

Get ready

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[0 : 00] Let me open in a word of prayer this morning for us. Father God, I pray for this morning, even as I bring your word, Father, please give me wisdom.

Please give me the right things to say. And whatever I say, I pray that it's from you. I pray that it's true, that edifies all of us this morning and pushes us and lets us focus on you and your second coming.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Okay, pop quiz, everyone. Now, what do these years, that's on the screen, 1870, or these years, okay, have in common?

Alright? What do they have in common? Now, if you've paid attention and you were following along to the Bible reading this morning, then perhaps you may have guessed that it may have something to do with Jesus' second coming.

And then you would be right. Now, the leaders of our Jehovah Witness friends that go knocking on the doors and the ones that don't cycle, through various calculations, observing historical and archaeological evidence, concluded multiple times that these were the years that Jesus was going to come back.

[1 : 14] Now, as you are here listening to me preach, evidently it didn't happen. They got it wrong time and time again. We are still here. Jesus has not yet come.

They got it totally wrong. But one thing they did get right and we share with our witness friends is in the example that we all believe that Jesus is coming back.

Now, that is the premise of our passage this morning and that we've just read. This is the one safe presupposition to have as believers. Now, in the New Testament alone, there is mention or reference to Jesus' return over 300 times.

In the New Testament alone, there is almost one mention of the second coming for every 25 verses that we read in the New Testament. Therefore, it is safe to say with confidence that Jesus is coming back.

So out front, this is our premise this morning that Jesus is coming back. Now, we'll get into more of this later but for today's passage, we are faced with three parables. Three parables that are interlinked, connecting to one another and explaining and clarifying each other.

[2 : 27] Now, throughout the sermon, I will refer to them as parables one, two, three or first, second and third parable. So please lock these parables in your mind as we go along. Now, the first parable is the one with the servant waiting for the master's return from the wedding banquet.

The second and the short parable is about the teeth that will come at an hour you won't expect. And the last and third parable is the one about the faithful and wise manager.

Now, because there is an overlap in ideas all over the place, we are going to have a bird's eye view of this text and we will dissect it slowly and by dissecting it instead of going up and down, we will see five things.

The what, who, when, why, and how. Okay, and if you're wondering where was invited today. Alright, so what are we to do to be ready?

The first W. Now, it's easy to jump into verse 35 and say, here it is. This is what we are to do to be ready. But let me suggest that the overarching intent and desire that we should have is obedience to the master or obedience to God.

[3 : 41] Now, you see in parable 1 and 3, both servants have a responsibility or a duty of a certain task. They were instructed or charged with something by their master. Wait for the master's return to welcome him home or take charge of the servants to give them food at the proper time.

And of course, there's an expectation that they should do so, right? It is wise that they do so. It is good that they do so. As it says in scripture, because the person they are waiting on, the person

that they are obeying is their master.

Now, this is a bit of a teaser to one of the wise later. But in the outset, I want us to think, I want you to think about this very important question. Who is your master?

Who do you call your master? Now, if you've been listening to the sermons over the past few weeks from the start of Luke 12, we begin to see how having an eternity mindset puts us, pulls us away from some of these earthly things.

Given that not all these things are bad, but to be focused and obsessed with them over God is a temptation of all men, myself included. Do we desire to look good on the outside but neglect what goes on on the inside?

[5 : 02] Do we desire the praise and acknowledgement of man rather than God? Do we have a desire of material things and a desire of surrounding ourselves with material possessions that we have no time for God?

Or are we chasing the pleasures and indulgences of life that we rather not discomfort ourselves for the sake of the gospel? You know, later in Luke 16, it says in verse 13, no one can serve two masters.

Either you will hate one and love the other or you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money or for that matter, fame, status, or possession.

So right now, think about the answer to that question and hold it in your mind. Whether you call yourself Christian or not today, keep that answer with you as we see how else this applies to us.

So who is your master? Next, who are these parables referring to? Who does it apply to? The second W.

[6 : 05] There's the same question that the disciple Peter asked Jesus after the first two parables in verse 41. Peter asked, Lord, are you telling this parable to us or to everyone?

Who is the us? Is he referring to just the 12 apostles or all of Jesus' disciples? Now mind you that Jesus had more than 12 apostles, right? Two chapters back in chapter 10, he sent out 72 and at the end, he was teaching and he was in Mary and Martha's house who can be considered his disciples.

So are we talking about the 12 or all the disciples? Now some people and some devotionals are quick to point out and zero in and say, look man, in verse 42, it says, faithful and wise manager.

