

Luke 12:35-48: The King Will Return

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The Gospel of Luke

Introduction

- Blue Bell Ice Cream truck - If I follow that truck I know that it will take me to the Promised Land... I know what's in the truck is heavenly, but I don't have access..
- If you are a follower of Jesus there is a Promised Land that awaits you. Jesus gives us access to the Promised Land - new heavens and new earth ([Revelation 21](#)).
- The promise of the Bible - Jesus Christ will return for us, and He will give us eternity with Him.
- How often do you think about the return of Jesus? We should think about the return of Jesus often because the New Testament in particular talks about it often. 260 chapters in the NT. In those 260 chapters return of Jesus is mentioned 318 times. Only books in the NT return of Jesus not mentioned are Galatians, 2 and 3 John. Return of Jesus a big deal to NT writers!
- The return of Jesus is the consummation of our salvation because when Jesus returns we will be glorified. Sin will be eradicated once and for all. Everything will be as God intended in the garden of Eden.
- But... I don't want you to just THINK about the return of Jesus. I want the return of Jesus to affect the way you live right now.
- Are you ready for the return of Jesus? If Jesus were to return today would He find you ready? In [Luke 12:35-48](#) Jesus shows us what it

looks like to be ready for His return. Two characteristics of people who are ready for His return.

Ready servants long for fellowship with the King.

- Previous verses: Don't worry... We have a tendency to let the worries of this world consume us. Instead, be consumed by the reality that Jesus is going to return. Spend your life waiting and watching for the King.
- Two parables. First parable, a master gone to a party - a wedding banquet. The servants don't know when the master will be home, but they do know that when the master returns they need to be ready to serve their master.
- The longest I've been away from home is 12 day trip to Japan. I know what it's like to be ready to be home. Staci, home with the boys for 12 days, knows what it's like to be ready for me to be home. Military families in our church - you know what it's like to wait for months for your spouse to return. And, on the day that your spouse returns - anticipation.
- Parable: servants waiting for their master to come home. They know he's coming, but they don't know quite when. It could be a few more hours or a few more minutes, but they're ready. Everything is in order, the lights are on, and whatever the master needs when he returns, the servants are ready to give him. They know the master's favorite late-night snack. They have it ready.
- Everything is focused on the master's return and having everything ready for the master, and they're not going to fall asleep. They can't fall asleep. They have to serve their master when he arrives. They're pounding energy drinks, drinking coffee, etc. to stay awake. They have to be ready.
- Then... the master returns. "Blessed will be those servants the master finds alert" (vs. 37, 38).

- BUT... an unexpected statement in vs. 37. “He will get ready, have them recline at the table, then come and serve them.”
- They’re prepared to serve their master, but the master returns to serve them!
- Jesus has come to serve you! ([John 13](#) - washing the disciples feet - picture of service that would ultimately be demonstrated in His death and resurrection.) We long to serve Jesus because He has served us.
- When the master we are serving right now returns, we will feast around the banqueting table with Him ([Revelation 19:6-9](#)). We will enjoy fellowship with Him for all eternity! That’s what our hearts long for!
- Jesus will return like a thief in the night (vs. 39). See also [Rev. 3:3](#), [1 Thess. 5:2](#), [2 Peter 3:10](#). Idea - Jesus is coming back unexpectedly, stealthily - for those NOT ready - they will suffer loss - eternal loss.
- Two questions:
 - **If Jesus were to return today, would He find you fast asleep?**
 - Time between ascension and return of Jesus is like nighttime - We know He’s returning, but we don’t know when, and it’s a struggle to stay awake and alert.
 - Asleep = a life given to worry, a life consumed with the cares of this world, a life given to sin, a life of hypocrisy, etc. (Think of the warnings Jesus has given up to this point.)
 - **Or, if Jesus were to return today, would He find you wide awake?**
 - Wide awake = serving Him. Enjoying fellowship now as you wait for face to face fellowship.
 - Wide awake = hope and optimism because you know that when He returns it’s going to be good. Wide awake not only living out actions consistent with our faith but an ATTITUDE that pervades our hearts because we know He’s returning. (Just been talking

about worry - someone who is ready for the return of Jesus is so focused on His return that there's not time for worry.) We know there's more. There's hope. So, we can endure, we can be optimistic, we can be joyful. We can be real. We EXPECT the world to fall apart, but we also EXPECT the King to return and make everything right.

