

## **Resurrection-Shaped Lives Ready When HE Comes**

*Luke 12:35-48*

### **The Problem of Waiting**

We are not good at waiting.

We don't like long lines. We don't like slow internet. We don't like delayed answers. If something takes too long, we assume something is wrong.

But what if the delay is intentional? What if the waiting is the test?

Some of you know what it's like to wait for something important. You have had those long days waiting on a diagnosis. Some of you have had those weeks where you are waiting to hear back on a job opportunity. Others of you are waiting on a prodigal child to come home. We all do all sorts of waiting. And that waiting reveals what we really believe about God.

And Jesus, in Luke 12, is talking to people who are waiting. But not just waiting for anything. They are waiting for **Him**.

### **A Life Lived in Light of Eternity**

All throughout Luke 12, Jesus has been pulling back the curtain on reality. He teaches that one day everything hidden will be revealed. The Lord lets people know that what you do with Him now matters forever. And he encourages believers to live with that forever in mind by not storing up treasure here. He teaches us to store up treasure in Heaven.

And now He says: **“Live like I’m coming back.”**

### **I. The Call to Readiness (Luke 12:35–40)**

“Stay dressed for action...” Or more literally: **“Gird up your loins.”**

Now let's be honest—that phrase doesn't exactly land in 2026. “Gird up your loins.” Gird is not to be confused with The Gerd (gastroesophageal reflux disease) is a broad term covering a lot of heartburn-related issues. My dad and several of you suffer from The Gerd. You need to add “The” in front of it, to help communicate the seriousness of the diagnosis.

But this is gIrd, “gird”, and not The gErd, “gerd.” This is different. Gird is preparatory. A sense of being prepared. But nobody woke up this morning and said, “Alright kids, let’s gird up and get to church.” And the Greek’s “let your loins stay girded,” doesn’t help. And loins, well, that’s a special little interpretive journey. So, what does it mean?

In the first century, people wore long robes or tunics. They were great for everyday life—but terrible for action. When was the last time you decided to spring to get the morning paper in your bathrobe?

If you needed to run, fight, or work hard, you had to **pull up the robe, tuck it into your belt, and secure it**. It looked awkward—but it meant one thing: **You’re ready**.

Ready to move. Ready to act. Ready for whatever comes next.

### **Modern Equivalent**

My hometown was recently in the news for a massive tornado chewing through part of the eastern side of the city. A mile north of my brother’s house. However, despite massive amounts of damage, the incredible meteorologists and the lunatics who chase the storms, helped people stay prepared and ready. Everyone in Oklahoma has a tornado plan. Everyone. They’ve either got shelters or an area in their home without windows that can be save spaces. Oklahomans are prepared. Girded.

If Jesus were preaching this today, instead of “keep your loins girded,” He might say: “keep your shoes,” or “keep your keys in your hand,” or “sleep in your uniform.” This is a command to live as through you’re on call.

That’s the idea. Not relaxed. Not drifting. Not spiritually half-asleep. The drift into “it’ll happen another day,” that is an issue in churches. It robs us of our urgency. The drift convinces us that the things we need to be doing, well, they can be put off a bit. Because the Master is not imminent, right?

It is what convinces us that we don’t need to pray every day. We don’t need to spend time in God’s word every day. We don’t need to have moments of rest and renewal in places where we are connected to creation, which is one of our essential relationships we were created to have.

The beauty of creation resonates with us because earth is our home because mankind originated from an unfallen version of it. We drift when we are too busy to engage in this important aspect of our created purpose.

The drift convinces us we need worship that resonates with our playlist and not our soul. The drift convinces us that there are a lot of things more important than gathering with other believers. The drift convinces us that sacrificial living for the Gospel and the Kingdom isn't really a worthy endeavor. The drift convinces us we don't need to be ready for that moment when the Master knocks on the door. The drift is a big bag of lies.

Be **alert, be engaged, be ready at any moment.** That's what Jesus is saying: Live like that spiritually. **Why? Because He Is Coming Back**

Jesus tells a story about servants waiting for their master. They don't know when he's coming. It could be late. Extremely late. But when he knocks they have to be ready, regardless of the time.

### **The Stunning Twist (v. 37)**

The master comes home and instead of being served, **He serves them.**

This is the gospel in miniature. The Master became the Servant. He came not to be served, but to serve—and to give His life. The One who will return in glory is the One who already came in humility.

### **The Timing: Unexpected**

Jesus says His return will be like a thief in the night. Not predictable. Not scheduled. Not announced. People will be living normal lives, and the suddenly, He's there. This is Jesus speaking of his own second coming, an surprise arrival, to be sure.

## **II. The Test of Faithfulness (vv. 41–46)**

Peter asks: “Is this for us—or everyone?” It is a good question. Is this just a story for the disciples, despite thousands listening in? Or is this for all of the ears in the crowd that day. Is Jesus warning everyone to be ready, to be prepared. Jesus answers with another story.

## The Steward

A servant is given responsibility. That's all of us. In the parable, the servants have been entrusted with the household. Which breaks down into a few things that matter to us. Every one of us has been entrusted with a few things. Regardless of age, resources, whatever. Every person has received some things that we are to take special care of. We've all been entrusted with time. We've all been entrusted with relationships. Which means we have all been entrusted with influence. And believers have been entrusted with truth.

