

Prepared for the Return of Christ

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Let's take our Bibles and turn in them to Matthew chapter 24. Matthew chapter 24. We're looking at verses 36 through chapter 5 and verse 13, or 25 and 13.

No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the coming of the Son of Man.

For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. Up to the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away.

That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field, one will be taken, the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill.

One will be taken, and the other left. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this, if the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

[1:16] So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time?

It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth. He will put him in charge of all his possessions.

But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, My master is staying away a long time. And then he begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards.

The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him. And at an hour that he is not aware of, he will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

At that time, the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise.

[2:23] The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil and jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

At midnight, the cry rang out, Here's the bridegroom, come out to meet him. Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, our lamps are going out.

No, they replied, There may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves. But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived.

The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet and the door was shut. Later, the others also came. Sir, sir, they said, open the door for us.

But he replied, I tell you the truth, I don't know you. Therefore, keep watch because you do not know the day or the hour.

[3:27] Well, when will it come? The end of the world.

Two years from now? 2012, like some Mayan writings predict? Such end of the world scenarios continue to sell movies and books as they prey upon men's fears.

Some are so sure that the end of the world and of all life on earth is going to happen that they say it's not a matter of if, it's only how and when.

Scientists and specialists in these things predict the different scenarios in which this world will come to an end and all living beings upon it.

Human life. Some say a meteor strike, some asteroid colliding with the earth will do it. Others say, no, it's going to be a pandemic. Some killer strain of influenza, some super bacteria that's resistant to all antibiotics.

[4:47] Others say, no, just a natural disaster, a super volcano, super earthquakes, mega tsunamis, floods, and that sort of thing, climate change.

Others say, no, it will be nuclear war. A nation will exchange missiles with another nation and so plunge the earth into a nuclear winter with temperatures that will send us into an ice age.

Others look up and say, no, it will be extraterrestrial creatures coming down and destroying us. And some say, no, it's going to be these man-made computers and robots that get out of hand and turn us and everything here into gray goo.

You can get online and read about the gray goo threat to the earth. But a Christian with his Bible knows that though some of these things may indeed kill millions of human life here on earth, that not any one of them or all of them together is going to mark the end of the world.

The thing that will bring this world to an end is the personal return of Jesus Christ to the earth. That much we can be sure of. Jesus Christ is coming back and he's coming back to a planet that is still populated with human beings, isn't he?

[6:17] And when he comes and catches up his own to meet him in the air, then and not until then, the heavens will disappear with a roar. The elements will be destroyed by fire and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

For by the Lord's word, the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men, 2 Peter 3.

This world may, if it had just been left to mankind and to chance and time, may have just exploded and come to an end, but it is being kept, preserved by its maker for a final disaster that he will bring about at his coming.

As I looked at the different lists of end-time scenarios, end-of-the-world scenarios, I didn't find any that listed the return of Jesus Christ is what will bring the world to an end.

Men are probing their own ideas. They are so wise. And all the while ignoring the one who holds the whole world in his hands.

[7:41] It's not a question of if. It's only of how and when. On that, they're right. It's not a question if Jesus will come again.

He is coming and will bring this present world to an end. You can mark it down. There are no questions at all about it. Just as Christ appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself, so he will appear a second time not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to all who wait for him.

Hebrews chapter 9. So it's not if, but how and when. What about how? How will he come? Well, the Bible tells us he's coming in the air.

This same Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will come back in the same way that you have seen him go into heaven. And so he's coming in a body, the same body that hung on the cross, the same body that rose gloriously from the dead.

That glorified body, he will appear. And he's coming not as he came the first time, but he's coming in power and great glory and all of his angels will be with him.

[8:57] He's coming with a trumpet blast, with a loud shout, and in such a manner that every eye will see him. Revelations chapter 1. He's coming suddenly, unexpectedly.

Not if, but how and when. That's the issue. Well, what about when? When is he coming? Well, you can read your Bible through forwards and backwards and you will never find when.

It's not like it's hidden in there in some cryptic ways and signs to figure out. It is simply not there. In fact, God has intentionally hidden the timing of his son's return.

Why? So that we may be ever on the watch and may be always saying, even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Now this is what our Lord has been teaching his disciples in Matthew chapter 24.

He's just two days away from his arrest and crucifixion. His public teaching ministry is over and he's turning now to instruct his own disciples.

[10:10] So he's on the Mount of Olives and he's with the Twelve. And they're wondering about these things, about his coming, and when this world will come to an end.

