

A Faithful Servant to the Returning Master

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[0 : 00] You would turn in your Bible to Luke chapter 12, Luke chapter 12, beginning of verse 35.

If you all would stand as we read God's word. Verse 35, stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.

Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch or in the third watch and finds them awake, blessed are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. You must also be ready for the son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

You may be seated. So, I kind of, I titled this a faithful servant to the returning master.

[1 : 36] It gives us a good glimpse of what Christ is calling us to do is to be prepared for his return. But as I was thinking about this set of scripture and not being surprised by what's going to happen.

I remember when I was young, I would say elementary age. I remember watching TV during Christmas time and I remember one commercial that always stuck out to me.

Do you all remember the Folgers Christmas commercial where Peter, remember that one? Where, so what happens is all the family was asleep in the early morning hours.

A car drops off Peter outside. He enters the house, his hands full of Christmas gifts for his family. The commercial cuts upstairs as she hears the door shut.

And she is upstairs. She is awake. She is fidgeting with, I think, her teddy bear. She's just waiting for everyone else to wake up. But she hears the door shut and she goes downstairs to see what the noise is all about.

[2 : 43] And she sees Peter and she exclaims, Peter! And he hugs her. And he says, and she says, everyone's still sleeping. He replies, shh, I know just how to wake them up.

Or something along those lines. I know just how to wake them up. They go into the kitchen. He opens a fresh can. I remember back in those days, the aluminum can that had the plastic lid on top. And they show a picture of him opening up the can, a fresh new can of coffee, Folgers coffee. And then he measures it out and puts it into the coffee maker.

And then the coffee maker begins to drip the fresh coffee. And it zooms in on the shot of the coffee dripping into the pot. And the steam's coming off.

And like right now, I could use a cup of that. I guess my nap wasn't long enough. But as the zooms in, you see the coffee, the fresh coffee being brewed.

[3 : 47] You can smell it. And even though you can't smell the TV, you can smell it wafting. And then the aroma begins to obviously waft through the house. And it makes its way upstairs to where everybody else is sleeping.

And then as everyone begins to smell the coffee, they begin to be awakened up from their sleep. Putting on their robes, coming downstairs to see who's making coffee.

And as they make their way down the stairs, the mother sees her son and exclaims, Peter! And then all of a sudden, it just cuts to a scene to where they're all in the kitchen and are all enjoying each other's company of this surprise visitor.

Obviously, they were expecting Peter at some point. But this time, he had surprised his family. And so this commercial, just a commercial.

I always remembered I did not like coffee. I was, I would say, younger, elementary age. My grandpa, Trotting Wolf, he made me try coffee once.

[4 : 53] And I did not like it. And he said, here, try this. I was like, no. Yeah, you try it. I was like, all right. I tried it, and I didn't like it. Never thought I'd drink coffee.

But that's a lot of what I drink today. But I bring up the commercial again because it gives a nice picture of a surprise arrival of a guest. But as we look at the parable tonight, we see a warning from our Savior about his return.

Jesus says it will be a not-so-good surprise return for some, but a welcomed return for others.

Jesus makes it clear of what is to come.

He's coming back. Anybody excited about Jesus coming back? I am. I can't wait. He doesn't want us to be caught off guard by it, though. And so he gives us this scripture.

So how can we be prepared for an event when we don't have any time frame for when the event will take place? Be prepared for something you don't know when it's going to take place.

[5 : 54] That's kind of hard to grasp there. But as we look at this scripture, we're going to see what Jesus means by being prepared for his return. The main point of this sermon tonight is Jesus calls us to be ready for his return.

Jesus calls us to be ready for his return. As we look at verse 35, Jesus gives a clear picture of a faithful servant to the master during a time of uncertainty.

The uncertainty being when will the master return from the wedding feast. Again, when Pastor Tyler was preaching, he mentioned weddings back in this time. And these weddings could last up to seven days.

Could you imagine waiting for somebody for seven days? That would be rough. Looking out the window. Are they here yet? No. 20 minutes later, look out the window. Seven days. That's a long time.

I think of when I was, again, going back to when I was little. Talked to mom. Call her at work. Better have your room cleaned. And by the time I get home. She'd give me a time frame when she's coming home.

[7 : 03] And I'd typically wait 20, 30 minutes before she's going to get home. But with the Lord, obviously, we don't have a time frame as such. And so we are made to be prepared now.

We aren't good at waiting. Well, maybe some of you are. Are you good at waiting? Would you call yourself good at waiting? If we make plans with friends and they happen to be late, depending on who it is, and we get a little upset, right?

