

Luke 12:35-59

Verses 35-40:

--Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 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. 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. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 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. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

--(35-36) Having spoken about the Father's pleasure in giving the kingdom, Jesus now speaks to everyone about being prepared for the coming of the kingdom of God.

--Long flowing robes made work difficult, so they would be hiked up—**waist be girded**. Also, traveling or waiting in the dark would require a lamp with oil—**lamps burning**. Both are signs of preparation for action.

--Jesus is picturing a servant ready to immediately respond to their master's knock at the door. There is nothing they need to do before answering the door and meeting their master.

--(37) What an incredible promise! Who else but Jesus would dare to tell us something like this?! The last thing a servant would expect would be for their master to "turn the tables" and have them sit down and be served.

--**Assuredly, I say to you.** . . . Is definitive. Jesus wants to make it clear that His promise is no mere symbol. He intends to do exactly what He said. Who He was in the flesh, He remains in glory.

Luke 22:27: For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

--What greater honor could there be than to be served by the Lord of Glory?! Do we find it hard to serve Him now? Even in glory, He does not find it hard to serve us!

--(38) The Jews broke the night up into three watches (**Judges 7:19**) and the Romans had four watches (**Mt. 14:25**). Whichever watch Luke is referring to, the point is that the servant is watching and ready late into the night.

--Jesus is offering a particular blessing to servants who are ready at the latest hours—us!

--(39-40) Anyone would be prepared if they knew the exact time of something. If the time is not known, only the event, then we must be ready at all times! Reference back to the living readiness of 35. *What if Jesus returned today? Would He find us about His business? Our readiness looks like living quiet, simple lives of faith and obedience.*

--The *point* of understanding the signs of the times is to *live* ready.

--**Son of Man**. . . is a direct reference to Himself. Jesus, the Son of Man and Son of God, will literally return to earth. *Though no one knows the exact time, so don't believe anyone who says they do!*

Verses 41-48:

--**Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?"**

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? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 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, 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. 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. 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.

--(41) Peter asks a good question. Is Jesus speaking specifically to His disciples or to the crowd? Jesus doesn't answer directly, but the point of the parable does. Everyone will be accountable for what they have been given—stewards (disciples) and servants (crowds).

--(42) Stewards were freeman or slaves who oversaw the operations of an estate in the place of the owner.

--Faithful stewards of God's house make sure things are run in a way that pleases the Master, and that the other servants receive **their portion of food in due season**. *I think the portioning of food is a reference to the ministry of the Word of God.*

--(43) How should our Master find us? **So doing**. . . not merely knowing. *Doers* of the Master's Word, not just *hearers* of it—47.

Titus 3:8: This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

--What has your Master given you to do?

--(44) Faithful stewards are promised greater stewardship! The natural process of oversight in any job is service to oversight. Faithfulness leads to promotion.

--God's kingdom is similar. This life is *the beginning* of our ultimate and eternal service to God. The fact of our service never changes, but the function does.

--(45-46) **But if that servant**. . . Jesus now takes the same servant and gives them a different character.

--**Says in his heart.** . . What we say to ourselves is the most important thing we are saying.

Proverbs 23:7: For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

--**My master is delaying his coming.** . . When the master is far away, so is accountability and judgment. *Isn't this the sad reality of so much church history?!*

1 John 3:3: And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

--**cut him in two.** . . is a Greek word (*dichotomeo*) that could mean to be bisected or flogged severely. It is used in the NT only here and in **Mt. 24:51**, where we are told: **and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

--I believe Jesus is threatening to remove the unjust servants from His household as opposed to just hurting the body. The end game in both references is receiving the same portion of judgment as **the unbelievers.**

--**(47-48)** God's grace does not interfere with God's government. He will be morally just. As there are differences in responsibilities, there will also be differences in judgment.

--Servants are accountable for what they know. Not what they do not know. That is the ultimate answer to Peter's question.

--**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.**

--What has God given us? What has God committed to our care? That is what we will be accountable for.

Verses 49-53:

--**I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.**

--**(49)** What type of fire is Jesus speaking about here? Some think Jesus is referencing the Holy Spirit, but that seems very foreign to the context. Others feel it is the fire of judgment, but that seems difficult to relate to the current timing and desire He is speaking about. He was not currently judging or even there to condemn.

--Fire is also a picture of trouble and affliction through the Scripture. See: **Ps. 66:12; Isa. 43:2; Lam. 1:13; Ez. 39:6; Hosea 8:14; Amos 2:2+5.**

--Jesus is saying that His presence on earth is like a spark setting it all on fire! The following context of His baptism and the resulting division reflects this interpretation of fire better than fire being pictured as the Holy Spirit or even ultimate judgment.

--What baptism is Jesus referring to? The baptism of His mission to carry our curse on the cross and drink the cup of God's wrath on our behalf.

***Mark 10:38-39: But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"**

They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized;"*

--James and John would also face trouble, tribulation, and death, but not like Jesus did. Their obedience would not accomplish what Christ's did.

