

THE BOOK OF LUKE
STUDY TWENTY-ONE (LUKE 12:13-21; 12:35-40)
PARABLES FOR THE DISCIPLES:
THE FAITHFUL SERVANT, PART 1
JUNE 8, 2008

MEMORY VERSE

"You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Luke 12:40

INTRODUCTION

This two-part series of the "Faithful Servant" will begin our study of the parables of Jesus in the book of Luke. In this lesson we will look at The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21) and The Parable of the Waiting Servant (Luke 12:35-40). Luke 12:1 sets the context of the chapter by indicating that Jesus began to speak to His disciples among a great crowd of people. This is significant when you examine The Parable of the Rich Fool. Here Jesus has been asked a question by a person in the crowd about dividing his brother's inheritance. Jesus answers the man by saying that he will not be an arbiter or judge between the two brothers. Notice next that Jesus uses the man's question as an opportunity to begin teaching the disciples. Luke 12:15 is the thesis of Jesus' lesson. He illustrates this lesson by using a parable about a rich man who stores up wealth for himself and who is not rich toward God. In following, Jesus uses the Parable of the Waiting Servant to illustrate the importance of being prepared, actively serving and looking to the time of His return.

In addressing the disciples with these lessons, Jesus is exemplifying the characteristics of a faithful servant. The servants' first priority should be to be concerned with the kingdom of God rather than with storing up for themselves riches on earth. In the second teaching, The Parable of the Waiting Servant, Jesus addresses the disciples about the importance of being alert and ready for His return. At first glance, these two parables may seem unrelated. However, if we align our lives with the realization of Jesus' return as the second parable teaches, we will find our thoughts, attitudes and concerns of this world transformed by an eternal kingdom perspective and not give in to the temptation of greed as the first parable teaches. With an eternal perspective we will not be prone to worry or become bitter over the cares of this world, for we understand that we do not live for this world. Instead, we store up treasure in heaven, being rich towards God and trusting in the provision of our daily needs from our faithful Heavenly Father. This mindset will prevent all sorts of covetousness, jealousy, and bitterness, which can keep us from focusing on the truth that Christ may return at any moment. An eternal perspective will also prevent us from spending our time and our energy with the things of this world and missing opportunities to see God work in us, through us, and on our behalf.

LEARNING FROM GOD'S WORD

Read Luke 12:35-40 and Luke 12:13-21.

1. What does it mean, in verse 35, to be dressed and to keep your lamps burning?
2. According to verse 37, how will we be blessed if we are living our lives expecting Christ to return at any time?
3. What problem did the man approach Jesus with in verse 13? What was the Lord's response to the man's request?
4. In verse 15, what is the primary lesson that Jesus is about to teach the disciples in The Parable of the Rich Fool?
5. Is Jesus condemning those who have money? (Matthew 6:19-24; 1 Timothy 6:10)

OUR DAILY WALK

1. What changes would you make in your daily life if you were living your life expecting Christ to return any day?
2. Do you think our culture has a tendency of displaying the thoughts and attitudes of the rich man in verses 16-21? Why or why not? How has this outlook affected you?
3. According to 1 Timothy 6:10, what is the danger of loving money?
4. According to 1 Timothy 6:17-19, what should the attitude of the rich be? Do you reflect the attitudes in these verses in your own life?
5. What does it mean in your own life to be rich towards God? What might you change so that your hearts and lives are focused on God and His Kingdom rather than on yourselves?

GOING DEEPER

1. Warren Weirsbe said, "Rich toward God means to acknowledge gratefully that everything we have comes from God, and then make an effort to use what He gives us for the good of others and the glory of God. Wealth can be enjoyed and employed at the same time if our purpose is to honor God." Read Matthew 6:19-24 and write down what you learn from these verses.

2. According to Ephesians 6, 12-20, what kinds of things do you need to "put on" to be prepared for the master's return? What do each of these pieces of armor represent? What role does prayer play in being prepared?

SERVING AND BEING SERVED

Make a sign to put on your mirror that says, "Christ is coming back today." Then take a few moments to pray and ask the Lord to guide your day so that you live more fully for His glory. If the idea that Christ is imminently returning does not excite you or fill you with joy you might want to talk it over with your small group or one of our pastors. We also encourage you to spend some time reflecting on your own attitudes about your wealth and ask God to specifically show you one aspect of your life that He would like you to change.

SUGGESTED SMALL GROUP STUDY FORMAT
THE FAITHFUL SERVANT, PART 1
STUDY TWENTY-ONE - JUNE 8, 2008

CONNECT25 MINUTES

Time of Fellowship

Opening Prayer

Icebreaker Questions:

- 1. Other than tithing, what are some ways that you give of your plenty?*
- 2. What is your most prized possession? How would you feel if it were taken away?*

MEMORY VERSE (Memorize and say aloud in your group)5 MINUTES

**"You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming
at an hour you do not expect." Luke 12:40**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS 35 MINUTES

PRAYER AND PERSONAL SHARING30 MINUTES

- 1. As a small group, commit to encourage one another and hold each other accountable to focus your hearts on the coming return of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 2. Continue to pray for the leadership of RCC as they seek direction and guidance from the Lord regarding the future of our church.*
- 3. Pray for the personal needs of one another in your small group*