

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

## "THE 'GOOD OL' DAYS' ARE AHEAD OF US" | LUKE 12:35-48 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

### WARM-UP QUESTION:

**What is challenging about having a surprise visit at home or at work?**

### ***"Readiness Described" (Luke 12: 35-36)***

Jesus' parable shows good servants waiting for their master to return, prepared and alert. **What is hard about staying prepared and alert for Jesus' second coming?**

### ***"The Blessing of Readiness" (Luke 12: 37-40)***

Jesus' parable shows the Master serving the servants when he returns. **What impact should that have on a Christ-follower, that when Jesus returns He will serve the faithful?**

### ***"Accountability for the Servants" (Luke 12: 41-48)***

Jesus' parable shows that the Master returns to selfish servants, forgetful servants, ignorant servants and faithful servants, with each receiving different reactions. **If Jesus is the Master, what does this show about Him and what He wants from His followers?**

### ***"The 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming's Practical Application" (Luke 12: 35-48)***

When a Christ-follower understands Jesus is coming back, it should result in Spiritual Alertness, Mission Urgency, Power to Forgive, and Hope in Suffering. **Which one of those responses is easiest for you? Most difficult?**

### REFLECTION QUESTION:

Jesus is coming again, at a time His followers don't expect. Jesus doesn't expect His followers to figure when He comes, but to be faithful until He comes. **What is one thing you can focus on this week to be more faithful? What would need to change in your life for that to happen? Pray God gives you the heart and discipline to be found faithful.**

## The 'good ol' days' are ahead of us

### I. Slide1 **Announce:**

A. Slide2-9 AP: Harvest. CG. Men's. Food. Fam Nite. A21. Baptism. Ministry Fair.

B. Slide10 Sun Prayer:

C. Slide11 STEP: Larry, Jen, & I are going to Nepal on Friday.

1. **The purpose:** of our trip is to **establish a Company** in Nepal in order to **secure land** for the Rohingya. [we must establish a Corporation in Nepal in order to purchase property in Nepal as foreigners].
2. **The problem:** is rent increases every pay period & their property is literally being purchased right out from under them. Result, there are 2/3 families living together in a corrugated-metal-home, in squalor conditions.
3. **The solution:** To purchase a large piece of property where we can help **secure permanent housing** on a large enough piece of property for the Rohingya. To do this, we started **a separate nonprofit Foundation** called **STEP** (Strategy To End Poverty) in which we can receive grant \$ that is specifically identified for **humanitarian aid**. STEP is controlled by CM, and is the **humanitarian aid arm** of **CM's missions program**.
4. **STEP runs parallel** with our church's Visions to reach the Rohingya. The idea is for STEP to focus on the **Humanitarian needs**, **while** the church is focused on the **Spiritual needs**.
5. **Where is the money coming from, for the solution:** The Church purchased **property** approximately 20 years ago. **During the last 15 years, we have watched God use various portions of the property to provide for CM in unique ways.** **The last portion** of the property is currently in **escrow**, and **the sale should close in early November**. If it closes, some of those funds will be used by STEP to purchase the property in Nepal. The rest of the money needed will come from humanitarian aid grants.

6. We have committed to help with their lives to become *sustainable financially*, productive Nepali citizens, & God's glory is our ultimate goal.

D. *Prayer: May we, Look for his coming. Love his coming. Long for his coming.*

## II. Slide12 Intro: *The 'good ol' days' are ahead of us*

A. *Parables:* Read and Ponder. To provoke your imagination. These parables were about Himself and His Kingdom. *They remind us of 3 things:*

1. *The Surprise of God's Kingdom* (not to take over Rome, *but* heal the sick, a sign of God's kingdom).
2. *The Upside-down Kingdom* (poor & low status were imp to God).
3. *God's Kingdom Requires a Decision* (ignore or reject Him, *or* trust & follow Him).

a) *Let's also remember about parables:* they were to *reveal* truth to those who were *open-minded*. *And* to *conceal* His message for those *against* Him.