--Jesus says, ***and how distressed I am till it is accomplished.*** The weight of that mission was heavy on His heart.

John 12:27: "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour."

--The Greek word for ***accomplished*** (*teleo*) is the same used in:

Luke 18:31: Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished."

Luke 22:37: For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end.

John 19:28+30: After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. . . So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

--Jesus Christ has accomplished on our behalf what no one else ever could, or even would have had the courage to attempt. The very weight of it would have crushed a weak human spirit.

Only Jesus of Nazareth had the character and courage necessary to fulfill God's will.

***Stewart (The Life and Teaching Of Jesus Christ): "From this point on one steady, dazzling flame can be seen burning through the shadows as they deepened into midnight—the heroism of the soul of Jesus. Listen to his words: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50). "I must walk today, and tomorrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Luke 13:33). So with a high head and steady eyes and firm step he went, with no weapons but his love, no resources but God and his own indomitable soul, to where the entrenched and embattled forces of evil were waiting for him. No wonder the evangelist, describing one stage of that last march, has put it like this: "Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid" (Mark 10:32).**

*“Jesus,” says Bengel finely, “was dwelling in his passion.” If evangelical Christianity, emphasizing (and rightly) the wonderful tenderness of Jesus, has sometimes obscured the blazing heroism of the Master’s soul, here on the road sweeping south out of Galilee toward Jerusalem that heroism must be rediscovered and lay its overwhelming spell on heart and conscience again. And especially today, when a world grown impatient of sentimentalism and insincerities is beginning to realize that religion is not a mass of shibboleths but a brave, glad quality of life; when we are learning that the real saints of the Church are not the feeble, ineffective spirits who wail “Thy will be done” with a sign of futile resignation, but the men who shout it like a battle cry—“Thy will be done!”—and go out to take the Kingdom by storm; not those who shun the hard way, but the men who tread it with song, the young fellow who is living to God in the difficult atmosphere of office or shop or factory or club, the girl to whom the law of Christ matters more than the law of her social set—in such a day as this it is a captain, a commander, who is needed. Here on the royal road of the Cross he stands, the Hero-Christ, a leader for whom men would gladly die. So the strong Son of God went out to his last crusade.”**

--(51-53) Christ is well aware that what He is about to accomplish will send fire that divides even the closest of family ties. Before peace on earth comes division in relation to the Person and Lordship of Jesus Christ.

--It is wonderful to see whole families saved and serving Jesus Christ, from grandparents to grandchildren. But it never starts that way! First, there must come a saved person, an individual who is the first one born again in any family, who breaks the old paths through division. *Sadly, many unsaved people are annoyed or enraged by a loved one’s new life in Christ. Many even hate it!*

--Jesus understands. His own siblings didn’t believe in Him at first (**Jn. 7:5**).

--Even so, Jesus claims unflinching and uncompromised loyalty. So much so that one cannot be His disciple otherwise (**Lk. 14:26**), and God even allows the marriage vow to be surrendered by a saved spouse whose unsaved spouse wants to leave (**1 Cor. 7:15**).

--Jesus Christ demands loyalty over all other human relationships.

--Why was it important for Him to say this? Because He knew how hard it would be for believers through the ages! He knew family divisions would cause us to wonder: *Am I doing something wrong?* Jesus Christ knew we would need the clarity He gives us here.

--These verses do not need exposition or explanation. They require faith and obedience.

Verses 54-56:

--Then He also said to the multitudes, “Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming’; and so it is. And when you see the south wind blow, you say, ‘There will be hot weather’; and there is. Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?

--Jesus was speaking to an agricultural society that was very familiar with reading the weather. They could read the sky and respond accordingly.

--His rebuke is stern. He calls them **Hypocrites!** Why?

--Because they could read the sky but refused to **discern this time**. What time? The time of the Messiah! The time promised from the beginning by the prophets.

Luke 10:23-24: Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."

--They were hypocrites because they didn't have *the will to see*—not the eyes to see. We can be hypocrites in our refusal to acknowledge the truth. *How many today are living in the world and pretending that what they know about Jesus isn't real?!

Verses 57-59:

--Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite.

--(57) I think Jesus is saying something similar to (11:19), where His basic point was that any normal person will see and judge clearly the reasonableness of what He is saying.

--(58-59) This short parable shows that the wise move is to get things right and make peace *before you stand before the judge*.

--We, too, need to make sure things are right between God and us while still **along the way**. Arrival will be too late. *How many people foolishly think they are not perfect, but they are not bad enough to be judged by God and sent to hell?!

--The **you** of 59 is singular. We need to make individual, personal decisions. Choose to step out of the crowded broad path and join the narrow path traveled by few.

--Jesus Christ has accomplished our path to forgiveness!

Colossians 2:13-14: And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

--All we need to do to be eternally right with God is to believe in the work of His Son.

--Am I ready for my Master's return? Am I faithful with His business? Whose side am I on? Do I see the signs of the times? Am I walking in agreement with God now, or waiting for judgment?

--Jesus pleads with hearts on so many different angles in these parables!