

“Prepared for Christ’s Return?!”

Luke 12:35-40

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- Recurring nightmare of unpreparedness
- Jesus postponement of kingdom and interim period between comings

Prepared for Christ’s Return?!

A. The PROMISE of Christ’s Return

1. Guaranteed by Jesus to the disciples

- John 14:1-3-- *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”*

2. Reinforced by the angels at His ascension

- Acts 1:11-- *“Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*

3. Reiterated by Paul to a doubting congregation

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17-- *“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say be the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*

4. Jesus concern: Are you ready? Prepared for His coming?

B. The PARABLES

- Luke 12:35-40-- *“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, that 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 them so, blessed are those servants. But 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. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*

1. General Expectation: Readiness

2. Specific Preparedness

a. It is important to be PROPERLY DRESSED for service!

- Luke 12:35a-- *“Let your waist be girded”*

- 1) *“loins girded”*—perfect imperative implies constant state of readiness.

2) **Custom of “girding up the loins”**

3) **Dressed in the “whole armor of God”**

- Ephesians 6:13-17-- *“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”*
- 2 Timothy 2:22-- *“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”*

4) **“Clothed with Christ”**

- Romans 13:11-14-- *“Do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”*

b. It is important to be PREPARED for the NIGHT

- Luke 12:35b-- *“keep our lamps burning.”*

1) **Parable of the Ten Virgins**

- Matthew 25:1-4-- *—“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.”*

2) **Our part as the “lights of the world” and lights that shine.**

- Matthew 5:14-16-- *“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”*
- Ephesians 5:8-10-- *“walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth) finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.”*
- Philippians 2:14-16-- *“Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life.”*

c. It is important to be WATCHING and WAITING for His return!

1) **Two Illustrations**

a) **Like servants waiting for master**

- Luke 12:36-37-- *“and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that 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.*
- Luke 12:38-- *“And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.”*

b) **Like a homeowner waiting for a thief**

- Luke 12:39-- *“But 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.”*

2) **Jesus as the “thief”**

- Revelation 3:2-3-- *“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your work perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.”*
- Revelation 16:15-- *“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed in he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”*
- Luke 12:40-- *“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*
- Matthew 24:36-- *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, but My Father only.”*
- Matthew 24:44-- *“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*

3) **Early church’s belief in the imminent, soon return of Jesus**

- Philippians 3:20-21-- *“From which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”*
- 1 Corinthians 1:7-- *“you come short in no gifts, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- 1 Corinthians 1:8-- *“will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- James 5:7-8 -- *“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”*

4. **The blessedness of being prepared.**

- Luke 12:37a -- *“Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching.”*
- Luke 12:38-- *“And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so (that is, finds them watching), blessed are those servants.”*

3. **The Reward for Preparedness**

- Luke 12:37b-- *“Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.”*
- a. **The “normal” master-servant relationship**
- Luke 17:10-- *“So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”*
- b. **The Twist: GRACE**
- c. **He will reward us for our spiritual preparedness**
- 2 Timothy 4:7-8-- *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”*
 - 1 John 2:28-- *“And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming!”*
- d. **Christ’s return is soon. Are you ready for His coming?**
- Romans 13:11-- *“the hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, for your salvation is nearer now than when you first believed.”*