one will be left.

Therefore watch, be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason, you be ready too, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

And then 1 Corinthians 15 verse 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed.

Philippians 3 verse 12 or 11 In order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Stop reading there.

Jesus says He will return, but no one knows the time. No one knows the time of His return. No angel knows it.

Even Jesus Himself does not know it. Only the Father. And many people have their theories and even some Christians they say that Jesus will come at the end of the world.

But Jesus says don't be deceived, no one knows that time or hour. And Jesus in Matthew 24 you can read for yourself, He says there will be people who will come and false prophets will say Jesus has come again or He is there at a certain place, don't be deceived He said. And He said and warned how evil times would come and the love of many would grow cold.

And He said to them, don't be deceived, don't be deceived. Just like the brother from the Eastern Cape spoke earlier on, he came here, met with the Lord and his heart burned for the Lord. But then he said slowly other things crept in, the devil came, that love grew cold and he started doing the wrong things.

Eventually where did he end up? Out there with the neighbors, boozing there and with girls, with a prostitute because that's what a girl that lives such a life is. He said to them, don't be deceived, don't be deceived. He said to them, don't be deceived, don't be deceived.

deceived, don't be deceived, don't be deceived, don't be deceived, don't be deceived.

But he came and he apologized, he made it right and that's why he's still here today. If he would have persisted in his sin and not brought it to light and confessed it, he wouldn't have been here anymore. And he came, apologized, even prayed together and asked the Lord to forgive him too.

So you see, this is a good example of someone who makes right his sin, he is forgiven for it, but the person who persists in his sin and doesn't make it right, he must know that he will have to leave, he cannot stay here. He said to them, don't be deceived, don't be deceived. And Jesus said it will be like in the days of Noah, where people will be getting on with their lives, they will be marrying and given in marriage and going along as if nothing is going to happen and suddenly the flood came.

And that one asks oneself, but didn't they see that great wonder that took place when all the different animals, the monkeys, the lions, and all the different animals went into the ark. One can't imagine how such a thing could have gone unnoticed. But history repeats itself.

Like Dr. Lutuli recently, when she was shown around here and she saw what was happening here, she said, I can't believe this, I never knew such a thing was happening in Africa and was possible. And I said, well, it's amazing, you're just from close by here at Belito and you don't know what's going on. And so it was in the time of Jesus as well, when he was born, the people close by in Jerusalem, they didn't know about it.

The people from far away, the wise men, they knew about it. And so it can be that people are blinded to the fact. They don't see what is really going on.

And that time as well, they probably saw the boat, the ark being built, and they just saw, oh, here's something being built. They didn't realize what was really going on. That big construction didn't impress them or touch them.

They just said, oh, that man is busy doing his own thing. They were busy with their own politics. And at that time, all manner of lust and defilement was around.

It was a terrible time. They did all sorts of perverted sexual things. Like the internet today, it's a cursed, a damned thing concerning sex.

Many a Christian falls. Many a Christian falls. And sometimes they come here into this building, looking at those damned things.

Things of hell. And you'll defile yourselves and your wives even with those things that you pick up there. And you will defile even your children with those things.

So as it was in the days of Noah, so it is today. And that's why we expect the second coming of the Lord is imminent. Jesus said, in that time there will be earthquakes, there will be famine, and many diseases, and all those things are happening today.

It's possibly only one thing that's outstanding, and that is that the gospel is preached to the uttermost people. To the uttermost parts of the earth. Even though today the gospel is preached via radio, and that is broadcast across the world, but maybe it still needs a more in-depth working in those areas.

Because Jesus said, before he comes again, the gospel needs to be preached all over. They say every time Moody preached a sermon, before he preached he'd tell himself, I've got to preach in such a way, because it could be that before I end this sermon, Jesus will come again. Do you see that this was something that was burning in his heart? That's what he told himself daily.

Is that the life you live? That you live in such a way knowing that he could come at any time before the sun sets today? So the early Christians, they were expecting the Lord at any time, and even when some of them fell ill, seriously ill, they thought, well, they obviously won't die before he does come. And so it was confusing for them when some started dying. How will it then be when the trumpet sounds? They say two will be in the field, and it says that one will be taken, the other one will be left behind.

Two will be grinding at the mill, one will be taken, the other will be left behind. I don't even know whether it could be a married couple, this, and one will be taken, the other left behind. When she was on her deathbed in hospital, she asked for someone to come to see her, and when that person from here got to see her, she couldn't speak anymore, she just could say one word over and over again.

God had locked the door. She was unconscious. I don't even know whether it could be a married couple, this, and one will be left behind.

I don't even know whether it could be a married couple, this, and one will be left behind. Woe to you when God gives you an opportunity to make things right, and you don't make use of it, because the day comes when He locks the door, when you can do nothing about it anymore. You can do nothing when He's locked the door.

So two will be in the field, or two will be at the mill together, and then the trumpet will sound, one will be taken, and the other will be left behind. And then in Corinthians we read that this will happen in the twinkling of an eye. It won't be like when he was taken up slowly into heaven.