Ah, he's talking about leaders. It doesn't apply to me. I'm not a leader. I'm just a normal, regular Christian. Now I would say a bit of yes but mostly no.

Now explain what I mean. Now we must understand that the third parable was the answer to Peter's question about the first two parables. Jesus used the third parable to answer Peter meaning the third parable is building on what has already shared in the first and second parable.

[7 : 25] Okay, let's presume Jesus meant the 12 apostles or leaders and apply it to parable one.

Does that mean that only apostles or leaders were to wait for Jesus' second coming or only the apostles and leaders were going to receive the benefits of being obedient than being invited to the banquet of heaven?

No. It doesn't really match up with the other passages of scripture about the second coming. But if we see the passage like this, parable one and two being the umbrella instruction for all disciples, parable three a specific instruction for leaders by extension and verses 47 and 48 as a conclusion ending for all disciples, leaders included, then I think the parables would flow a bit better.

That's why I said a bit yes but mostly no because while parable three I think points more as a reminder and warning to all leaders, it must be applied understanding that parable one and two is for all disciples, all who call Jesus their master.

And it's interesting that Jesus told the parable three or the third parable as he did because when I read verse 41 and 42 especially to give them their food allowance at the proper time, I can't help but think about what happened in John 21 in the Gospel of John.

This is at the end of the Gospel of John after the crucifixion, after the burial, Jesus was seen alive by the disciples as they were out catching fish. He made them breakfast by the seashore and before he ascended back to heaven, he said these words, feed my lambs, take care of my sheep and feed my sheep.

[9 : 09] And remember who Jesus said that to? The questioner for today. It was Peter. In this conversation, Jesus restores Peter after he denied him to feed the sheep.

Now this parable seems to foreshadow what was going on, what was going to happen after Jesus' ministry on earth. Before Jesus goes up to heaven, he places Peter and the apostles in charge of

the church to teach and disciple until he comes again.

So in extension today, the leaders are to feed and teach and disciple until Jesus comes again. So who is to be ready?

Now we should conclude that he must mean all disciples and leaders more so. This applies to anyone who calls himself or herself a disciple of God.

If you are a believer today, this applies to you, this applies to me. Therefore, as believers, we are the ones that have to be ready. Now we've understood what, we've understood who.

[10:14] The next W is when are we to be ready? So if our Jehovah's Witness friends' example earlier were of any help to us, it showed us that we don't know when he is coming back for sure.

But won't there be signs you may be thinking? Won't there be wars, natural disasters, plagues, false prophets and all that when Jesus comes back? With the latest conflict in Israel, there were people saying that isn't this a clear sign that he is coming back already?

Yes, there will be signs, but those are the signs for the end of the age and not necessarily the imminent return of Jesus. Now I don't really want to open this can of worms this morning.

If not, we'll go back this afternoon. But remember that there have been wars, plagues, disasters, antichrist figures in the last hundred years alone, not to mention the last two thousand years.

Now there have been many checkboxes where they will tick wars, you tick plagues, tick this and tick that. And the only tick that hasn't been ticked is Jesus' return.

[11:19] So yes, since the beginning of the New Testament until this day, I will say that we are living in the end times or end of the age, but that doesn't directly indicate that Jesus' return is just about to happen.

Now back to our passage in verse 39 and 40, it says in 39, but understand this, if the owner of this house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.

You must be ready because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. And to add to that, Matthew 24 verse 36, I'll read for you, but concerning that day and hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, not the Son, but the Father only.

No one knows except God the Father. The Son of Man will come at an hour you do not expect. But just a thought experiment here, how many of us expect that Jesus will come back this afternoon?

Can I see a raise of heads? How many of you expect? I see one. Okay, that's fine. How many of you don't expect? I see two, three, four, five. Okay, that's fine.

[12:26] And for the rest of you, you may be thinking, ah, this is a trick question, right? And it's a bit, it's a bit like that, right? So if you expect that he's coming back this afternoon, scripture says that he won't, he might not.

And if you change your mind and say, oh, he's not coming back, he just might. Right? So all this to say that we don't know, okay, when exactly he's coming back except the father. So there's no point in trying to think, in trying to calculate when he's coming back and to proclaim all that.

So how does this help answering the when question? The answer is simply, we must always be ready. In the first parable, the servant waits all night.

It could be in the middle of the night or close to daybreak, but the servant waits patiently and eagerly for the master's return to welcome him at the door. In the third parable, the servant becomes impatient, waiting for the master and does abusive things, wrong things to those around him and the consequence of his disobedience is worth the warning for us, which we'll get into after this.

