

Jesus Will Come. Are You Ready?

Text: Luke 12:35-48

1) How We Are To Make Ready

Suggested Hymns:

2) When We Are To Make Ready

15, 338, 491, 848, 508

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Luke 12:35-48, ³⁵ *“Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; ³⁶ 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.*

³⁷ *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. ³⁸ And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.*

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. ⁴⁰ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*

⁴¹ *Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?” ⁴² And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? ⁴³ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴ Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.*

⁴⁵ *But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.*

⁴⁷ *And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. ⁴⁸ But he who did*

not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more. (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Christianity puts purpose into life. We are not the creatures of a day, knowing only in part from where we have come from, and to where we are going. We know who we are.

The majestic words of the first verse of the Bible tell us: ***“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”*** We know where we are going. In the last chapter of Revelation, the Bridegroom of our souls, gives us the comforting assurance: ***“Surely I am coming quickly. Amen,”***¹ and the bride answers with yearning of heart: ***“Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”***

Ours is an eternal destiny. All of life on this earthly sphere is to be a preparation for the life to come. There is coming a day when this earth, with all its glory and pleasures, its business and commerce, will pass away and the King of kings will appear for the Judgement. Jesus will come. Are you ready?

The highest wisdom therefore demands that we make ready for the return of the Lord. Let us consider, *Make Ready for the Lord’s Return!* Our text tells us *how* and *when* we are to make ready. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. How We Are To Make Ready.

Our text pictures an Advent scene full of beauty and charm. The darkness of night has fallen upon the earth. But, lo, there is a home in which the lights are burning and sending their soft gleam through bright windows out into the night. The light does not come from some small night-lamp shining dimly in a single room, as if to light the watchers in a sick-room.

No, here the lights gleam and sparkle from all the windows, as if joyous festivities were in progress within. But such is not the case. If you glance through the windows, you will observe that servants, and the servants only, are moving about within, their loins girded and their lamps burning.

They do not sit at the table, eating, drinking, and making merry. There is an air of expectancy for the coming of some one greatly desired. They are watching for none other than the master himself. Time passes. The second watch of the night is followed by the third, and still the lights burn brightly. In the main, all is in readiness; and yet, as is always the case, there are final preparations to be made.

No servant needs to stand idle. No servant needs to find it difficult or impossible to stay awake. The lagging hours move slowly on. Then suddenly they hear a sound about which there can be no mistake. All trim their lamps and prepare to go forth to meet their dear friend and master.

There he comes, and his entrance into the house is the signal for cheerfulness and rejoicing. In his joy at finding the servants watching, the master invites them to sit down at the loaded tables. The master himself girds his loins and moves about the table waiting upon his seated servants. The house is filled with the joy and gladness of the feast.

This vivid scene brings some very vital truths to our attention. The servants of the Lord watch and wait for His return. The servants are those in whose heart the Spirit of God has performed His work and aroused them from spiritual death and made them God's children through faith in Christ, the sin-atonig Saviour. They have been adorned with the robe of His righteousness and clothed with the garments of salvation. They have heard with rejoicing in their hearts the Saviour's words of pardoning love. They are His own, and He is their beloved Master and Friend.

They are waiting for His return. For He has said that He would come again in glory and all His holy angels with Him. Trust in His Word causes them with anxious expectancy to wait for the Lord's return. Love for the Master urges them to watchfulness. For in loving devotion to the Bridegroom they yearn for their Friend's return.

The burning lamps are a symbol of the spirit of hope that shines in the believers' heart. The loins of the servants are girded; for they are always ready to give willing and cheerful service to the Master, in whom is centred all their faith, love, and hope.

Even now, my friends, the Master of the house is looking down from heaven upon His Church. How it must grieve His heart to see that in outward Christendom, in many places, the light of God's truth has been extinguished and human philosophies have taken the place of the light of the Gospel, the message of His vicarious life and death!

How it must fill His heart with sadness when He sees the dimness with which the lamp of faith and love and hope is burning, even in the Church of the pure Word and confession!