- If you have an overly pessimistic, hopeless, defeated, joyless attitude, you're not awake! Awake people know something good is coming! Wake up! Eternal joy is on the way! A better day is right around the corner!

Ready servants live with faithfulness before the King.

- Peter speaks up... "Are you telling this parable to everyone?" Makes sense. Sometimes Jesus addressed the larger crowd. Sometimes He just addressed the disciples. Who was Jesus talking to?
- Jesus answered Peter's question with a parable. He doesn't directly answer Peter's question, but instead, with this story, Jesus challenges Peter.
- Jesus will return for His church, His bride. The question: Will those that Jesus has entrusted to care for His possession (the church) be faithful to care for Jesus' treasured possession? Or, when Jesus returns, will He find you doing your job?
- Makes sense that Jesus would say this to Peter ([Matthew 16:17-20](#)). Peter and the disciples charged to lead Jesus' movement - charged with being a blessing to others.
- **Simple instruction: "Do your job."** The Master may not be present with you (physically speaking), but He will return, and He will know if you've done your job. If you've done your job, you will be rewarded.

- On the flip side, if the Master delays, the temptation for His followers will be to take their eyes off of the work of the master and mistreat the people they're supposed to care for and live for pleasure rather than live for the master. That kind of living is rejection of the Master and His will. You can make a confession that Jesus is your Master, but if that confession is not evidenced by a life of living for Jesus and His return, you've rejected the Master (Think parable of the sower.) You can't think of yourself as Christ's servant while refusing to do the work of Christ.
- When the master returns, he will deal harshly with those who have lived faithlessly instead of faithfully. vs. 46 - gruesome imagery that might point back to [1 Sam. 15:33](#). Jesus wants us to know that those who know the truth yet fail to live their lives in light of the truth will face strict judgment. (See [Matthew 24:51](#) - the unfaithful servant assigned a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.)
- And... those who do not know the truth (at least to the degree that the disciples knew the truth or that you and I know the truth) will also be punished, but the punishment will be lighter. Not sure what Jesus means by lighter punishment - all unfaithful are condemned to eternal death, but harshest punishment reserved for those who know the truth full well but choose to reject. All who have not lived for the Master and His return will be judged. Period.
- The point to Peter and the point to you: You've been given knowledge. You know the truth. You know that Christ died and rose again for you. You know He's going to return. You have responsibility to live according to the knowledge you have and faith you profess. Orient your life around the truth instead of rejecting it. These verses are a warning not to cause us to fear losing our salvation or to fear eternal judgement but instead to remind us that are Master has expects you to live the faith you profess.
- vs. 48 - For those who have been given much, much is required. Much has been given to us. There's great responsibility for those who walk in the truth.

- The question that these two parables cause us to ask: “If Jesus were to return today would He find you faithful or faithless?”
- In this second parable, Jesus calling us to take responsibility for the truth we know as we wait for His return.
- **Take responsibility for your faith.** (Grow up.) - Perhaps Jesus wouldn't find you faithless, but He would find you sleepy in your faith. Disciple's wheel (Graphic from discipleship book) - Some of you have been stuck in spiritual childhood for far too long. It's time to grow up. Which means: putting childish ways to death ([1 Cor. 13:11](#)). It's past time to put away childish things.
- **Take responsibility for the work that Jesus has called you to.** (Do your job.) What is your job? Make disciples - a spiritual parent takes responsibility for his faith and takes responsibility for helping someone else grow in their faith. Do your job in your home, in your work place, etc.
- **Take responsibility for unity and work of the church.** You may not be a pastor, but you have a responsibility to this church. When our Master returns, we want Him to return finding His bride faithful to Him. That means your church attendance matters, your giving to the church matters, your encouragement of others in the body of Christ matters, using your giftedness through the church matters.
- These are tough words of Jesus, but they are also encouraging words. There is judgment that awaits those who ignore/reject Jesus' words but there is blessed hope for those who respond to His Word. Remember verse 37 - Remember what kind of King we have in Jesus - Jesus is the King who has come to serve us. THIS is the truth that causes us to want to take responsibility for our faith and serve Him. He came to serve us by dying the death that we deserve and rising again from the dead for us. Don't reject the free gift of salvation! This gift that compels us to love

and serve Him. This King who served us by dying for us and rising again for us will return and bring us home with Him. Be ready for His return!