

Blessed Servants (Luke 12:35-48)

I. Introduction

A. *This Week in Clear Living*

1. The faithful servant is watching for his Lord's return.
2. The faithful servant acts responsibly in preparation for the Lord's return.
3. The faithful servant will be rewarded by the Lord.
4. The unfaithful servant will be judged by the Lord.
5. The faithful servant knows that his service is only his spiritual duty.

Question: Do you fret over money and material things? If so, Jesus would ask, Why? Jesus said that we should store our treasures in heaven. How can we do that?

B. Even Christian people occasionally fret over money when finances are tight, but the reason they do so is because they are not fully trusting the Lord to meet their needs.

1. We need to remember the word importunity (*anaideia*) from Luke 11:8. If God does not take care of His people, then non-Christians will have opportunity to gloat.
2. We need to remember Exodus 32:10-12, when Moses told God that the Egyptians would be able to speak negatively about Him if He did not care for His people.
3. Psalm 37:25 says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

C. In Luke 12:13-34, Jesus taught some important principles about money.

1. A person in the crowd wanted Jesus to divide his family's inheritance between his brother and himself.
2. This person may have been trying to trap Jesus, but Jesus quickly turned the tables on the individual.
3. Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 - a. He did not come to divide inheritances or settle disputes.
 - b. Those called to serve the Lord should remain focused as well. Luke 10:3-4 says, "Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and ***salute no man by the way.***"
4. In verses 15-20, Jesus warned about covetousness by telling about the rich man that wanted to build bigger barns for his goods.
5. In verses 22-31, Jesus taught that our heavenly Father can be trusted to meet our needs.
6. In verses 32-34, Jesus taught that we should store our treasures in heaven.

Blessed Servants (Luke 12:35-48)

Question: Jesus told the crowd to be ready, but ready for what? Was He talking about a literal kingdom or a figurative kingdom? How can we justify our belief? Was He talking about His Second Coming or the Rapture.

- II. Jesus told the crowd to be ready.
- A. In verses 35-38, He told them a parable that warned them to keep their loins girded and their lights burning.
1. **The Principle of Hermeneutics** - to understand the Bible, a person must put the passage into the correct context, have some understanding of the time period for the text, know something about the culture, study the original language of the passage, and understand the author's intended meaning.
 - a. According to Dr. J. Vernon McGee, a groom had a wedding supper with his friends prior to claiming his bride at her home. His servants were expected to be fully dressed for work and have their lights lit for the celebration when everyone returned.
 - b. Jesus was speaking to the Jewish people about His Messianic Kingdom and telling them to be ready.
 - c. **His message was clear.**
 - 1) *In the first part of the chapter, He warned against believing the false teachings of the Pharisees.*
 - 2) *Then He warned about being too greedy for gain rather than trusting God.*
 - 3) *Now, He is advising people to be ready for the establishment of His earthly kingdom.*
 2. **People are too easily persuaded to accept manmade religion, and they get too caught up in things that do not matter.**
 3. To be girded about meant to be fully dressed and ready to go/serve.
 4. Was Jesus talking about a literal kingdom or a figurative kingdom? How can we know?
 - a. We believe that His kingdom is literal because the promise was derived from earlier promises that involved a literal seed (Isaac) and literal land (Canaan).
 - b. Some people, even Christians, do not believe in a literal earthly kingdom (Amillennialists). They believe that Jesus figurative returns into a person's heart and that His kingdom is within us.
 5. In verse 37-38, Jesus presented the image of faithful servants to the one getting married.
 - a. Even though their master may return when not expected, the servants will be ready to serve the wedding guests.
 - b. In verse 37, such servants are called blessed (**makarios** - happy).

Blessed Servants (Luke 12:35-48)

- c. That verse also says that the master will allow his servants to participate in the celebration dinner.
 - 1) The master will gird himself, just like his servants.
 - 2) He will serve them as they have served him.
 - 3) Notice in the parable that one servant is not heralded over another. They are rewarded equally because of their faithfulness to their master, but not because one servant was better than another.
 - 4) ***The Lord wants us to be faithful to Him. If we faithfully discharge the tasks that He gives us, then we will be blessed for our faithfulness rather than our degree of success.***
- B. In verses 39-40, Jesus told a second parable, this time about being prepared for a thief.
 1. Jesus was telling the people to be ready for His return in the Rapture. We know this because His Second Coming will be dated to the Rapture and will someday be determinable.
 2. Jesus was omniscient, but He gave up the right to know when He would come back in the Rapture. Mark 13:32 says, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."
 3. He returned to John on the island of Patmos to tell Him about His return. John wrote of the events in the Book of Revelation.
 4. **Not knowing when Jesus will return keeps us from being lackadaisical.**
- C. In verse 41, Peter questions whether the parables apply to everyone in attendance or just to the disciples.
 1. The timeframe is when Jesus was most popular.
 2. The crowd was immense.
 3. In Luke 12:1, Jesus had spoken first to His disciples.
 - a) Apparently Peter believed that Jesus had been speaking only to His disciples up to that point.
 - b) Now Peter wonders whether or not Jesus has opened His remarks up to the crowd.
- D. In verse 42, Jesus indicated that the message was for His faithful and wise stewards.
 1. Faithful (***pistos***) - of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties, in the NT one who trusts in God's promises.
 2. Wise (***phronimos***) - prudent, mindful of one's interests
 3. Steward (***oikonomos***) - the manager of household or of household affairs
 4. A faithful, wise steward can be trusted to look after his master's household.
 - a. Jesus was sharing these parables about being ready for His return with such individuals.

Blessed Servants (Luke 12:35-48)

- b. Revelation 2:29 says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Question: What are the blessings of being ready and the curses of not being ready when Jesus returns?

III. The blessing of being ready and the curse of not being ready

- A. The blessing of being ready when Jesus comes
1. Blessed (*makarios*) - blessed, happy
 2. Servant (*doulos*) - a slave or bond slave, one who gives himself up to another's will those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing His cause among men.
 - a. Romans 1:1 says, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,"
 - b. Romans 6:16-18 says, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 3. In verse 42, the servant that is devoted to the Lord will be happy while serving and also happy when Jesus comes back.
 4. In verse 43, the faithful servant will be promoted.
- B. The curse of not being ready when He comes
1. In verses 45-46, an unfaithful servant will behave in a distasteful manner.
 - a. He/she will mistreat the subordinates.
 - b. He/she will indulge in unhealthy appetites (eating/drinking).
 2. Cut him in sunder (*dichotomeo*) - cut up by scourging, scourge severely, a cruel method of punishment used by the Hebrews and others of cutting one in two.
 3. Jesus issued a stern warning to those that were listening.
 4. Was He only talking to the disciples? Probably not.
- C. What determines a person's standing as faithful or unfaithful? The Greek word *doulos*, which means slave or servant.
1. According to Romans 6:16-18, those that have received Christ as Savior are counted as faithful.
 2. Those that have not are the unfaithful, and it makes sense that they will not be looking for or be ready for the Lord's return.
- D. Those that are punished will be evaluated based on their opportunity to learn about the Lord.

Blessed Servants (Luke 12:35-48)

Question: Do all people have a chance to be saved?

IV. Next week's lesson: Achieving Citizenship (Luke 13:22-30)