

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**
Chapter 12- Luke 12:41-48

242- What Jesus Will Do When He Returns- Part 2

June 8, 2014

Luke 12:41-48

41 Peter said, "Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?"

42 And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?"

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

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

45 "But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, *both* men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;

46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect *him* and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

47 "And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes,

48 but the one who did not know *it*, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

To the Glory of God

Now here in this Parable- Jesus gives us an indication of both the great Reward and the horrific Punishment that He will meet out when He returns.

And in this Parable- there is a master who has slaves. And the master goes away and puts them in charge and tells them to oversee the distribution of the household commodities to the appropriate usages among the people who were there- to feed them and care for them. And

when that master comes back- if he finds a slave who has done exactly what he was told to do- the master will bless him and the master will then give him even *more* responsibility- because those faithful slaves have proven themselves.

But if the master comes back and finds slaves who rather than care for the people who were put under their charge and dispense the food and the resources needed has- on the other hand- abused the people and harmed the people and beaten the people- both men and women- and indulged themselves so that they becomes gluttonous and drunk- when the master comes back it's not going to go well for those slaves.

In fact, it's a pretty dramatic event with those slaves. Verse 46 says,

the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect *him* and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

... so that's a pretty severe action.

And so verse 46 tells us that if we live our lives with no thought of God and His Ways- we are acting like we do not believe and so when Jesus comes back- He will treat us as though we don't believe.

And this underscores the fallacy of much of what the modern Church teaches about Salvation. It is common today to hear somebody preach that God doesn't expect anything out of you and only wants you to acknowledge that He exists, and then He will save you and you have no further obligation and duty after that- and that is just flat out not true.

It is absolutely true that Salvation is by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone and not brought about by human works or human deeds, or by taking Communion or by being Baptized or by speaking in tongues or by walking down an aisle or shaking a preacher's hand or praying a prayer. That is true.

Salvation is a Sovereign Work of God alone Who, all by Himself, does sixteen separate things in order to save you to the uttermost:

- God chooses some unworthy sinners for Salvation before the foundation of the world

- God took on flesh and lived a perfectly sinless life for 33-1/2 years to earn the Righteousness that the Law of God promised
- Jesus died on the Cross to absorb all the Divine Punishment for all the sins of God's elect
- God raised Jesus from the dead three days later
- 40 days later Jesus rose up into Heaven
- God the Holy Spirit moves out into the world to seek those whom God has chosen to save
- God the Holy Spirit regenerates those people by violating their will, invading their minds and bodies, and replacing their fallen nature with a new divine nature
- With that new nature- these elected sinners receive eyes that see and ears that hear and a heart to believe (Saving faith)
- God the Holy Spirit drags these people to Jesus
- Jesus receives all whom the Father gives Him
- With that new divine nature those elected sinners have both the will and the power to repent of their sins and trust in the finished Work of Jesus and are forgiven
- God takes the spotless Righteousness of Jesus and imputes (credits) it to these justified individuals- making them fit for heaven
- God adopts these justified people into the Family of God (the Body of Jesus Christ/ the Church)
- God the Holy Spirit molds and shapes these justified souls into the Image and Likeness of Jesus Christ through the life-long process of Sanctification
- These souls die *in* Christ
- They are raised with a new body to live without sin in Heaven forever

... and this is called, "The Ordo Salutis" or "The Order of Salvation".

But it is equally true that if somebody has indeed trusted in Jesus Christ for Forgiveness and Salvation and has received within themselves a new divine nature by Grace through Faith- the result is that they *will* love God and they will love the *things* of God, and those new loves that have been graciously *granted* to them will empower them to strive to obey Jesus- not perfectly, but honestly- and to live

their lives to God's Glory- striving by God's Grace and in the Power of the Holy Spirit to be found with three qualities:

- Humbly and joyfully submitted to the Authority of Holy Scripture in their daily lives
- Valuing Jesus Christ as being the Treasure of their hearts
- Seeking to be found faithful and busy in the Work of the Lord

And so by definition- this kind of life will be manifested in the visible and lasting fruit of the Holy Spirit. Therefore- because that is true- those who do *not* bring forth this godly and tangible fruit have no reason to believe that they have ever been saved or forgiven.

Jesus then goes on to say in this Parable that there were some other slaves- who really didn't know what they were supposed to do- and they'll still get beat- but they will receive only a few lashes.