If we're running 20, 15, 20 minutes late for them to come join us at dinner, we tend to get a little upset. We're not good at waiting. But also, depending on person, we can also take comfort when they say, I'll be there.

You can count on me. I'll be there. And in that time of waiting for that person, and again, depending on who it is, it's not a big deal to wait on that person.

But sometimes we do get pretty – we can get worked up as we're waiting for someone. So in that time of waiting, how do you pass the time?

[8 : 13] In that time of waiting, whether it's for somebody, whether it's for a guest to show up at your house or whatever it is, how do you pass the time? And as we see, as Jesus explains to us in this scripture, waiting for his return is not a sit back, watch TV.

It's not a enjoy the summer breeze, enjoy the spring rains. It's a constantly doing something.

In verse 35, it says, stay dressed for action. Or the literal translation is, let your loins be girded, means to gather the loose material of the long robes that they would wear in this time frame.

They'd be all the way to their – close to their ankles. And as they would be preparing for something to be able to move quickly and easily, what they would do is they would pull up all the extra material, and then they would tie that material up here to where they can move quickly, whether that's – whether that's – if you are a servant, being able to listen or to do what your master is telling you to do.

So it's hard to move around with your legs bound by material. A faithful servant would know the situation if it meant to be ready for action or if the situation was less pressing.

[9 : 43] In this case, Jesus tells a faithful servant would be ready for the return of the master to serve him. And with this let your loins be girded, we see that many other times within the Bible.

In Exodus 12, chapter 12, verse 11, it says, Again, the Lord gave the Israelites this command to eat the Passover in such a way to be ready to move.

1 Kings 18, verse 46, it says, And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garments and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. Here, for the simple fact, he girded up his loins so that he could run before Ahab.

And so what we see here in let your loins be girded is you're being prepared. You are prepared that if you need to move quickly, you are ready.

You are ready. You are ready to move as the moment may have called for it. If your master told you, go now and give this message to so-and-so, it's of utmost importance.

[10:57] You wouldn't say, hold on. Let me prepare my robe. Throw in my shoes. Master, you've seen my belt. Master, you've seen my shoes. No, that's not something that a faithful servant would say.

A faithful servant would be ready for that command of go and give this message to somebody. And that's what gird your loins meant was to be ready to do what was asked.

The faithful servant is always physically ready for the physical needs of the returning master and wouldn't be caught off guard by the return of the master. So point one, a faithful servant is always ready for the return and commands of the master and is not idle.

Faithful servant is always ready for the return and commands of the master and is not idle. Also in verse 35, Jesus says, keep your lamps burning.

This is also a physical action for the servants of regular checking the lamps to make sure that oil, plenty of oil in the lamps. Also to trim the wick of the lamp to make sure at any time the light that was given off by the lamp was optimal.

[12:15] Being able to see in the dark, optimal. What's that word I'm looking for? Oh, you know what I'm talking about. I'm sorry?

And so that's another thing as Jesus is telling his faithful servants or describing the faithful servant as one who tended the lamp as well.

So when do you change the batteries of your flashlights? Do you try to squeeze all the energy you can out of the batteries until it's just completely gone?

Or do you wait until, or do you do it when the light is beginning to fade? The wise thing would be to do it when the light's beginning to fade. Because I think back at the tornado when we lost electricity. And it's not fun being without electricity and not knowing where the flashlight is, hoping there's good batteries in it. But we see here the need not only to be ready for movement, but also to be tending to the lamps.

[13:19] To be tending to the lamps. A faithful servant would be ready to go out and meet the master with the brightest lamp or torch to light the path of the master.

A servant, a faithful servant of master Jesus, is keen to stay in the light of life and not fade into spiritual darkness.

As we look at this, keep your lamps burning, what Jesus is telling us to be spiritually ready for his return. So Jesus being the light of life, the faithful servant, a faithful servant, would be spiritually ready for his return.

And we get a picture of that in the ten virgins parable in Matthew 25. We see five of the virgins were prepared, had plenty of oil for the need of waiting for the bridegroom to come to go to the wedding feast.

And we see the other five weren't ready for the arrival of the bridegroom. And Isaiah didn't pay attention to what was going on with their lamps.

[14:34] They ran out of oil. And they asked for some oil from the five who were prepared. And they said, no, if we give you ours, we will run out.

And they were told to go buy extra oil. And during that time, the bridegroom comes for the wedding feast. And the five that were prepared go into the feast.

And the door shut. The five unprepared were left out and rejected by the Lord. The Apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 13, 11 through 14.

Besides this, you know the time that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is near to us now that we first believed.