And so Jesus takes the opportunity to teach them about his second coming and the end of the world. And yes, he addresses their question of when will these things happen.

Chapter 24. Three times. Verse 36. No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Verse 42. Therefore keep watch because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Verse 44. So you also must be ready because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him.

He's coming. The when is unknown, intentionally so, that you might always be ready. So Jesus turns from His teaching, His discoursing on this subject, to now giving a parable about it.

[11 : 26] The parable of the ten virgins. And notice what the last verse is. It shows us again the purpose for telling the parable. Verse 13 of chapter 25.

Therefore keep watch because you do not know the hour of His coming. So a man with his Bible, a boy, a girl with his Bible, or her Bible, knows more than the scientists about how this world will come to an end.

But he will never with his Bible be able to tell us when the Lord is coming back. Now, the parable that the Lord teaches to drive that point home and four lessons from it.

Notice how chapter 25 begins. At that time, Jesus is teaching His twelve what will happen at that time when the Son of Man returns to claim His bride.

He says, it will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. And right away we're thrust back into unfamiliar territory of first century wedding customs in Israel.

[12 : 36] And it was a bit different from our own as we see from the reading of this parable. Here they are. They're at the home where the wedding banquet, the wedding feast is to be celebrated.

It's evening. The food is prepared. The guests are all there. The ten virgins are there. These ten virgins, what are they?

Well, they're kind of, sort of, not exactly like our bridesmaids. They're there to attend the bride and to serve her.

But especially so is their work for the bridegroom as we'll see in a moment. The focus of this parable is upon them.

They had an important role in the wedding ceremony and leading up to it. And so this, these ten virgins are focused on in this parable.

[13 : 36] Everything's ready then. The only thing missing is the bridegroom and his party. He and his attendants have not yet arrived at the wedding feast. Now, the folks at the home know he's coming but they just don't know when.

Is that like anything we've just said? We know he's coming but we just don't know when. And that was the position this night of the wedding as the ten virgins are there waiting.

Well, they're waiting because as soon as the bridegroom and his company appears on the distance, these ten virgins will rush out to meet him and to honor him by giving him a royal escort as it were back to the place of the wedding ceremony.

and then they will escort them and give them a grand entrance into the wedding. That's part of their important role these ten virgins.

And that's the reason they all have lamps to light up the way for the bridegroom as he walks those last steps to the wedding feast to give him this grand entrance all lit up in the night.

[14 : 52] Now these ten virgins have a lot in common and they appeared very much the same. They all have lamps.

They all profess to know the bridegroom and be interested in his coming. That's why they're here. They are all expecting to meet him when he comes to go out and to escort him in.

They're all expecting to go into the wedding feast and enjoy the wedding with the bridegroom. But there's one critical difference within these ten virgins that separates them right down the middle.

Now you and I know about this difference because Jesus tells us about it. But this is a difference that will not be discovered until the bridegroom arrives. though they all look prepared Jesus tells us that only five are really prepared and the other five are totally unprepared.

Again doesn't look that way but the coming of the bridegroom will show it to be so because though all have lamps only five have oil. And that detail will reveal their true character as to whether they are wise or foolish.

[16 : 14] Just as Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount talked about the wise man and the foolish man and how in the storm their character is revealed.

Verse 3 says the foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. They are careless. They are neglectful. They are thoughtless.

They are unwilling to go to the little trouble of even checking their lamps and being sure that they had enough oil for the night. Did they have no more love and respect for the bridegroom than this? Is he not worthy of a little bit of trouble to be sure that they do not embarrass him on his big night? Not to say anything of embarrassing themselves. Perhaps it would be a bit like you being in charge of the car that the bride and the groom will drive away from at the wedding ceremony.

[17:21] And so you decorate it all up and got it all ready but you don't bother to check the gas. And so the couple comes out and they get in and they barely get out of the driveway and the vehicle starts sputtering and coughing and rolls to a stop to the great embarrassment of the host of the bride and groom.

Indeed it's foolish isn't it to go to all the trouble of getting dressed up and going to welcome the bridegroom with the others but to give no trouble to ensure that they had enough oil in their lamps. They're just presuming everything will go well. And so though they looked like the wise virgins when the bridegroom came and the lamps were lit then their folly would appear that they had no oil they're totally unprepared for the appearance of the bridegroom.

Well what's the meaning of this parable? What is the spiritual import of it? Well the ten virgins stand for the professing church of Jesus Christ.

It's all those who are expecting the Lord Jesus to come back and think that when he comes they will be with him in the wedding feast forever and ever.