So this Parable is really all about stewardship. It's all about how you handle your time and talents and opportunity under the Master.

Now this entire Parable is fashioned around verse 40 where Jesus says,

Luke 12:40

You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.

Now back in verse 35- Jesus gave four analogies of what this readiness looks like:

- Have your loins girded up. Get your clothes on. Be ready to move. That's a picture of readiness.
- "Get your lamps lit- don't be in the dark- be alert- be aware- don't slumber- be watchful."
- Be like servants who don't exactly know when the Master is coming back from a wedding feast. Consider the Return of Jesus to be imminent.
- Be like a householder who knows a thief is coming, just doesn't know when, so he's ready all the time."

Those are the images of readiness that Jesus wants us to have in our minds as we continue to live our lives to God's Glory. These four characteristics are what it means to:

Be ready...

So we've already been introduced, starting in verse 35, to this great reality of truth that Jesus is coming back. The Son of Man, the Messianic title for the Lord Jesus, is coming back, as **Daniel 7** says, to take the Kingdom the Father will give to Him as the rightful heir to the universe, to the earth and to all its inhabitants.

Now the final earthly scene in the life of our Lord happened out on the Mount of Olives- 40 days after His Resurrection- when Jesus ascended into heaven in the very same body that He was raised in- which is the very same body that he died in. He was there talking with His followers and all of a sudden He ascended into heaven in the clouds and disappeared.

And according to **The Acts 1: 9-11:**

9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.

11 They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

... so this last scene was the going of the Son of Man and it sets the stage for the next event:

This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.

And, so, we have to know that the Mormons are absolutely wrong about this. The Ascension of Jesus is not some kind of "spiritual ascension" where Jesus walked through a cloud and came over here to North America. The Holy Bible is crystal clear about this:

- Jesus literally and physically died on the Cross

- Jesus literally and physically rose from the dead on the third day in the very same Body that He died in
- Jesus literally and physically ascended up into Heaven in the very same Body that He rose in
- Jesus is literally and physically coming back to this earth

And Jesus will come back to this earth in Power and great Glory- but He is coming at a time that is unexpected. And so, we are called to be ready- all the time.

Now I have told you that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is a cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith. It is not minor, it is not unimportant, it is not secondary or tertiary, it is critical, it is a substantial reality in our faith. In fact, in some ways the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is the most important of events because it's the *end* of the story- because the Second Coming consummates everything. So to minimize the Second Coming is to minimize everything else because this is the finale- or the culmination.

Jesus' Return to this earth consummates the history of the world and the history of redemption and the fulfillment of all God's pledges and promises and covenants and threats and warnings. So, therefore- because that is true- all Blessings and all Judgments in their final disposition are connected with the Return of Jesus Christ.

Now world history sometimes seems to be careening sort of helter skelter into blackness- sort of uncontrolled. But that is not the case at all. While the behavior of fallen Man becomes less and less controlled- the very movement of history is under the sovereign Control of God- Who is moving all of human history exactly to the point which He has predetermined- and that is the Return of Jesus Christ.

Now here in **Luke 12:41**- Peter is speaking on behalf of the rest because Peter was the spokesman. And in Verse 41- Peter said,

Luke 12:41b

... Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone *else* as well?

... the parable being verses 36 to 38, about a master who went away to a wedding feast and left his servants with responsibilities and is coming back at a time they don't know, hoping to find them doing what they should have been doing, prepared for his coming. And if he finds them

that way, he'll gird himself to serve and he'll have them recline at the table, he'll come and wait on them whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third. If he finds them doing what they're supposed to be doing, they'll be blessed.

And the implication of that Parable is that there's some danger here. And the danger is in not being ready. And immediately all these men standing there did a heart examination and so they come up with this question,

"So who is Jesus talking to? Is this us? Are we in danger of not being ready?"

... I mean, that's really the issue here. It's very personal. So the Apostles are wondering, *"Are we the ones that Jesus is talking about or is He talking about all these other people around here?"*

And so Peter sort of says, *"Are you talking to the whole crowd here of all these curious people, or are You talking to us? Just who is in danger here and who needs to hear this?"*

And that's a very important question and it's had some interesting answers because we might be tempted to say, *"Well it doesn't seem that the Lord gives Peter an answer."* And He doesn't give him a *direct* answer- because the answer is in the Parable itself. So Jesus doesn't give Peter a direct answer- He gives him an *indirect* answer that is wrapped up inside the Parable. And so by examining the Parable we will see the answer. And the Lord begins by saying this:

"Who then is the faithful and sensible steward?"