The night is far gone. The day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies or drunkenness, not in sexual morality or sensuality, not in quarreling or jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires.

[15 : 46] Again, as Jesus is telling us, being prepared for his return is not only a physical thing, but a spiritual thing.

We are to be spiritually ready for his return. The second point, a faithful servant is spiritually prepared by living in the light of the world as they wait for the return of the master.

John 8, 12 says, again, Jesus spoke to them saying, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

You ever hosted a dinner party or having a group of maybe your Sunday school class over and you feel like you're prepared and maybe 30 minutes early and the doorbell rings and all of a sudden panic sets in.

Panic sets in. It's funny because, yeah, you're expecting people. But when it comes unexpectedly, we begin to panic.

[16 : 57] We begin to say, did you get the table cleaned off? Did the kids get the shoes picked up? Did this? Did that? I still haven't taken a shower. What is going on? Who's here so early?

That early guest surprise. Even though you're not, you're expecting someone to eventually ring the doorbell always seems to catch us by surprise. And it's typically not a great feeling. We're most excited about guests who arrive on our terms.

Would you agree with that? You're most excited about the guests who come on your terms. Jesus knows how we struggle.

Jesus knows that we can tire easily. I think of a camp. We had our lights out was 1030.

That's so much quicker than at Falls Creek. But still, yeah, there's tiredness there and there's tired going on. And Jesus knows this. But he says the ones who he finds awake.

[18 : 19] Blessed are those. Jesus says even at the time that we desire to be asleep. And he makes mention of the second and third watches. That would be from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m.

He says those he finds awake to welcome him back. He would in turn ready himself or gird his loins to serve those he found awake.

What have we done to be served by such a master? Nothing. Nothing. The grace we've received cannot be outdone.

The gift can never be repaid. How is it a man who has laid down his life for our filthiness would upon his return delight in our service to him and tell us to recline at the table?

And he would serve us once again. John 13, verse 5 says, He poured out water into the basin.

[19 : 32] And began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. Matthew 20, 28. Even as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Luke 22, 27. For who is the greater? One who reclines at the table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table?

But I am among you as the one who serves. And the next point, In his return, Jesus will serve the faithful servants. It blows my mind the way Jesus serves.

But also illuminates my life to where I struggle. To where I struggle and to where I need to continue to be prepared and ways for me to prepare for the return of Jesus.

When I read that, it just took me back for a moment to think that Jesus, when he comes back, Yes, it will be the end of it all.

[20 : 52] But what he will do is see us in our faithfulness. If we are faithful to him and service to him, he will tell us to recline at the table. And he will gird his loins and serve us.

What an amazing picture of our Savior. What an amazing truth of our Savior. Again, in the scriptures I just read, he is a servant.

He is a servant. Again, in his return, Jesus will serve the faithful servants. In verse 39 and 40, Jesus clears up the year to when to expect his return.

When we least expect it. How does that help us? First off, it's a promise. He's going to return.

Just as he promised he would die and be raised. Luke 9, 22. The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.

[22 : 08] Obviously, that happened. That came to truth. That is truth. And that's why we are here. But he also promises his return.

Matthew 24, verses 30 and 31. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man. And then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven

with power and great glory.

And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call. And they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24, 36 through 42.

But concerning the day and hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son, but the Father only. Verse 42 says, therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

He's coming back. Are you ready? We may say we're ready. We may look forward to when he deals justice to Satan.

[23 : 19] But are we truly ready for his return? As he calls us to be. Matthew 25, verse 31.

And when the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations. And when we separate people from one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, come, you who are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to see me.

Then the righteous will answer him saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you? Or naked and clothe you?

[24 : 30] And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? And the king will answer them. Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these, my brothers, you did it to me.

That's the work of a faithful servant. The one that's not prepared and are sleeping when he returns. Verse 41 of that same chapter. Then he will say to those on his left, depart from me, you cursed into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food. I was thirsty and you gave me no drink. I was a stranger and you did not welcome me. Naked and you did not clothe me. Sick and in prison, you did not visit me.

Then they will also answer saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister to you?

[25 : 39] Then he will answer to them saying, truly, I say to you, as you did not do it for one of the least of these, you did not do it to me. And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

The servant who is ready for the return is actively doing the will of God.

And it's constantly pursuing a God-honoring and God-glorifying life. And the king will say to those on his right, come, you who are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

From the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, you welcomed me.

I was naked, you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me.

Again, the servant who is ready for the return is actively doing the will of God and desires and wants to honor God in his life.

[27 : 24] Or her life. God's grace causes us to be like Christ. To do these things that Christ did.