Is the Church of the Reformation, blessed with the pure Gospel, the world's only hope, vividly conscious of the nearness of the Lord's return, and casting aside all lethargy and procrastination, and with girded loins, ready for action, bringing the Gospel with its peace and moral power to the world, which is hastening on to lawlessness?

In these times of godlessness, materialistic philosophy and worship of scientific inventions, in this age of armaments, imperialism, class war, exaggerated nationalism and capitalistic cruelty and greed, where is our Church's determination and heroic courage to bring to people the peace of the Cross, the Spirit-wrought power of Christian love, and the sure hope of entering a land of perfect happiness and glory? Oh, the Church needs more brightly burning lamps and better girded loins!

And if we turn our attention from the Church as a whole, to the individual members, what do we find? Where are many of those who have stood before the altar, and with sincere devotion vowed eternal allegiance to Christ and lifelong service to their Master on Confirmation Day? Their lamps have gone out. Their feet are entangled in the meshes of worldliness and the thicket of the service of sin. Once servants of the Master, they have become slaves of Satan and are on their way to the abyss of destruction.

But what about your own spiritual condition? Are you waiting for your Lord in vital faith, with love's devotion, with ardent hope? Is Jesus your One and All? Is your lamp of hope burning brightly in anxious expectation of your Lord's return?

Are you vitally conscious of the fact that you are but a stranger and pilgrim here on earth and that your abiding home is above? Have you gone out from the

world and from all that might entice and shackle you here below, and are you with your whole heart serving the Lord in your personal life, your home-life, your business, your recreations?

Are you with girded loins performing the tasks which your Master has entrusted to you as a servant in His household? Are you living for self or for Christ and for the advancement of His kingdom? Oh, who of us is not deeply conscious of his drowsiness?

May Christ awaken us all from our spiritual sleepiness, and give to us all a New Church-Year, new in complete devotion to our Saviour, new in constant watchfulness for His coming!

2. When We Are To Make Ready.

May none of us postpone the hour of spiritual awakening.

Our text says, 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.* ⁴⁰ *Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*”

⁴¹ *Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?”* ⁴² *And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?”* ⁴³ *Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.* ⁴⁴ *Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.*

⁴⁵ *But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk.*

Let no one say in his heart, “*My master is delaying his coming.*”

If the master of the house had known the hour when the thief would come, he would have remained awake and not permitted the thief to plunder his home.

Likewise we do not know the hour when our Lord will return. Therefore we are to watch always, to be ready for the Lord’s coming at every hour of life’s fleeting time. The Lord may come in the days of our youth, in the midst of the labours of manhood, or in the days of old age’s frailties.

Let nothing therefore keep you from turning to Christ today, this very hour.² Scripture says in 2 Corinthians 6:2, ***Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*** Now you are still counting the moments of grace. Tomorrow it may be too late. For as death finds you, the Lord will find you when He comes to judge.

Some people want to procrastinate. They wait for a more convenient season. In the days of youth they want to enjoy the pleasures of sin. In middle life they are too busy with the business of the world, and the labour of saving up for a rainy day. Christ gives no guarantee to us that we will reach a ripe old age. He gives us no assurance of a death-bed repentance.

Now we should take Christ and His Cross and His service seriously, now wholly dedicate our life to Him. Now and every day of our life we should be on our guard lest Satan, that thief in the night, come and rob us of our faith in Christ, our love to Jesus, and our hope of eternal happiness.

We are truly blessed are we if when the Master comes He finds us watching. He will make us partakers of the marriage feast of the Lamb and let us share His glory in the eternal home.

May the Spirit of God, through His Word and Sacrament, give us true Christian watchfulness, so that we can say with sincerity of heart:³

Nearer is my soul's salvation;
Spent the night, the day at hand.
Keep me in my lowly station,
Watching for Thee, till I stand,
O my Saviour,
O my Saviour
In Thy bright, Thy promised land. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Revelation 22:20

² See hymn 305

³ Hymn 491 v 3