So when should we be ready? We need to be ready now. We need to be ready from here on out to always be ready to welcome Jesus back.

[13:43] We must always be ready. So far we know what we as believers or disciples of Christ need to do and what we need to be constantly be ready.

But now let's think about why. What could be our motivation or incentive to always be ready? Now there are several why's that we need to bear in mind and consider in this passage.

Alright? But remember the question I asked you to hold on to the beginning as a believer. Who is your master? That is the first and foremost why we ought to have as believers.

We are ready because Jesus is our Lord and Master. Because as Christians we believe that Jesus believe what Jesus has done for us through the cross redeeming us who were once sinners unto himself purchased us with his blood so that we can be free from sin so we recognize our sinfulness

our helplessness and we cling to the one who is righteous.

Now if we believe that he loves us redeemed us died and rose again from the dead ascended to heaven until his second coming then the first why is obvious right? Now it didn't occur to me this morning was going to be Holy Communion as I was preparing this sermon but it's great that we did.

[15:10] Remember what Pastor Brian said as we took the Holy Communion just now from 1 Corinthians 11, 24, 26 right? I'll read to you again. 24, and when he had given thanks he broke it and said this is my body which is for you and do this in remembrance of me.

But 25, in the same way after supper he took the cup saying this cup is a new covenant in my blood. Do this wherever you drink it in remembrance of me. So we took the bread and cup together in remembrance of what Jesus did on the cross.

And in verse 26 it says for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. We remember Jesus and proclaim his death not just today not just tomorrow but until he comes again.

So if you took Holy Communion today then you a bit checkmate already. You have to I take it that you will call Jesus your Lord and Master.

So let us consider our attitude in response to how after this. So if we believe he is Lord and we are ready when Jesus comes back here is the second why we should be ready.

[16:21] In parables 1 and 3 after the instruction is given by the Master it says a total of 3 times a similar starting phrase it will be good.

In verses 37, 38 and 43 now you can read them with me as I read it to you. Verse 37 it will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes.

38 it will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready even if he comes in the middle of night or servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns.

It's as if Jesus was throwing all the hints at his disciples of the great benefits of being ready. Jesus here is saying if you listen to me if you obey me and be ready there are good things that is in store for you so be ready.

He then goes on to clarify in verses 37 B and 44 again beginning each sentence with a similar phrase truly I tell you in 37 B truly I tell you he will dress himself to serve will have them reclined at the table and will come and wait on them now in both verses Jesus will do something for his disciples the first that is in verse 37 B portrays the type of Lord he is he is the servant king even though he is the master and Lord because of his disciples faithfulness and obedience he will have his servants sit and recline on the table and wait on them now this idea is so counter intuitive to what we think of a human version of a master but in several months time after this incident in scripture in the upper room in Jerusalem Jesus will remove his outer garments wrap a towel around his waist and wash the feet of his twelve disciples that's in

[18:22] John 13 there were witnesses to an action that was both symbolic of his work in the incarnation and the prophetic of the messianic meal at the coming of his kingdom the wedding supper of the lamb at that meal in Luke 13 it says people will come from east and west from north and south and recline at the table in the kingdom of God and behold some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last it will be a joyous and happy occasion where we are going to sit down at the feast of feast as guests of the king of kings heaven is sometimes portrayed with bright clouds and little angels floating around playing with harps of a sumptuous feast with laughter jubilation and intimate fellowship with Christ eternally and if you have anything like me

I was sold at feast of feasts now in verse 44 in regards to leaders that I raised before it talks about being given some sort of authority in heaven now if you read the parable of the bags of gold in Luke 19 and parable of the talent in Matthew 25 because of the servant's faithfulness they'll be given charge of something now if you don't know or don't recall these two parables involve servants who were given an amount of gold or silver and the one who multiplied it or used it well for the master was rewarded and the one who buried it in the ground or hid it was punished so here they use similar phrases to verse 44 put in charge of a certain number of cities in the parable of the golden banks now what does this look like in heaven now we don't really know for sure we're not told clearly but we do know that there will be a reward for being faithful a reward for being ready and this reward will definitely be something that is good that's the second reason why so if there's a reward for being ready there's also punishment for not being ready now we can see this from verses 46 to 48 the master of that servant

I'm reading verse 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he was not aware of he will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers the servant who knows the master's will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be beaten with many blows but the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows from everyone who has been given much much will be demanded and from the one who has been entrusted much much more will be asked now the principle and reasoning the principle and reasoning is simple and this my friends is a warning for us today the servant who knows the master's will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be punished now this principle seems to be applicable to all disciples or all Christians leaders or otherwise now in this day and age with the internet and amount of scholarship available we are greatly exposed to the understanding of scripture where books upon books article upon article sermon upon sermons are written and recorded online we have more knowledge and access to the gospel and scriptures than any human being had in the last past 2000 years put together now with all that we have today as