As he fed the hungry. As he had compassion. Welcome strangers. This point.

The faithful servant is prepared despite the hour of return. The faithful servant is prepared despite the hour of return.

Jesus makes mentions of his faithful servants in the way they prepare and make sure they are ready for the return. They are constantly doing kingdom work.

The faithful servant also constantly pursuing holy living. The faithful servant will be served by the master. The faithful servant longs for and is ready for the return of the master.

[28 : 41] Being prepared begins with Jesus being Lord and Savior of your life. The adjustment.

Live as if Jesus is coming back tomorrow. Because he just made. Living as if we knew Jesus was coming back tomorrow.

Requires intentionality on our part as a believer. Are you intentional?

Intentional on the way you live. Not to get the bills paid. Not to mow the yard on a regular basis.

But are you intentional in kingdom work? Again, being prepared begins with Jesus being Lord and Savior of your life.

[29 : 48] And as most of us know. How much we're sinners. How much we're wicked. How much we fall short. Of the standard of God. And the glory of God.

And that's what separates us from God. How much we're living? But while we're still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5.8.

So that. So that we could have a relationship with God. Again, being prepared for Christ's return Is Jesus being Lord and Savior of your life The bad news is you're a sinner But we're all sinners The good news is that Jesus Made a way for us To be with the most holy one To be in the presence of the most holy one For when he comes back, we will be with him For when he comes back Those who are faithful to him in service He will serve them He will tell them to recline at the table And he will serve us Something we don't deserve But because of what Jesus did But because of he went to the cross

Because, again, because of our sin Because of the wrath that all of our sin Has stored up for ourselves And in God's eyes and in his books All the wrath that we have Jesus came To pay that debt Of all that sin debt that we have Went to the cross Went to the cross A humble servant To the cross Died on the cross A horrible death Suffocation Buried But three days later Come living out of that grave In victory In glory So that we could be here now

So that we could be here And read God's word And we can understand that For us as believers As Christians That Jesus has made a way for us That we can be prepared For when he comes back We won't be on the Bad side of his return Again, his return Is when he comes back That's when Judgment happens Jesus comes to pave a way For us For our eternal For our eternity To be in heaven Not because we're decent people But because we're sinners Again, Jesus Paid that debt That we can never repay Or that we can never pay off And when you've placed Your faith and trust That Jesus In his death Buried on the resurrection That if That finished What he said He was The savior of the world When you place your faith And trust in that

[33 : 20] And let that filter Into your life Let that filter Through your life Your daily decisions Your daily relationships Let that filter Through your life Then you begin To look like Christ Then you begin To serve like Christ And then at his return At his return You'll be with him In glory Again, the adjustment Is live As if Jesus Is coming back tomorrow Because he just may The application question If you knew Jesus was coming back tomorrow Would you have To make adjustments To be ready Would you realize That you weren't ready For his return In church

We don't know When he's coming back But who's to say It's not tomorrow And that's a legitimate question And asking Are you ready If he came back tomorrow Are you a faithful servant To Jesus Is what Jesus Accomplished In his On the cross Is that filtering Your life decisions Do people see Christ In you Again, if you've never Placed your faith And trust In Jesus Christ As Lord and Savior Know that That really did happen Know that What he does Giving the Holy Spirit That happens Many people in this room

Can attest to that Of living Under the Authority And the Guiding Of the Holy Spirit And there is A difference there There's a night And day difference From who you were Before Christ To who you are Now in Christ If you've never Placed your faith And trust In Jesus Christ And God is calling You into relationship Through the death Burial and resurrection Of Jesus Christ Afterwards Come speak with me Pastor Tyler Pastor Mike The elders We want you to know Christ We want you to Experience God's saving grace Because there's Nothing like it There never will be Nothing like it But Jesus is coming Back Let's pray Father I thank you For this time That we can come And open your word And Father as you Speak to us As you warn us But also Father You show us What it means To be prepared For your return

That we are to be Active in our life As Christ followers We are to be Always doing something For the kingdom We are always To be spiritually ready Father I pray That we would all Be spiritually ready And we would be Active for the kingdom So that when you Do return Father you would Find us awake You would find us Excited about you Coming back Father for those In this room That do not know Jesus as Lord And Savior Father I pray That they are Will answer the call Upon their name And the affirmative Of saying Yes I'm a sinner In need of Jesus And what he did On the cross That he paid My sin debt Father I pray For that person For those persons In this room Father I pray That they would In boldness Speak out and say I need Jesus And Father again For the rest of us May we be Christ May we be ready

For your return In Jesus name I pray Amen Amen Amen