No, this will happen in a twinkling of an eye, when suddenly you will notice that the person that was with you before is no longer there. So it won't be like when you're working with someone and suddenly he drops down dead, just all of a sudden without warning. No, this is something different.

This is when the Lord comes again, when the trumpet sounds, the one will be snatched away, and he will no longer be there. So that person will be snatched up, but because flesh and blood can't inherit the kingdom of heaven, that person is changed in a moment. And then in Philippians Paul writes, he says, he also would like to attain to the resurrection of the dead.

What does it say in English? Philippians 3 verse 11. What translation have you got? In order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Oh yes.

That's not what the Greek says. If you read the Amplified Bible, they've translated according to the Greek. To the resurrection, not only of the dead, all the dead that will rise.

The resurrection out of the dead. Many will remain dead. Out of the dead, some will rise.

Just as those two, the one stays, the other, in the twinkling of an eye, will meet the Lord. The resurrection out of the dead. The rest will remain dead.

Only those that are ready and have been ready will rise. The others stay in the graves. Their time will come.

But first of all, the Church of Christ, the Bride of Christ, in the twinkling of an eye, will be caught up and meet with all the saints. And their bodies in the graves will rise. And then their souls will be together, united again with their bodies.

And He'll come with all the saints. Those that have gone before. Those that have gone before.

Those that have gone before. And then we will be caught up to be with them at that great wedding feast. And Paul didn't take it for granted.

So Paul didn't just take it for granted as he says in Philippians 3. And as he says in verse 10 or verse 3 of chapter 3, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings being conformed to His death, in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. In order. He put everything into it.

He didn't say, I take it for granted I'll be there. No, he says, I want to be like Jesus. I want to be ready.

I want to be prepared. He said that when He comes, even if I'm dead, that I'll... And he says, not that I've already been perfected. Some don't understand that.

And they say, but how can you say you are perfect already or perfected when Paul himself said he hadn't attained to it. Paul there was referring to the resurrection of the dead. That's what he was referring to, that he hadn't attained to that yet, but he was striving to attain to it.

That's why he couldn't say, I'm already perfect. But if you carry on, he says, all of us that are perfect, let's be like minded. But in this instance, he was speaking about the resurrection out of the dead ones.

He was speaking about the resurrection out of the dead ones. He was speaking about the resurrection out of the dead ones. Verse 44, for you do not know the day or hour when the Lord will return.

For this reason, you be ready. You do not know the hour or the time. But But be prepared all the time, because you don't know when he'll come.

You could be ready, but then you slip out here to the neighbors to do your wrong thing. And then he comes at that moment and you are found unprepared. Or you are ready and suddenly you get angry and annoyed with your wife.

You speak horribly to her. And at that moment he comes and you're not prepared. For this reason, you be ready too, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think he will.

No one knows when he will come, but what we do know is that he'll come at a time when you don't expect it. Therefore, be prepared, because you do not know when he'll come. He'll come unexpectedly.

And when he comes, it'll be so sudden. There won't be time to then suddenly run and say, well, now I want to confess my sin. I want to make right my life.

There will be no time for that. Make right your life and be prepared all the time. If you stay behind when the Lord comes, when the trumpet sounds and the Lord fetches his own, if you stay behind there, it'll be a time

when the devil will be let loose and you will have a terrible time if you get left behind.

We don't have time to talk about that. Today is a time where the Bride of Christ and the Church of Christ are still here on earth. The Holy Spirit is still at work.

But when the saints have been snatched up, taken to glory, you can imagine what it will be like. Everyone else who wasn't prepared and who is living in sin will be left behind and you'll be left with those. So redeem the time.

The Lord is coming soon. At the sound of the trumpet, the saints will meet him. Make sure that when that day comes, when that hour comes, that you are found to be in the ark.

Get into the ark now because when those floods come and you're not in the ark, there's no hope for you. In those days, even the animals had more brains than we do today. They had more brains than the human beings, even though they thought themselves wise.

So make sure that you are in the ark when Jesus comes. The animals, even the pig went in, but the human being outside. Woe to you if Christ returns and you're not in the ark.

You're not in Christ. It will be like a big magnet. You know when you bring a magnet close to other pieces of metal, also magnets, they are drawn to each other.

So the Lord in that day will draw those unto himself who are in him and are like him. Because of time, we won't ask the choir to sing anymore. We will just pray and then we can go home and think about that, what we've heard, that we can digest it and chew the cud.

Lord, by your Holy Spirit, make alive your word in our hearts. We've heard the words that you yourself spoke, coming out of your mouth, saying, be prepared, be alert, watchful, for you know not the hour when I will return. We see things happening here on earth.

If we look at the signs, your coming must be very soon. But you also say that it will be at a time that we do not expect. Now we wonder, Lord, when that unexpected time comes, when it comes, what it will find us busy with.

Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7615.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/erlo-stegen/being-ready-at-all-times/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**