... and then in verse 45 He says,

"But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming, begins to beat the slaves..."

.. so you've got two kinds of people in this Parable- two different groups of people. You've got the people who are faithful and who are, therefore, ready, and you have the people who are unfaithful, and, therefore, are not ready. And the first group is going to be blessed and the second group is going to be punished.

So Jesus doesn't really need to answer the question in any other way than to say that the Parable is self-explanatory. If you're in group two- then you're the one who needs to get ready. And if you're in group one- you're the faithful and the sensible and you're ready now- but you need to stay ready.

Now some people have suggested through the years that this Parable is all about just believers because Jesus says that they're all slaves of the master, and doesn't that mean that if the master is the Lord- then they're all believers?"

No, it doesn't because it says in verse 46 that some of these servants of the master are going to be cut in pieces and assigned a place with the unbelievers. And saved people don't get thrown in with the unbelievers unless you're one of them. So Jesus was not talking about just believers here.

So everybody is in this Parable is in one of these two groups- believers who by definition are ready and non-believers who by definition are not. And the believers are pictured by the faithful and the unbelievers are pictured by the unfaithful. And that becomes self-evident and is the only answer the Lord really needs to give to Peter.

So in effect- Jesus answers Peter by telling him that there are really only two kinds of people- those who are faithful- meaning they are saved and ready, and those who are not- meaning those who are lost and are not ready- and every single human being is one or the other of these two groups.

Now how can anybody be a slave of the master if they are not of the master? Because everybody is accountable to God for your life and, therefore, in that sense- everybody is responsible to God. Every human being ever born has been given his or her life as a Divine Stewardship, and, therefore, everybody is accountable to God with what they do with it.

So all men are accountable to God- all men are responsible to God, and all men are able to be judged because all men are responsible before God to do the right thing, and so if they do not do the right thing- they *can* and *will* be judged by God.

This is an issue called "Human Responsibility", and it is absolutely taught from cover to cover in the Holy Bible. We are responsible for what we do. So if we do not do the *right thing*- if we do

not heed the General Call to repent and believe and then obey the Gospel- we will be judged by God.

Now over the years- this Biblical Truth about Human Responsibility has been perverted into a very bad untruth called "Human Free Will". And they are not the same thing. So while Human Responsibility is absolutely taught in the Bible- Human Free Will is not.

The concept of Human Free Will- as most people understand it today- is a composite teaching that contains some Biblical tenets of Human Responsibility mixed in with some real bad unbiblical teaching about so-called "Human Free Will" that was made up by a heretic named Pelagius about 1700 years ago.

And as we have studied together- Pelagius was the father of the single greatest threat to Biblical Christianity that has ever and that will ever attack the Church- an apostasy called "Pelagianism", or what we would call today "Secular Humanism".

Pelagianism denies the Biblical Truth about Original Sin, and, then, subsequently goes on to attack Grace and Justification by Faith alone- which is the very heart of the Biblical Gospel. Pelagianism eventually deifies Man and reduces God to being nothing more than a cosmic servant of Man.

And as we have seen- the modern Church gets some of its most famous and well used phrases about Salvation and Evangelism from Pelagius- the heretic and not from the Bible like:

- Man is a "Free moral agent".
- God will never violate the free will of Man

Now the Holy Bible doesn't teach either one of these concepts and yet the modern Church does, and so you have to wonder with all the claims that are made today about loving the Bible and about being Biblical why the foundational teachings about both Salvation and Evangelism in most every church around here comes from an ancient heretic and not the Scriptures. Isn't the Bible enough?

And as we have seen- many centuries after Pelagius was excommunicated by the Church and his teachings condemned as heresy- an unsaved Presbyterian in the mid-1800's who denied the Blood of Jesus named Charles Finney- took those very same wrong

teachings of Pelagius and began to teach them all over again- this time packaged as Revival Sermons, and later on these same teachings were made famous and mass produced by Billy Graham so where today- the ipso factor teachings of Evangelism comes from a 1700 year old heresy and not the Bible.