[18:52] The ten virgins represent all those who profess to have faith in Jesus Christ who profess to be Christians and they all have this in common but in reality Jesus is teaching that within the church there are some who are truly prepared to meet him and others who are not at all prepared to meet him.

Some are wise some are foolish some have only the outward appearance of belonging to Christ others have the inward reality of grace.

those with the outward appearance may do many of the same thing that the other Christians do they read their Bibles pray and give money and come to worship and are baptized and take the Lord's supper but they have a lack of inward grace of that faith in the Lord Jesus that works by love and obedience of that repentance that turns away from sin and puts them to death of these inward realities of spiritual grace they are strangers completely it's all external religion without the root of the matter in them it's outward appearance with no indwelling!

Holy Spirit they're like lamps on the outside but they have no oil on the inside outward forms of godliness but lacking the power in the heart and as such they are totally unprepared for the future now I find it interesting that even as Jesus is giving this parable to the twelve there is one among them that though he looks to all human eyes as if he is ready for Christ return is really a lamp without oil his name is Judas Iscariot it illustrates the very thing Jesus is saying men may go a long way in religion and yet be lost and it's not as rare as some men think it is in the parable it's half and half isn't it fifty fifty five were wise five were foolish now I'm not saying that Jesus is thereby saying that it's exactly fifty percent of people in all of the church of Jesus

Christ that are truly saved and fifty percent that are only apparently saved and will finally be lost but I am saying we can conclude from this parable that it is not a rare thing that Jesus is warning us of it's not one in a million it's not one in a church it's a plague that plagues the church that side by side growing up in the worship and the outward forms of religion are those who are truly prepared to meet him and those that aren't and we don't need to rely on this parable for our theology we can go back to the sermon on the mount and we can hear Jesus speaking words not of a parable but words of a discourse of his teaching in which he says not everyone that says to me Lord Lord will enter into the kingdom of heaven but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven for I tell you that many many will say unto me in that day

[22:34] Lord have we not preached in your name have we not cast out demons in your name have we not healed in your name and I will say to you I never knew you depart from me you evil doers Jesus says this is not a rare thing many in that day will expect that they are in and will find in that day of Christ return that they are out they thought they were wise they are found out to be fools that's the first reality Jesus is drawing our attention to in this parable that's the first lesson many who claim to be prepared for the Lord's return are completely unprepared unprepared for it and and though they're together now and they're perhaps sharing a hymnal as they sing and though they

pray together and hear preaching together a day is coming when Christ will return and then the church will be divided into two camps the wise the foolish the prepared the unprepared well let's return to the parable and see how this happens!

Verse 5 tells us that the bridegroom! was a long time coming and they all became drowsy and fell asleep now again they have this in common they both fall asleep but what separates the wise and the foolish is that the wise fall asleep prepared while the foolish fall asleep totally unprepared and suddenly at midnight the cry rang out here's the bridegroom come out to meet him and that's when the difference between these ten virgins was uncovered they all woke up they all set about to lighting their lamps adjusting the wick and lighting and getting it going and the foolish ones barely get it lit but that it starts sputtering because they had no oil they thought they were ready for this occasion they now find out they weren't and it's panicky time give us some of your oil they said to the wise for our lamps are going out and their request is refused because there simply was not enough oil for the five foolish virgins and for the five wise virgins to share they are sent to buy some and so off they go in a hurry to make last minute preparations and here we have the second lesson from the

Lord Jesus it is not until Jesus returns that the folly of the unprepared will be uncovered those who claim to be Christians and went to church and did all the things that Christians do outwardly who thought they were ready for Christ's return will only find out otherwise when the Lord Jesus returns that's the picture before us they learn too late of their need for something more than mere outward attachment to Christ if you talk to them now they would say that the preaching such as you're used to hearing is vital faith and repentance and holy living is just a bit too strict too radical for them they like their own brand of Christianity a Christianity without a cross Christianity without any mortification of sin without repentance without holiness without obedience to commandments without separation from the world without any need for the new birth but in a moment they will learn of their need for the one thing needful and they'll see themselves as lost and guilty and without Christ when he comes when he comes verse 10 but while they were on their way to buy the oil the bridegroom arrived at the house and the virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet and the door was shut and shut to be opened no more and those who were wise and prepared for his coming will go in with the Lord Jesus they are clothed by faith in the righteousness of Christ and therein in they will go those who all their lifetime were repenting of their sins will then finally find rest in heaven those prepared by the new birth by the possession of the indwelling spirit will go into heaven to enjoy the wedding feast forever with the lamb and they will ever be with the Lord with him who came to earth for them who bore the wrath of God on the cross for them who heard every prayer that they ever uttered in his name by faith who held them up all of their life through all of their trials who brought them safely home to heaven who promised that he would return for them there in the feast with the Lord Jesus Christ what a blessed thing for those twelve to hear as they're about to see their savior hung up on a cross to die this isn't the end guys you're going to be with me alive more alive than what you are right now but what a difference for the unprepared in that day verse 11 later the others also came sir sir the word could easily be translated lord lord they said calling to the bride groom open the door for us they expect to get in like their friends like their parents their brother their sister their fellow church members they're inside lord open for us too and though they expect to be in they find out otherwise for the bride groom replied from it within