Christians I believe we cannot say that we do not know the master's will and we not warn of the master's will it has been made but with all these warnings and resources available at our fingertips we still do not get ready or do what the master wants there will be punishment and now we understand that from verses 47 to 48 it seems to indicate different severity in punishment the one who knew the master's will but did not obey God's instructions to be ready compared with the servant who did not know his will and was not ready they were both not ready but one was more severely punished than the other meaning if you call that is because from everyone who has been given much much will be demanded and from the one who has been entrusted much much more will be asked meaning if you call yourself a Christian who have known the gospel know God's desire for us to persevere in our faith to Christ likeness and do not much more will be demanded of you in response and more so for the leaders among us today not only do we know

God's gospel do we only know Christ but we have been entrusted with God's ministry here on earth so people like Pastor Brian myself the elders the deacons those who preach from this pulpit much more will be asked of us now it says the one in leadership position who does not prepare will be chopped up and assigned a place if the unbeliever so along with some sort of reward awarded to leaders because of their faithfulness so will the accountability be more strict if we are not now if you are listening today and you are not a Christian or a believer you my friend are not excluded from this warning that I've been giving this morning the reality is that on the day he comes again an accounting will take place for what we've done on earth and you will be held liable to as opposed to a Christian who knows but doesn't do and he will be punished more severely you will be punished as well even though less but the consequence will be carried out and alongside leaders who are not ready you will end up in the same place as them it won't be a good place a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth as it says in

[24 : 32] Luke 13 again how the punishment will be more severe or how is it mattered out in the next life we're not entirely sure but from this passage it seems that there are different severity for punishment for Christians and non Christians because of their knowledge and there is punishment if you do not obey his warnings for you but the good news is that that doesn't have to be the case because as Christians we believe what Jesus has done for us through the cross redeeming us who were once sinners unto himself Jesus purchased us with his blood so that we can be free from sin he took our place on the cross so we can understand that he died for us in our place he died for you in our place I'm just going to repeat the passage that Pastor Brian brought up about what is the good news in

Colossians 13 1 Colossians 1 13 to 14 for he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the son he loves in whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins so therefore if you have another master in your heart now let me encourage you to consider Christ consider him to be your lord and master consider going to Christianity Explored that is going to start soon if you have questions so our last segment for this morning segment number five how should we be ready now to answer this I think there is one main point I want us to get and understand and from there a few practical how will flow from the main point so one big point and a few sub points we look at the first verse this morning verse 35 be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning now this idea

I will speak into two parts to explain the first part be dressed ready for service and the second keep your lamps burning number in other translations it says let your loins or waist be girded now in that time as today in some Arab or Middle Eastern places the Jews wore long tunics that goes down to their ankles and what they would do is they would raise the tunic above their knees wrap it around their thighs or waist and secure it with a belt to keep it in place when they needed to work the fields or when they needed to act or move quickly so basically Jesus is telling us here for part one of this sentence as when the time comes you must be ready for action next the sentence keep your lamps burning brings being ready for action into perspective the burning lamp or light has been used metaphorically in scripture to symbolize God's word in

Psalms 119 talks about Jesus in John 8 and 9 it talks about God working in the lives of unbelievers in 2nd Corinthians and 1st Peter and even as Christians we are also called to be a light Matthew 5 says you are light of the world a town built on a hill cannot be hidden neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl instead put it on its stand and it gives light to our lives it is our faith that shines for all to see we become the light of the world through our faith in Jesus but as an add on to the idea of just the light and the lamp there is a constant action of keeping the flame burning it is not a one time thing we don't light a fire and it is done you have to constantly take care of the fire and keep it burning now do you remember the parable of the ten virgins where the five virgins were the ones who brought oil in a vessel so that when the bride who comes in the middle of the night they would still have light in their lamps they kept the lamps burning throughout the night and when the bridegroom came they were able to enter in now the five foolish virgins who didn't keep their lamps burning were shut out and were not let in now in both parables the lamp was there but more importantly the sustaining of the burning of the lamp is crucial for a positive outcome now the sustaining and continuing of our faith is what's important now in fact if you've been joining our home fellowship group we'll be going through a video study talking about gospel when we first came to Christ or at the end of our lives but it affects us throughout our Christian journey and that's what we call sanctification running the race fighting the good fight continue in this process of being made holy and set apart for God now I wanted to see three other passages from 1 John and the Gospel of John to add on to what it might look like I think the passage 1 John 2 4 Now John 8 12 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 so basically what these verses are saying is that we need to walk the talk if we claim we have fellowship with him if we say

