

Ready or Not?

Luke 12:35-48 ▪ February 8, 2026 ▪ Brad Manley

Await Jesus' return with _____, not indifference. (vv. 35-40)

Await Jesus' return with _____, not idleness. (vv. 41-48)

Luke 12:35-48

³⁵ "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶ 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. ³⁷ 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. ³⁸ If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! ³⁹ 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. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

⁴¹ Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?" ⁴² And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? ⁴³ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴ Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. ⁴⁵ But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and put him with the unfaithful. ⁴⁷ And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: How well do you respond to guests showing up at your door unexpectedly? Why? How would you say your response to unexpected guests differs from your response to expected guests?

Read & Discuss: Luke 12:35-48

1. In verses 35-36, Jesus gives two commands: “Stay dressed for action” and “keep your lamps burning.” What does it look like for a Christian to maintain this posture of readiness in the rhythms of ordinary life? What makes this posture often difficult for us to maintain?
2. Verse 37 describes a shocking situation where the Master dresses himself to serve the servants. Knowing Jesus is the Master, how does this image of Him serving us shape your motivation for staying awake? How is this different from staying alert out of fear or mere duty?
3. Jesus compares His return to a thief in the night (v. 39). While we often want a schedule or a deadline to stay motivated, Jesus chooses to leave the time of His return unspecified. What does this lack of a timeline reveal about the kind of faithfulness He is looking for in His followers?
4. In response to Peter’s question (v. 41), Jesus speaks about the “faithful and wise manager” (v. 42). What are some things God has entrusted to you—such as specific relationships, gifts, or roles—that are easy to forget actually belong to Him? How does viewing yourself as a steward rather than an owner change how you think about and approach these things?
5. The unfaithful servant acts the way he does because he tells himself, “My master is delayed in coming” (v. 45). What are some temptations or distractions in our culture that tend to pull us toward spiritual apathy regarding Jesus’ return?
6. Verses 47-48 introduce a sobering principle: “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required.” What evidence is there in your life that much has been given to you? How can we hold onto this sense of responsibility with joy rather than with fear of not doing enough?
7. Readiness in this passage seems to be less about knowing a date and more about the state of our hearts. If Jesus were to return this afternoon, where would you feel a sense of joyful readiness—and where are you still longing for growth?

Apply: Looking at the themes of faithfulness and watchful waiting, what is one practical adjustment you can make this week (such as in your schedule, attitude, or relationships) to live more like a servant who is joyfully expecting their Master?

Pray: Pray that God will help us to be spiritually vigilant. Ask for the grace to see our responsibilities not as a burden, but as a way to honor the Master who has promised to serve us.