[29:09] I tell you the truth I don't know you and at this point the parable recedes into the background and the reality that it represents comes right up to the foreground what I mean is we can hardly picture this in the parable anymore can we we can hardly imagine a wedding ceremony or a reception after the wedding in which the bridegroom would say to guys that got there late sorry you can't get in don't know you no the parable is receding the story is over as it were and what we have now is just the reality what the story is about is now front and center because there will be a day when the Lord Jesus returns that he will speak these words to people who really thought they were going into heaven and he'll say I tell you the truth I don't know you I don't know you we had no relationship to know someone is a word of intimate relationship it's not just knowing about someone it's an intimacy of loving relationship the bridegroom will say

I had no loving relationship with you I don't know you 1 Corinthians 8:3 says the man who loves God is known by God who's known by God the man that loves him and he says I don't know you he puts his finger on something that was missing all their lives that love for the bridegroom they had

no heart love for the Lord Jesus they had all the outward trappings of religion but no heart that beat after love for Jesus and now it's shown now it comes up missing they were content to live without personal relationship with Christ to live without loving him and obeying him and surrendering to him they were content to have the outside husk of religion without personal communion with the living Lord and Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:19 the

Lord knows those who are his! And it's it says in that day I don't know you and you and you and you and you all of you outside I don't know you we have no relationship you're not what you claim to be you don't really belong to me it's the ultimate rejection of the final judgment and so all their efforts at last minute preparations failed the doors closed and will not be reopened and we learn a third lesson from this that at Christ return there will be no time left to repent can you think of any other door that was closed there was no time to repent we go back to the flood don't we know his time that ark that he built and there was a door in the ark and while it was open anyone that wanted could come in and

Noah preached to them and invited them but nobody wanted in while the door was open it was the the open door was the despised door but once the door was closed and the rain started falling and the flood started rising and men began to see with their eyeballs their need then the closed door was the most desired door but it was too late it was too late by the time they could see with their physical eyes it was too late the door was closed it would not reopen and it was done by God himself you see once God shuts the door there's no more opportunity to enter salvation is by faith faith alone and if you will not enter now by faith you will not enter later by sight if you do not enter now by faith in the preaching of

God's own word you will not enter by sight when you see the rain falling and you see the floods rising you will not enter later when you see the Lord appearing in the air once you see him coming in the clouds and in great glory and power it will be too late too late to repent there is no last moment preparations no last minute repentance once he appears no quick prayer of Lord save me as he's coming there is absolutely no time to do what you may have always intended to do but never got around to doing once he appears once you see him the door is!

[34:25] that's a sobering reality that the Lord Jesus is painting before our eyes this morning there is a too late response to Christ's offer of salvation oh but it's my joy as a preacher of the gospel to tell you this morning the door is wide open it's as open as the heart of Jesus this morning today is the day of salvation today if you hear his voice harden not your heart seek the Lord while he may be found that's today there's coming a day when he will not be found when the door will be closed forever now at the end of the parable Jesus sums up with the main lesson verse 13 says therefore therefore summing up all that I've just told you men therefore keep watch because you do not know the day or the hour so the thief does not send you a card in the mail notifying you what time he's coming at the night to break into your house and steal!