Suffice it to say that while it is true that fallen human beings do indeed have a "Will" and can makes choices- that "Will" is certainly not "free"- but is, in fact, in bondage to our fallen nature.

So here is how you must understand human will. It is true that human beings can choose. But we cannot stop with that statement and we must press into it further. *Why* do we choose what we choose? We choose what we choose because we choose what we love, and what we want, and what we crave after, and what we desire, and we do not choose anything long term that is contrary to our loves and desires.

But we cannot even stop there because what do lost people love and crave after and want and desire? Do lost people want God or the things of God? No. Lost people do not care one whit about God or the things of God. Lost people only love and want and desire two things:

- Self
- Sin

... and, so, lost people will be happy to go to church and go through the motions- as long as it doesn't interfere with or hinder or cramp the style of the two things that they love the most:

- Themselves
- Their Sin

... and, so, because that is true- lost people will only choose in accord with those fallen and sinful and rebellious loves and wants and desires. So left to themselves- lost people would never love God would never voluntarily seek after God and would never desires to serve God gladly. Here is how the Bible puts it in **Romans 3:9-18**:

9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

10 as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOTE EVEN ONE;

11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;
12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."
13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";
14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";
15 "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,
16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,
17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."
18 "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

Now notice the *universality* of that language. The Apostle Paul uses words and phrases like:

- None
- All
- Not even one

... to describe the fallen state of Man. Now please turn with me to another verse that illustrates Man's will being in bondage to his fallen nature in **1 Corinthians 2:14:**

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

Now notice the two parts of this verse. The Apostle teaches here that the "natural man" or the lost and unsaved man *does not* do something and then at the last part of this verse- Paul says that the lost unsaved man *cannot* do something. So let's see what that means.

Paul says here that the lost and unsaved man:

... does not accept the things of the Spirit of God

... the lost person does not receive with gladness, he does not believe, he does not embrace, he does not trust in or have confidence in what?

... the things of the Spirit of God

Now *why* doesn't the lost and unsaved man accept or trust in or embrace or have confidence in or receive with gladness the things of the Spirit of God? Look at the very next phrase:

... for they are foolishness to him

Now this type of foolishness in the original Greek has nothing to do with being silly or funny. This type of foolishness has to do with being so utterly absurd that it deserves to be scorned and ridiculed and rejected by any thinking and reasoning human being.

Well what is it that needs to be rejected as being so utterly absurd by any thinking human being?

... the things of the Spirit of God

... things like Repentance and Salvation and Loving and Obeying Jesus Christ are all rejected out of hand by lost people as being utterly absurd because they do not accept them as a normal and natural function of their fallen nature.

Now that is real bad- but it gets even worse- look at the next phrase of **1Corinthians 2:14**:

... and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

So first we read that the lost person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God- which has to do with his own personal volition and will. So the lost person- as a normal and natural function of his fallen will sees the things of the Spirit of God as being utterly ridiculous to the point of voluntarily and consciously and gladly choosing to reject them as a function of his fallen will.

But here in the last part of **1 Corinthians 2:14**- we see not human will and volition- but we see human ability and power. Paul says that the lost man:

... cannot understand them...

... and that has nothing to do with human will or choice- this has to do with power and ability.

So the way to understand this is that lost people do not love and serve God because they cannot. And they cannot because they don't want to.

And that is why we can and will be judged by God, and why we are all accountable to God- because each and every rejection of Jesus is a *willful* rejection which God can and does hold us to account.

But, if that is true- which it is- then how does anybody in that condition ever suddenly want to love and serve God?

This is where what Pelagius taught is so wrong. Because we are so radically ruined by The Fall- in order for any lost person to ever begin to love and serve God gladly- God has to sovereignly *intervene* in that person's life and *interrupt* the natural and normal processes that would cause him to reject, and God has to sovereignly *override* those fallen instincts and change the nature of the individual from being fallen to being divine. And another way of saying that is:

For anybody to be saved- God has to violate the stew out of our will

.. which is completely contrary to what Pelagius taught, and sadly it is also contrary to what many in the modern Church teaches as well. And that is called "Regeneration", or being "Born Again". It is the sovereign and gracious *giving* or *granting* of spiritual life to those who are spiritually dead.

And then with that new nature- new loves and new desires and new wants and new cravings emerge, and the now born again individual now personally desires and wills and to love and serve God, and so his new choices reflect those new cravings.

