



Kingdom Preparation

Matthew 24:42-51

Written by: Cody Vasut

How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

<https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/faithful-and-wise-servant>

<https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/will-he-find-you-faithful>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/your-main-calling-in-the-end-times>

Discussion Guide Outline:

Matthew 24:42-51

1. Christians Must Remain Spiritually Vigilant and on Mission Every Day for the Lord. Vv. 42-44
2. The Good Servant Serves the Lord and Will be Blessed. Vv. 45-47
3. The Wicked Servant Never Served the Lord and Will be Condemned to Hell. Vv. 48-51

Matthew 24:42-51

slaves and eat and drink with drunkards;

Be Ready for His Coming

50 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know,

42 "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

51 and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

43 But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

44 For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

45 "Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time?

46 Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.

47 Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

48 But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,'

49 and begins to beat his fellow

Discussion Questions

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 24:42-51.

INTRODUCTION AND MAIN IDEA

Have you ever been excited about an upcoming event and counted down the days? Christ does not want Christians to just count down the days for His return. He wants us to be spiritually vigilant and on mission every day for the Lord sharing the Gospel. We, and especially Christian ministers, must be good stewards of what God has given us so if he were to return tomorrow he would see we are pursuing Him and have cause to bless us. We should not be like the wicked servants and hypocrite (a/k/a the Pharisees) whose lives are characterized as abandoning of the Lord in favor of unrepentant sinful pursuits. People who live lifestyles of unrepentant sin never knew the Lord to begin with and will be caught off guard when Christ returns suddenly to condemn them to hell.

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

I. Christians Must Remain Spiritually Vigilant and on Mission Every Day for the Lord. Vv. 42-44

1. By "stay awake," Jesus is calling His disciples to be ever spiritually vigilant so as not to be led astray and ever-on mission. Read Mark 14:34-38. Was Jesus calling on his Disciples merely to "not sleep," or was it rather to pray for Christ and themselves to be free of temptation?

2. We know the Day of the Lord will come on a day we least expect. If Jesus had set a date when he would return 2,500 years into the future, how would that change the attitude of the Disciples and the early church? Would they have been as on guard against temptation as they needed to be? Would they be as eager to share the Gospel?

3. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8. Paul contrasts Christians who belong to the day/light with those who practice evil in the night. He calls on Christians to stay awake and be spiritually vigilant by being "sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet." What does it mean to be sober-minded? How does focusing on our faith in Jesus help us remain sober-minded and on guard against temptation and evil?

4. Read Matthew 28:19-20. What is our mission as Christians? How can we ensure we stay on mission every day until the Lord returns?

II. The Good Servant Serves the Lord and Will be Blessed. Vv. 45-47

5. The word for servant here is akin to “steward” or “trustee,” i.e., someone who has been entrusted with a valuable possession to take care of it. To be successful, he must do more than the bare minimum (feeding the household) but do well in his role (feeding them at “the proper time”). Have you ever trusted someone with something valuable to you? How would you expect them to treat that thing?

6. What makes someone a good employee? Doing the bare minimum, or going above and beyond? How are good employees typically rewarded?

7. Read Hebrews 13:17. Ministers are given special charge by God to watch over the flock and will have to “give an account” for doing so. Thinking of a flock of sheep, what are examples of a good shepherd?

III. The Wicked Servant Never Served the Lord and Will be Condemned to Hell. Vv. 48-51

8. Thinking back to a flock of sheep, what are examples of a bad shepherd?

9. Our actions reveal our hearts. Read 1 John 1:5-10. When John is referring to “walking” he is referring to a pattern and practice of living. Notice the contrast between walking in darkness and walking in light. Does walking in light require sinless perfection (see verses 8-9)?

10. When we walk in darkness, we are engaged in a lifestyle of unrepentant sin and do not “have fellowship with [God].” How is the wicked servant walking in darkness?

11. In verse 51, Jesus says the wicked servant will be treated like the “hypocrites” and is bound for hell (see the description of the place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth” in verse 52. We have seen throughout the Gospel of Matthew how Jesus has condemned the pharisees as hypocrites because they outwardly practice righteousness but inwardly are not of God. Their poisonous fruits though give them away. What are some traits of wicked ministers in our day and age?

12. How can we practically avoid acting like the wicked servants? Is it just a matter of what we do? Or does it matter more where our heart is? Do you love Jesus? If Jesus returned tomorrow, would He find you living out your love for Him?

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

Matt. 24:42–25:30 Parabolic Exhortations to Watch and Be Prepared for the Coming of the Son of Man. Jesus gives four parables to explain to his disciples how and why they should be prepared for his coming: the homeowner and the thief (24:42–44), the good and wicked servants (24:45–51), the 10 virgins (25:1–13), and the talents (25:14–30).

Matt. 24:42 stay awake. Christians should not merely keep looking for the coming of the Son of Man. Instead they should be completing the work of the Great Commission (28:19–20), as well as being prepared and expectant, because the time of Christ's return is unknown (24:36). On readiness for Christ's return; cf. 1 Thess. 5:1–11; 1 Pet. 4:7; 2 Pet. 3:2–18.

Matt. 24:48–51 delayed. The behavior of the wicked servant indicates he is a false disciple (cf. Gal. 5:19–21) and is deserving of that place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, a description of hell (cf. note on Matt. 8:11–12).