And so the Lord has not told us when he's coming back so the question the pressing question should be this how should someone live who doesn't know when Jesus is coming how should someone live who doesn't know when the Lord will return and Jesus says ever watchful ever ready for his return the answer is not to try to figure out the times and the dates but to always be watching and ready the answer is not speculation but preparation and oh how our natural hearts when the whole topic of the end of the world and Jesus return comes up you know what our natural hearts do they all run to speculation and you know what Jesus says every time he brings up this subject preparation personal preparation are you ready are you ready if it should happen today our great duty is to give diligence to the business of our souls and this is the fourth lesson and last lesson then since we don't know when

Christ is coming we must always live in a state of readiness you see our ignorance of when he's coming is the given but it is not an excuse for being caught unprepared you can't say well I didn't know when you were coming or I would have been ready that won't do no the fact that we don't know when he is coming is given as the reason why we should always be prepared do you see that! watch why? because you don't know when I'm coming so don't make an excuse out of the reason to be prepared I don't know about you but I need to think more often about Jesus sudden return and the end of the world it has a way of focusing my attention on what is most important in whatever life I have left how often do you think about the Lord's second coming how often does that thought even enter your mind Jesus is coming again do you love and long for his appearing this is the grand event to which all of history is moving can

I ask you is that the event toward which you are moving are you consciously! moving to that event is that ever conscious in your life and why you do what you do and don't do what you don't do because I am going to meet the Savior at!

[38:52] coming you see Jesus is saying that the event of his sudden coming is to affect the way that I live now Jonathan Edwards knew this he as a young man made some resolutions and number 19 was this resolved never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if I expected it would not be above an hour before I should hear the last trump do you see how he wanted the last trump to dictate how he lived I will not do anything that I would be ashamed to do if I thought within an hour I hear the last trump that starts to define what I do and don't do does it exert that influence in your life the apostle John said as much when he talked about the

Lord's return when we know that when he appears we shall be like him for we will see him as he is everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure you see that hope of his coming exerts an influence to cause the person to purify!

themselves why? Because the last trump will be sounded one day people who expect Jesus Christ to return live differently than people who don't expect him that's that's the lesson is that not clear as you live with your eyes open and see how people are living are people living as if they expected the last trump one day he'll come and what a surprise to a sleeping earth let's be watchful for his let's be expecting him we live differently when we expect someone if a woman is expecting company from a distance but is unsure when they will arrive if she's wise she will get things in order early so that she'll be ready whenever they do show up so she gets all of her chores done early in the day and then she waits in expectation no fears should they suddenly appear at noon she's ready should they appear at five in the afternoon she's ready because she expects them she prepares early for them she's wise are you wise are you wise is everything in order for meeting the Lord

Jesus what about your sins have you have you just tried to sweep them under a rug quickly or or have you taken them to the cross of Christ and pleaded his blood to cover you are there any outstanding controversies clouding your relationship with Jesus are you ready just to walk into his presence are you ready for his appearing or are there some issues between you and him and you know it some commandment that you are compromising with some sin you're refusing to mortify and forsake are you walking daily with the Lord John says and now dear children remain in him in Christ so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming did you get that Jesus wants us to meet him confident and unashamed are you remaining in Christ are you abiding in Christ then you have every reason to wait for him with confidence and then to meet him with confidence and unashamed to be ready you need to be sure you belong to Jesus Christ get into him by faith and then live for him every day of your life that's what it means to be ready always to be found in Christ when he comes living for him you know there have always been people who believe the Lord's coming back and because they know he's coming back they withdraw from society and they go off to the mountains to wait for his coming as if that's what it means to be watchful and ready and you know the Bible takes its big guns and just shoots holes in that all over doesn't it second Thessalonians much of that letter was written to correct such erroneous ideas Paul says if you know anybody like that they quit their job and they head to the mountains but every time at supper they trickle down and have a way of finding their place at your house don't you give them anything to eat because if they won't work they will not eat but it was all precipitated by this the Lord's coming back oh I haven't time for things of the world for a job and this and that and the other

[44:25] I've got to go and get ready to meet him hogwash Paul says in fact scripture in this very next parable that Jesus teaches in Matthew 25 it's the parable of the talents the talents that were entrusted to the servants until the master comes back remember we studied that and it teaches us that readiness for Christ return is not passively sitting around waiting and trying to figure out the timing but rather it's faithfully attending to the God given responsibilities assigned to us so you're a father you're a mother you're a husband you're a wife you're a student you're a young person a child an older person you have responsibilities that God has assigned to you don't you responsibilities to your family responsibilities to your studies responsibilities to your church to your neighbors and most of all to God who gives you all these assignments and it will be good for us to be found doing our

God given duties when he comes if that's nothing more than taking care of your aged husband in his last days looking after your children seeking to raise them up in the nurture and admonition of

the Lord it will be good for that woman to be found doing when he comes and doing it unto him doing it with an eye to him unto the Lord that bought them going to work putting in your your eight hours is unto him that's readiness brothers that's what it means to be ready for Jesus return the first continental congress in our nation's early history was convened on the day that happened to have a total solar eclipse things got eerily dark about midday and confusion broke out in the streets people were running around saying the end of the world is here end of the world is here and the congress heard it and it caused a hubbub in the congress itself and some were saying we need to dismiss and get to our homes and one of our leaders

