

Fear Not, Be Ready

Text: Luke 12:32–40

Theme: Confidence in God's Kingdom leads to readiness for Christ's return.

Have you ever waited for something important? You know, you ordered a new tv. A phone call from a loved one. News about something that would change everything. Waiting can be full of worry. Filled with anxiety. And in our lesson this morning, Jesus has invited us into a different kind of waiting. Not anxious waiting. But *watchful waiting*. Not fearful. Because fear is an emotional response to something you think may be a danger or a threat to you. It can be physical, like fear of pain. A feeling of rejection. Or it can be spiritual, like fear of judgment and the unknown. Fear often tells you: *"You're not safe here. You're not in control. You don't know what's going to happen next."*

This passage of Scripture I just read is about *not* being afraid. It's about trusting God. And living ready for eternity. Jesus began by giving assurance in vs. 32. *"Do not be afraid, little flock. Your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom."* The *Promise of the Kingdom*! And when He said that, He wasn't speaking to a large group of people. He was speaking to His disciples. His *little flock*. That includes us! Vulnerable. Easily shaken. Sometimes worried. He said, *"Don't be afraid."* Why? Because the Kingdom of God is a gift to you. Not something you earn. Jesus graciously assured His followers that they need not be afraid, for God delights in giving them a lasting inheritance. The Kingdom itself. It's not payment for performance. He's *pleased* to give it to you! So, let go of fear! Because Jesus is our coming King who will return to judge evil and set all things right. He will gather His people into eternal joy and bring peace. He will bring justice and healing. And full redemption. And He will reign with perfect love, truth, and righteousness. So, you *do* have a life that's an eternal treasure.

Look at vv. 33–34. He said for you to sell your possessions. *"Sell your possessions and give to the poor... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* Jesus wasn't concerned where your money is. He's concerned about where your heart is. We live in a world that focuses on security. Comfort. Success. But Jesus says: Let go. Give freely. Live generously. Why? Because all those earthly treasures will fade away. But your heavenly treasure will last forever.

This isn't about guilt. It's about freedom. When you're fully secure in God's Kingdom, you're free to bless others. Unafraid of loss, your heart will follow what you value. That's why Jesus said for you to value what's eternal. *"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning..."* (vv. 35–40) He used that illustration of servants waiting for their master's return to show us how to live. Expect His return at any moment! *"You must be ready. Because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."*

That doesn't mean being obsessed over time or dates or headlines as to when that will happen. It means living with spiritual awareness. Being faithful in service. Making the heavenly kingdom your priority. And having a watchful faith. Which is a way of saying, *stay spiritually alert*. Stay awake and ready for the Lord at all times. It's how you live in *"the now."* Between the first coming of Jesus. And His second coming. Fully awake. Joyfully expectant. Fixed in grace. Trusting God every day, while looking ahead with hope knowing that Jesus will return. It's not just about watching the skies. It's about living your life with purpose. Expecting Jesus' coming.

So, what's the *shock* in this parable? It flips everything upside down! The One we serve is Jesus. And He is the One who came to serve *us*. The Master returns and serves the servants. (v. 37) Jesus tenderly calmed their fears, reminding them that the King of all creation delights to give them the Kingdom. It is a gracious inheritance. And He *is* coming again. Not to catch you off guard. But to bring you into the fullness of joy. And how does Jesus bring you into the fullness of joy? By restoring you to God. Healing your brokenness. Filling your life with His presence. His peace. And His purpose.

True joy, the kind that lasts beyond present circumstances, is found in Him *alone*. John 15:11 is where Jesus said: *"I have told you this, so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete."* But sin separates you from God who is the source of all joy. And Jesus bridges that gap. And what does it mean Jesus *"bridges the gap"*? It means, He restores the broken relationship between you and God through His death and resurrection. Through Jesus, you are welcomed back into God's presence. When you trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives within you. Joy isn't something you force. It's the fruit of His Spirit. And *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace..."* (Galatians 5:22) Jesus gives you joy, by abiding in Him (John 15:4) and keeping His commandments. (John 15:10–11). Obedience isn't about duty. It's about walking closely with the One who gives you life. Joy comes from living with your heart in tune with His heart. He gives you joy. Not just for today. But for eternity.

So, live with a deep hope He will return and make all things new. *"You will grieve. But your grief will turn to joy."* (John 16:20) Jesus' resurrection guarantees our own! And that's what should give you unshakable joy. The Apostle Peter said, *"Though you have not seen him, you love him... and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy."* (1 Peter 1:8) So, what does our lesson today teach us? Do not fear. God is generous. He gives the Kingdom freely. You don't need to be

afraid. You are part of God's flock. You have a Father who takes pleasure in giving. And the gift He gives you is His Kingdom. His rule. His love. And your future. So yes, do not fear! God is generous. Let go of lesser treasures. Live generously. Stay awake. Not with anxiety. But with joyful readiness. You're not just waiting for an event. You are waiting for Jesus! The One coming is the One who died for you. Who lives in you. And who loves you without end.

Billy Graham often emphasized that. He said, the One who is coming again, Jesus Christ, is the same One who died for us on the cross. He didn't use those exact words, but it was a central theme in his preaching. The returning Christ is the crucified and risen Christ. Our Savior. Our Redeemer. And soon-coming King. *"Jesus Christ is coming again,"* he would preach. But not coming as a baby in a manger. Not as a suffering servant. He is coming as King of kings, and Lord of lords. And never forget, the One who comes is the same One who loved you enough to die for your sins." The cross, and the crown go together. Jesus died in weakness. But He will return in glory. God's love was fully revealed at Calvary. And His justice will be fully revealed when Christ returns. You can face the future with hope, not fear. Because the One who will judge the world is the One who gave His life for you. *That same Jesus who was born in Bethlehem, walked the dusty roads of Galilee, and died on the cross, is alive—and He is coming again.*

Jesus' return is not something to fear, if you know Him. Why? Because the Judge is also the Savior. And the Coming King is the Crucified Lamb. If you belong to Jesus, you don't need to fear His return. You can live with watchful joy, confident hope, and daily peace knowing that the One who is coming again, is the same One who gave everything for you. Revelation 22:20 says, *"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."* When people ask, *"Are you afraid to die?"* they're really asking: *What happens next? Will I be okay? Can I face death with peace, instead of fear?* You're not alone. Even strong believers sometimes wrestle with that fear. But in Christ, we can say: *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For Thou art with me."* (Psalm 23:4) God doesn't ask you to *pretend* you're not afraid. He invites you to *trust* Him when you *are* afraid.

And the Christian belief is, you don't have to be afraid of death—because Jesus conquered it. *"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me will live, even though they die."* (John 11:25) *"To live is Christ and to die is gain."* (Philippians 1:21) Jesus promised eternal life to those who trust in Him. Because He has already gone through it. Jesus didn't just teach about life after death. He walked right through death and came out the other side. ALIVE! *"Christ has indeed been raised from the dead... so in Christ all will be made alive."* (1 Corinthians 15:20, 22) His resurrection turned the grave into a gateway. And because He lives, we can face death with hope, and not fear. Because death is a doorway. Not an end.

For the believer, death is not the end of the road. It's the doorway home. It's not defeat—it's victory. It's not goodbye. It's, I'll see you soon!

Let us pray.

Lord, help us to trust You. To treasure what lasts. And to stay ready for Your return. Let our hearts be awake. Our hands be open. And our lives be marked by love. Amen.