

## How To Be Prepared For The Lord's Return

Luke 12:35-36

**Luke 12:35-36** - "Be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps lit. Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks."

### **Introduction:**

- A. The basic purpose for which Jesus came to earth was to reveal God's truth to mankind and offer Himself as a sacrifice for our sins that we might have salvation. However, one of the subjects about which He talked some, especially later in His earthly ministry, was the need to be ready for His second coming.
- B. Read TEXT. In this particular passage, Jesus doesn't necessarily connect what He's saying directly to the second coming, but He does use the same kind of language in later passages where it's clear that He is talking about His return.
- C. So we can use these words to help us understand how to be prepared for the Lord's return.

### **I. We Must Have Our Waist Girded**

A. What does this mean?

- 1. To "gird" is to encircle, and to gird the waist means to use a sash or belt to tie together all one's clothing and accessories (cf. soldier) - Eph. 6:14, 1 Pet. 1:13

**Ephesians 6:14** - Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

**1 Peter 1:13** - Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- B. The reason for this girding is to be ready for anything, and hence it is a symbol of being prepared (cf. man with expectant wife) - Matt. 24:36-44

**Matthew 24:36-44** - "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left. Therefore, be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

- C. But how do we "gird up the loins of our minds" so that we are ready for His coming? - 2 Cor. 10:3-5, Phil. 4:8

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5** - For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

**Philippians 4:8** - Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

### **II. We Must Keep Our Lamps Burning**

- A. This reminds us of another story that Jesus told about being ready for His coming - Matt. 25:1-13

**Matthew 25:1-13** - Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut.

Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

B. But what's so important about keeping our lamps burning? - Matt. 5:14-16

**Matthew 5:14-16** - "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

C. So here we have an added element

1. Not only does preparation for Christ's coming involve bringing our own thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ
2. But also it means being a good influence on others - 1 Tim. 4:12, 1 Pet. 2:11-12

**1 Timothy 4:12** - Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

**1 Peter 2:11-12** - Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

### III. *We Must Be Waiting For The Master*

A. Christians even in the first century were waiting for the Lord's return: 1 Thess. 1:9-10

**1 Thessalonians 1:9-10** - For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

B. But waiting is more than just sitting down and doing nothing until the time (like doctor's office)

1. It also implies preparing or getting ready by doing what the Master bids us - Matt. 25:14-30

**Matthew 25:14-30** - "For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them and gained five more talents. In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more. But he who received the one talent went away and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Also, the one who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed. And I was afraid and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.' But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival, I would have received my money back with interest. Therefore, take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.' For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

C. This simply tells us that while we don't earn our salvation, waiting for the Master necessitates doing His will in everything - Matt. 7:21, Col. 3:17

**Matthew 7:21** - "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter."

**Colossians 3:17** - Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

**Conclusion:**

A. The fact is that Jesus IS coming again:

1. Jesus Himself said so (Jn. 5:28-29)
2. The angels said so (Acts 1:11)
3. Paul said so (2 Thess. 1:7-9)
4. Peter said so (2 Pet. 3:10)

B. Therefore, we need to be looking for it (Tit. 2:11-14)

**Titus 2:11-14** - For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

C. The question now is, Are you prepared for that day?