I don't know who it was I couldn't remember and I couldn't find it I think it was Adam stood to his feet and said listen man if it is the end of the world and Jesus is coming I for one want to be found at my duty at my post when he comes and he called the meeting back to order and they went on with business that's the spirit that's what it means to be ready to be found in Christ with all of our hopes in him and then doing what he has assigned us to do that's to live in a constant state of preparedness don't miss the heart of the Lord Jesus in all of this this world's in for a big surprise isn't it I mean Jesus said it will be like the days of knowing everybody is eating and drinking and marrying!

and giving in marriage and what he's saying is life goes on as usual it is always goes on people are going about their pleasures their sports it will be another world series this or that it will be another day at the job and then he'll come and what a surprise and here's the heart of the Lord Jesus I don't want you to be surprised I don't want this that happens to the five foolish virgins to ever happen to you I don't want you to ever hear these words I never knew you so listen to these words children adults do you have the real thing do you have faith in the Lord Jesus he's wanting us to show up not thinking we're ready when we're really not remember all ten thought they were ready but only five were are there many in the professing church who claim to be saved who aren't then if you are wise you will be eager to make your calling and election sure sure that's how you prepare for his coming you say

I want to be sure that I am in Christ if you need help with that you come to one of your pastors you go to your parents you go to somebody that you who knows the Bible and can help you how can I be sure that I am in Christ Jesus says if you don't deal with that issue you're!

[49 : 35] fool you're one of the five foolish virgins some of you would never jump out of an airplane just on the I think that it was packed correctly would you?

You wouldn't do it you'd be sure that the parachute was packed correctly some of you wouldn't buy a house for \$150,000 unless you had the inspections!

done and you were sure that the house was sound but some of doing that will face eternal damnation or eternal felicity and happiness and the issue of whether it will be one or the other without being sure it's insanity it's folly and most of the Christian world goes on its way in such folly no if we're wise we will give every effort to make our calling and election sure I'm sure Christ is mine so I can go to bed tonight prepared for his coming I sleep in Christ I rise and drive my car on a dangerous highway in Christ I work in a dangerous factory in Christ I fly in airplanes in Christ and I can face life confidently and

I can face the return of Christ confidently because I'm sure I'm in Christ are you sure are you sure make every effort that you're in the ark of safety when God's wrath breaks out upon the earth and if you're wise you'll not say yeah you're right pastor John I'll take care of that issue just not today oh Jesus cuts the feet right out of that one doesn't he with this parable you may not have later is what he's saying I may come when you're sleeping I may come in the middle of the day and as soon as you see me there's there's no more time the door is over the opportunity is over the door is closed now now is the day of salvation now is the time to get into Christ now is the time to daily trust in him to daily walk with the!

kids you play the game hide and seek what's the last thing that the person counting to twenty says ready or not here I come I want to tell you that Jesus has been doing more than counting to twenty with this wicked world and rebellion against him he has waited over two thousand years with a world that spits in his face and ignores him as if he's nothing it's a wonder that the earth has not been consumed yet by fire it's a wonder that he waited long enough to bring me into the ark that he waited long enough to bring you he's not waiting forever there will come a time when it will be ready or not here

[53:03] I come if he came today would he find you ready or not wise or foolish how kind is our savior how kind of him to be warning us again this morning be sure that you're prepared when I come let's pray oh lord we do worship you for your patience the patience of your grace that any of us are prepared is a miracle of grace oh and we think what it took what it cost the Lord Jesus what it cost heaven to have just one of us prepared for that day thank you for the blood of Christ thank you our father for giving us your son thank!

Lord Jesus for dying in our place at Calvary thank you Holy Spirit for opening up our eyes and showing us just how unprepared we are for that day and pointing us to Jesus and giving us faith and repentance!

that we might believe on him and be saved go on doing that great work even today let none presume upon this mercy to bring each one before they pillow their heads tonight to be eagerly setting about to make their calling and election sure to be found in Christ and in his righteousness in that day oh help us help us as we live in a sleepy world and as you delay your coming and it seems a long time keep us from being sleepy right along with the world but help us to live in a constant state of readiness to the praise of our Savior whom we one day will see in Jesus name we pray! Amen