

Be Prepared

I've been spending some time lately (and will spend a lot more in the next two weeks) getting my classroom – and myself—prepared for this upcoming school year. There are lots of things to do, all in an effort to have everything just right when the kids come back. In my former life as a grocery manager, an upcoming inventory or a visit from a District Manager would generally throw us all into a frenzy, trying to get done all of the things we should have been doing all along. It's just the way we are.

When Jesus was here on earth, He taught a great deal about being prepared. He was going to be crucified and return to His Father, but He would return eventually and take us home to be with Him. Much of His teaching in **Luke 12** is directed toward watchfulness. This is what he tells us in **verses 35-40**:

“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

He then tells them that they should be “wise managers,” taking care of their Master’s business when he comes back to check on them. The same is true of those given talents in **Matthew 25**. Those who took care of what their master had entrusted to them were rewarded. The one who did not was punished.

Peter heard Jesus’ teachings on preparedness and later wrote his own in an effort to encourage people to do the Father’s will at all times. We have no idea when this world will end for us, so we need to live our lives as if it were our last day. This is what Peter says in **2 Peter 3:10-13**:

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

As the old song asks: "Are you ready for the judgement day?" As many of us have witnessed in recent days, we are not promised tomorrow. We all need to make the most of today, serving Him in every way. It is the only day over which we have any control.

---Johnny Stephens