

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

October 23, 2019

The Gospel of Luke

Living for Christ in a Dark World – Remaining Faithful While We Wait

Topics – Luke 12:35;

Text – Luke 12:35 -

Congregational Reading – Luke 12:35

Introduction

In the previous verses of Luke twelve, the focus was on being faithful to the Lord even when there is great opposition from the world and from religion to the cause of Christ. This faithfulness should be reflected both in our stand for the Lord and in our stewardship of the Lord's resources.

Here in that remaining verses of chapter twelve, Jesus will shift the focus to the future. This faithfulness that He has been teaching needs to remain into the future while we are awaiting the Lord's return. In a particular way, these verses primarily apply to the second coming of the Lord at the end of the Tribulation Period to squash the rebellion of Antichrist and to set up His earthly kingdom. However, in a practical way, these verse can also encourage the New Testament believer as he awaits the rapture of the Church.

Quickly review: 1 Thessalonians 4:13 – 18; 1 Corinthians 15:51 – 58. After the Rapture of the Church, there will be a seven-year period of tribulation upon the earth, primarily designed to get the attention of the Nation of Israel. During this period they will realize that they were wrong about the Lord Jesus and many of them will be saved:

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Romans 11:25-27)

Not only will many Jews be saved during the Tribulation Period, but so also will many Gentiles. Though the Tribulation will be a time of great suffering, it will also be a time of great revival, and many will trust the Lord. However, they will have to remain faithful either unto death, or until the return of the Lord:

"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matthew 10:22)

So as we go through these verses, understand that in a special way they are not specifically written to the Church, but believers today can certainly glean from these truths about staying faithful.

I. Readiness for His Coming (vs. 35 – 40)

All of these verses have to do with readiness; being ready for the Lord at His return.

Verse 35 – “Let your loins be girded (περιζώννυμι – *perizōnnymi*) about” – Long robes were to be tucked into a belt in order to provide ease of movement. This truth was illustrated in the Passover account:

"And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover." (Exodus 12:11)

Their lights were also to be burning. They would not want to be caught in the dark, or have to take the time to light a lamp; or worse yet, have to trim a lamp and find oil. The light was to be on.

Though Jesus is no doubt speaking allegorically here, both of these descriptions convey the idea of being ready.

Illustrate – Parents will often get frustrated with their little kids when it is time to leave to go someplace. They tell them over and over again to put their shoes on and get their coat. They take forever to get ready. We need to be ready.

Notice the reference to the wedding in v. 36 – In a Jewish wedding the groom would leave his friends to go to the Bride’s home to get the Bride. He would then return, and they would be expected to be waiting for him.

According to verse 37, those that are faithfully waiting for their Lord will be rewarded, and will actually be served by their Lord.

Note – Jesus illustrated this grateful service in John 13 at the Last Supper:

"He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." (John 13:4-5)

Notice that they needed to be prepared even if the Lord delayed His coming. In v. 38, the second watch was from 9 PM – 12 Midnight, and third watch of the night was from 12 Midnight – 3 AM (See 2 Peter 3:3 – 18).

Verses 39 – 40 admonish that we do not know exactly when the return of the Lord, but we need to be ready. We need to live with full expectancy that He may be coming today. Someone once said that we need to work and prepare and build like his coming is long into the future, but we also need to be expecting the Lord return at any moment. Jesus said that we are supposed to “*occupy till [he] comes*” (Luke 19:13).

II. Rewards (or Retribution) at His Coming (vs. 41 – 48)

There are several principles in this section that we need to discuss. First – Peter asks the question in v. 41 regarding who the Lord was speaking about in this parable. The Lord does not really answer him directly, but states generally that a faithful steward will remain faithful until the return of the Lord. Those who remain faithfully fulfilling the will of his Master will be

rewarded for their faithfulness. Those who are not faithful will be punished.

Now the punishment will be different for different groups of people. In this dispensation that we are living in now, the punishment will be a temporal chastisement and possibly a loss of rewards, but not a loss of salvation:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

People during the Tribulation Period will need to remain faithful to the Lord. I believe that true believers, by the grace of God, will remain faithful. Those who forsake the Lord, however, will suffer eternally.

Notice in vs. 47 – 48 – Jesus holds those more accountable who knew better. I believe this applies to both rewards and punishment.

Question – Do you think the people in America, and especially the people who grew up in a church like this one will have a higher or lesser degree of accountability?

Illustrate – We should be more severe with our children for deliberate acts of defiance rather than for the stupid mistakes that they make. My dad used to say, “You know better!”

III. Recognition of the Signs of His Coming (vs. 49 – 59)

Jesus speaks in verse 50 about His coming “baptism.” He was obviously not referring to his water baptism that had already taken place. He was referring to His coming crucifixion. The word, “straitened” (συνέχω *synechō*), means to be constrained. Jesus life was rapidly moving toward the Cross. He reminds these disciples that they will also have a “baptism” because of their affiliation with Him.

Verses 51 – 53 teach that our affiliation with Jesus will cause division, even within our own families. Jesus taught something similar in Matthew 10:

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matthew 10:34-39)

Verses 54 – 56 – Jesus rebukes the people standing by for not being able to see the signs of the

times:

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:4)

Satan is doing a masterful job of blinding people so that they cannot see that need Christ. He is also blinding people so that they cannot tell the difference between right and wrong.

Conclusion

In Matthew 24, Jesus spoke a little about some things that we can see in our world that are signs of the soon return of Christ (See Matthew 24:1 – 14).

I think it is safe to say that these signs are all plain to see today. The Lord will be coming soon.

Are you ready?

Are you living your life submitted to the will of God?

Are you where you are supposed to be, doing what you are supposed to be doing?

Are you living your life separated from this world?

Are you a soul winner?