4. These *ancient parables* are still full of *new surprises and challenges*.

B. *Do you believe Jesus is coming again?*

1. *Every one of us is moving towards a rendezvous with Jesus Christ. You might not know this but it's been written into every one of our diaries, in every single one of our day planners, the exact time. It's scheduled. It's coming. Every believer / unbeliever, He's coming. Are you ready for this?*

## III. Slide13 **READINESS DESCRIBED (35,36)** *Read be alert for Masters return*

A. Jesus here starts with *a wedding feast*.

B. **THE GOOD WAITER** - 4 distinct characteristics:

1. **Preparation** - *stay dressed for action*.

a) In Ex.12:11 when God was giving Moses instructions for eating Passover He said: *Be fully dressed, wear your sandals, and carry your walking stick in your hand. Eat the meal with urgency, for this is the Lord's Passover.*

- b) **Stay dressed for action** - the verb indicates a state of perpetual readiness for action. It means to be the kind of person who never needs to be told to get dressed, because they will always live in this condition. (Jude, 1st day of Kinder)
2. **Maintenance** - **keep your lamps burning**. *We'll Keep the lights on!* (motel 6)
3. **Remaining** - **be like men who are waiting for their master**.
- a) He's **not saying** that the Christian's ultimate goal is to be a *hermit insomniac!*
- b) **Jesus is basically saying**, **Live** your life realizing that the end is near. **Live** with a heavenly perspective. **Live** more concerned about the fear of God and the fear of man. **Live** in readiness to serve Him.
- (1) **Anticipation** - of the 2nd Coming - is **motivation**.
4. **Expecting** - so that they may **open the door** to him at once when he comes and knocks. Rev.3:20 *Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.* [door watchers. *Ever get in late to a hotel & hope the staff is still up?*] 1st time I went to **India**, I stayed in **Kerala**, we showed up in the middle of the night. The family received us very late. met us at the car outside to bring in our things. showed us to our room. and immediately went to the kitchen to make us some toast.
- a) **Listen**, there's going to be *an invasion from outer space*, into this world ... it will be none other than **Jesus Himself** riding a white steed.
- (1) For the **lost** it will be **the final judgement**. For the **found** it will be **a beautiful reunion**.

#### IV. Slide14 **THE BLESSINGS OF READINESS (37,38)** *Read because timing unknown*

- A. **Now try to wrap your mind around ... He will come and serve them (37) -**
1. What a surprising **role reversal** in that **the Master** (the Greater Waiter) **ends up serving up a feast to the servants**. [we go from from waiter, to waited on]
  2. Reminds us of *the last becoming 1st*. Reminds us of **Jesus washing feet**.

3. Ever been uncomfortable someone serving you? Waiting on you?  
Now can you imagine Christ serving you?
4. This will be *the final reward* of watchful waiting, it's fellowship with Him.

V. Slide15 **HOMEOWNER READINESS (39,40)** *Read because timing unknown*

- A. The son of Man is Coming - at an hour you *do not* expect. [we are to be living *Ring Video Doorbells*]

VI. Slide16a **ACCOUNTABILITY (41-48)** *Read just 41*

- A. (41) He doesn't answer yet, *but* Jesus' scope of *accountability* reaches all believers and non-believers alike.

1. But everybody is in this somewhere. Believers/unbelievers. Faithful/unfaithful.

- B. Slide16b **REWARD For Faithfulness (42-44)** *Read because*

1. You receive your portion of food. You are blessed/oh how happy/Joy.  
You will be over His possessions.

- C. Slide16c **RETRIBUTION For Unfaithfulness (45,46)** *Read because*

1. The unbeliever is *cut in 1/2* (gk. dissection) or *separated from the community* (sheep/goats).

2. He was speaking to **false servants**. This servant is *no servant at all*.  
*Whatever profession of faith he had was annulled by his behavior.*

- D. Slide16d **Degrees of ACCOUNTABILITY (47,48)** *Read based on level of knowledge*

1. **Principle:** greater privilege means greater accountability.

- E. **The Forgetful Servant (47)**

1. A believing servant who **knew** better, *but* didn't get ready or do His will.

a) He was well schooled in the things of God. He knows what was expected of him. *Nevertheless*, he wastes his time and talents and ignores God's will for his life.