[30 : 32] I know him if we say we follow him if we call ourselves Christians then we need to live our lives as Christians we call ourselves Christians then we live like Christians we live our lives as servants to Christ so again the main point of how we need to be ready is to keep our lamps burning and in essence is keeping the faith there's a key application this morning and once we get to this point I think the sub points or practical points will naturally flow I'll give you three practical points that we can glean from this text then I'll summarize and draw the lines for you or for anyone that I may have lost along the way the first practical point in keeping the faith is discipleship now we're called to make disciples of all nations through teaching from the pulpit through Bible studies in form fellowship groups in our youth group through equipping ourselves through seminars webinars that KAC organizes through our time in worship and prayer through book reading groups through applying and growing our gifts serving in different ministries through all these things and much more we grow in faith and understanding the word more and more solidifying our faith and that would help us be effective and enduring in our ministries and faith so make use of it now no one knows scripture perfectly so come regularly to our Sunday service listen to God's word join a home fellowship group if you're not in one already register for example our equipped classes volunteer and serve in using your gifts that you have been fed and equipped to become disciples growing and continuing in Christ at the same time I want us all to remember that this aspect of discipleship it is not only the responsibility of the church or the church leaders to disciple people in a way I mean I mean it in this manner at the end of verse 48 it says from everyone who has been given much much will be demanded and from the one who has been entrusted much much more will be asked by extension we can apply this to all of us who are Christians what is it that has been given to us or entrusted to us that's important to us as Christians not leaders like everyone here the light in us the word of God we have received such an amazing gift a life changing gift and what are we doing with this amazing gift what are we doing with this light are we letting it shine in the darkness or hiding it under a bowl just like the parable of the talents or gold bags I used earlier don't be the

servant who hid this valuable treasure that they had in the ground or cloth or keep in your pocket and make sure it's used faithfully so wherever you are in your workplace in your home in your communities or in your families even you can be that light that sparks the journey of discipleship don't discount your efforts in sharing the gospel the seed that you plant every time you share you speak or just by being a living example of

Christ likeness may one day bear fruit in the life of another so again a reminder that every believer can play a part in discipleship alongside discipleship I think fellowship is vital for continuing in faith unlike the foolish manager in verse 45 we ought to cherish our brothers and sisters around us Christianity is not meant to be done alone like iron sharpens iron so one person sharpens another as it says in Proverbs when we as believers come together we encourage we edify we correct we share in grief and joy together supporting each other in different phases of our lives now 1st John 4:20 says this whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar for whoever does not love their brother or sister whom they have seen cannot love God whom they have not seen our capacity to love our brothers and sisters in Christ outflows from our love for God so again let me encourage you to consider joining home fellowship group join the youth group join ladies fellowship join the church camp that we'll be having in

July where you can connect with other members of this church body and together we can journey in faith building each other up and last practical idea this morning is self control in our indulgence on the last thing in this parable was that the foolish manager indulged himself to a point where he was unable to be ready he was eating he was drinking into drunkenness so for us we must have self control in what we do in life for example eating and drinking in itself is a good and joyous act we will have a piece of feast in heaven but if we over indulge or have no control about what or how we eat and drink it may become a sin rest is good but too much rest will lead us to be slothful in other words don't let things of this world control you be self controlled in our work be self controlled in using our money be self controlled in our emotions actions and speech be self controlled in our desires less we fall into temptation so we ought to be self controlled to allow us to remain sober minded and to remain focused on what's important keeping the faith in obedience to

[36 : 20] Christ now to end and to summarize this sermon this morning I said I will try to connect the dots for us to conclude at the bottom of the outlines I think I gave you the order which you can follow you can follow me why who what how and when in that order now with Jesus as our master and Lord being our motivation and focus we as believers would desire to obey what he asks of us therefore we will strive to be faithful until the end of days until he comes back again for us to welcome him so today let us not forget let us be slow to action let us let us be ready for our lord and master let me pray as we close father heaven we come before you acknowledging who you are to us your word this morning teaches us to be dressed and ready for service to keep our lamps burning and to be watchful for your return lord we desire to live in obedience to your instructions and eagerly wait for your son's glorious return father help us to stay vigilant to be awake in our faith to remain steadfast in your love may we be found faithful ready when your son returns just like a servant eagerly waiting your master in

Jesus name I pray amen amen