## Two Responses: Faithful and Unfaithful Stewards

Jesus then lays out two responses to these servants entrusted with the household.

The faithful steward is the first example. The faithful steward obeys his master. He also serves others. And he lives ready. He lives prepared for the masters knock.

That leads us to the next example of the unfaithful steward. He says: "My master is delayed." And that belief changes everything. It means that the steward can live for himself and not his master. That belief that the steward comes first causes him to abuse others and avoid accountability.

Jesus is pointing out the difference here for his followers. There's a difference between living like no one is watching and living like the Master could walk in at any moment. Character is revealed in the waiting.

## The Verdict

The master returns and the truth is exposed. The unfaithful servant is revealed to be exactly that, unfaithful. This is not a struggling believer but a **false one**. It is important to know the difference.

A struggling believer is someone who fights their sin, even if they often feel like they're losing that fight. But there is a desire to try to be holy, to struggle through with God's strength.

A false believer is someone that may look religious, and can even have some religious-appearing patterns (they go to church, they listen to praise and worship music, they occasionally poke around a Bible app) but they have no desire whatsoever to submit their lives to Jesus.

A struggling believer says, “I keep failing but I don’t want to. Lord, please help me.” A false believer says, “I’m fine as I am and I don’t really need to change.” The unfaithful steward certainly reflects the heart direction of a false believer.

### **III. The Reality of Judgment (vv. 47–48)**

Jesus closes with weight. Not everyone is judged the same. People who have greater knowledge are held to greater accountability. This is a sobering warning for us.

We are not people who lack access to truth. We have Bibles. We hear sermons. We know the gospel.

This closing section is troubling. One of the possible actions of the Master when he returns is to punish the unfaithful servant. Verses 46-48 outline three punishments.

1. The servant who is outright disobedient, who does the opposite of what was commanded, will be dismembered (cut him to pieces), and the Lord will assign him a place with unbelievers. The picture here is outright rejection.
2. The second punishment is for someone who knows what his master wants and who simply fails to obey that command will be severely disciplined (he will receive a severe beating).
3. But for the servant who fails to obey because he does not know what he must obey, he will be beaten with a few blows. Jesus pictures an accountability here that varies, depending on what one does and what one knows.

There are varying degrees of punishment in hell based on one’s knowledge of the Master’s will. While all rejection of Jesus leads to judgment, those who have received more spiritual knowledge (or “much”) are held to a higher standard. In other words, in hell there are degrees of suffering. So

the challenge is to make sure that we are spending our days laying up treasures in heaven, not storing up wrath in hell because of our amount of exposure to the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Come to church a lot, hear the gospel invitation, and then choose to reject Jesus? The New Testament tells us that person has been given “much” in that they have had many opportunities to learn about Jesus. And chose rejection. Which leads them to a terrible destination.

### **Gospel Presentation**

And here’s where this lands for all of us. Because the question is not just, “Are you ready?” The deeper question is, “**Are you His?**”

Because readiness flows from relationship. Jesus came the first time not to judge but to save. He lived the perfect life that we couldn’t live. And then he died the death we deserved to die. And on the third day, He rose again in victory. And now He offers forgiveness and life to all who trust Him.

But hear this clearly: The One who came as Savior is absolutely, positively coming back as Judge. Have you chosen to be His?

### **The Door**

Think of it like a door. Right now it’s open. Which means that grace is available. Mercy is extended. Forgiveness is offered.

But one day, that door will close. And when it does, there are no second chances. Do not wait or put off what you can and need to do today. If the Master knocks on the door tomorrow, are you prepared? Are you girded? Are you constantly ready?

### **What Does Readiness Look Like?**

Are you living your life spiritually awake, not spiritually asleep? Are you living for eternity and not just today? Are you living faithfully with what God has given you? Are you living differently from the world?

### **The Urgency of Now**

Are you prepared for the knock on the door? Recently the young man that my daughter enjoys spending time with was coming over to the house.

My wife told me that meant we had to get the house spotless, prepared, ready. We wanted the house to be clean and nice for the boy. So, I swept and mopped. I got every dish cleaned and all the tables dusted. I cleaned all counters and my son vacuumed and arranged the couches. The house looked immaculate and was ready for a royal visit. If we are willing to go to those lengths for our daughters' boyfriends, what length are we willing to go to for the Master's impending knock?

Are we willing to lighten our kids extra-curricular schedules so they can sit under preaching and teaching more than once a month?

Are we willing to sit in a smaller room for a Bible study with other believers, not being satisfied with just sitting in a big room to worship?

Are we willing to go next door or across the street to build relationships with our neighbors so that they can be prepared for the Master's knock?

Now, imagine if you knew Jesus was coming back tonight. What would change?

What would you stop? What would you start? What would you confess? Who would you reach out to?

Now here's the truth. You don't know that He's not.

So, gird up. Be prepared. Be ready. Keep your lamps burning. And live every day like the next moment could be the moment that you see your King.