2. Greater accountability, *a severe beating*. More is required of them because of their privileged position.

- a) Sometimes the stripes come in this life as God chastises him for his neglect. Other times God intends to deal with it at the Bema Seat judgment (wood, hay, stubble).

F. *The Feeble Servant* (48)

1. A believing servant who *knew* better.
2. Lesser accountability, *a lighter beating*. No excuse will be accepted at the Bema Seat for *poor performance*, but allowance will be made for *ignorance*.

G. *Everyone* (48) - here Jesus now answers Peter's question, *all*.

1. *See*, He was first talking to individual groups, but now *for all*.

H. *Slide 17* 1 Cor.3:12-15 *Anyone who builds on that foundation* (Jesus) *may use a variety of materials* - gold, silver, jewels (nonflammable materials), wood, hay, or straw (flammable materials). 13 *But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done*. The fire will show if a person's work has *any value*. 14 *If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward*. 15 *But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss* (of reward?). The builder will be *saved*, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

1. The test is *not* whether *they* will stand, but whether their *works* will stand.
  - a) Those who build poorly will suffer loss, but they themselves will be *saved* as a person who is rescued from a fire. *Picture a man escaping a burning building, he has his life ... but no possessions*.

I. *Examples of our wood, hay, & straw works?*

1. *Wood*: when you do a ministry at church to be seen by others ... *POOF!*  
*Hay*: when you share the gospel w/someone, but you're more interested in *showing off what you know*, than caring for the soul of the individual ... *POOF!*  
*Straw*: any time you *served the Lord* with a wrong heart ... *POOF!*

## VII.Slide18a THE 2ND COMING'S *Practical Application*

A. What comes to your honest mind when you hear Jesus is Coming again?

1. Know this, the 2nd Coming is very important. With no less than 318 ref's to it in the NT (that's, *1 out of 13 vss mention it*).
2. With this much information that we have **we should not be like the people in Noah's day** that were so **unprepared** for the cataclysmic flood ... even though they too *had many years of prophetic warning*.

B. It's teaching should **sober us and change us** ... in 4 ways:

### 1. Spiritual Alertness<sup>1</sup>

- a) The NT writers all eagerly awaited Jesus return. Like they were ***straining forward***, and on ***tiptoes*** as they yearn for His return. They lived with spiritual alertness, as if Jesus could back at any moment.
- b) **What if today is your last chance to repent, your last chance to forgive, your last chance to share the gospel?**

### 2. Mission Urgency

- a) If you know the world has ***an end*** - and that it could be ***soon***, it rearranges **your priorities**. (It makes no sense to go around rearranging deck chairs if you're on the sinking Titanic). **And yet** that's what many of us are doing with our lives. Often **our actions tell the world the end is not soon and the mission is not urgent**.

### 3. Power to Forgive

- a) Tim Keller points out that **believing in the return of Jesus gives us the power to forgive**. When someone wrongs us, we want **justice**. We run to the judgment seat of the world, hop on it, and help God mete out his due. **But here's the problem:** we weren't meant for that seat. **It's too big for us**.
- b) **Apart from** the doctrine of the second coming, we have no power to keep ourselves from running to that judgment seat. **Only by** knowing that Jesus **is**

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from an article by J. D. Greear.

coming back, and his return means *true justice*, can I be content to stay off it.  
*I can endure injustice for the time being, because he'll set things right.*

#### 4. Hope in Suffering

- a) Jesus returning “*in the clouds*” speaks of the permanent return of the glory of God. It is a promise that all of *the pain and suffering* in our lives can't last forever. Or, as Cornelius Plantinga says, “*The return of Christ is good news for people whose lives are filled with bad news.*”
- b) So if a **family member** just died of **cancer**, if your **marriage** just **dissolved**, if you're **lonely**, if your body is wracked with **chronic pain**, then Jesus is saying to you: Lift up your eyes! I'm coming back, and it might be today! There is reason to hope even in the midst of the *darkest valley*. As one author puts it, *Slide18b* “*The promise of the second coming shows us the ‘good ole days’ are always ahead of us.*”

C. Communion:

D. \*Please stop in the gym for our *Ministry Fair*.

E. Keywords: Second Coming, judgement, unbelief.