So it is true that man chooses- but his choices are not "free" they are not *autonomous*- but are in bondage to his fallen nature. So the problem with lost people are not their choices and not even their loves and wants- it is their fallen nature.

Being born again radically and completely changes the nature of the person- which in turn changes his loves and wants. And those new loves and desires automatically change his choices and his decisions. And with that new nature and with those new loves and desires- the

lost man then has the desire to seek after God, and he has the desire to want to be re-united with God, and he despises his sin and hates his sinful life, and in that condition- he hears the Gospel and sovereignly empowered- he believes the Gospel, repents and trusts in Jesus and is justified before God.

So God set this all up in such a way that it is *always* our own fault when we sin and it is *always* God's Grace when we don't. It is always *our* fault when we transgress against God's Law and it is always God's Grace when we don't. We get all the blame for our sin and God gets all the glory for our Salvation. So Human Responsibility is true- but Human Free Will is not.

So we are lost all on our own- through our father Adam- but we are not saved by anything that we do for ourselves. We are only saved by Grace and through the gift of Saving Faith and not of any human works.

So we're accountable to God- to His will and to His honor and to His law and to His Word and to His Son and to His authority and to His gospel and to His judgment- everyone is. Nobody escapes from that accountability, no institution escapes this accountability, and no Government escapes it either.

So in that sense- God is the Master of all- the Sovereign of all and the Judge of all, and in that sense- all men are accountable to God and to God only. And no one is excusable. **Romans 1** says we are all accountable to God. And that which may be known of God is within us so that we are without excuse. And **Romans 2** says we have a conscience and we have the law of God written in our heart, and, therefore, we are all accountable to God for that moral law, and that reasoning that leads us back to the primary cause who is God Himself. We are all accountable. So in this Parable here in **Luke 12**- in that sense- God is the master of all of us.

The **Book of Ecclesiastes** ends with this statement,

God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden whether it's good or evil.

So God holds every person accountable for everything. And that's the story Jesus is telling them here.

So this Parable is divided into two parts. Let's look at the first part first- Verses 42-44:

Luke 12:42-44

42 And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?"

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

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

Now Jesus loved this kind of image and so He used it a lot. He said this again and again and again. So every single person in the world has been given a stewardship of time and talent and opportunity to follow the path of conscience and reason. Every single one of us has been given the blessing of Common Grace- which is an opportunity to follow the path of Truth to the Knowledge of God.

And those who are termed here as "faithful" are those who have followed that Common Grace to the Truth. So the faithful are those who are ready- they're ready for the Lord to come and they await His Return with eagerness.

Now what does it mean to be ready? It means if you go back into Chapter 12 and look at all that we've already covered- being ready means:

- You've rejected false teaching and false teachers
- You've turned to fearing God instead of fearing men
- You've confessed Christ publicly
- You've put your life in the trustful care of the Holy Spirit
- You're turned away from materialism and the love of money and the love of the world, and you've pursued the King and His Kingdom of Salvation

... and you do all this with a sense of urgency- because Jesus may come at any moment. And those who are ready are here depicted and called the faithful and sensible steward, or servant. Faithful, *pistos*, that very important verb meaning believing- so this is the believing and the *phronimos*- which is a word having to do with thinking- so *phroneo*- the

thoughtful and the prudent- the discreet and the wise and the sensible- which is a great translation.

These people are given the ability to understand the urgency of this reality. They understand what matters. And that faithful steward when his Master comes back- he's going to show Him that when he was put in charge of his servants to give them their rations at the proper time- that he did exactly what he was told to do.

Now this particular servant in this Parable was given the responsibility of general management of the food supply, and he had the responsibility to make sure everybody in the family and everybody in the extended family and all the servants in the estate were cared for. And he is a representative of every human being. So he's been given resources. He's been given knowledge. He's been given the Law of God in his heart. He's been given an understanding mind that reasons him back to the first and primary Cause. He's been given talents and capabilities and gifts.

This kind of person has been gifted with being able to see the Creation around him and all the Handiwork of God. He's been given opportunities and spiritual experiences. He's been exposed to the Truth and the Gospel.

So the question is:

What have you done with what you have been given?

And to that extent- this is like the Parable of the Talents over in **Matthew 25** in which Jesus says,

"Some receive one talent, some more, some more."

... so not everybody has the same stewardship- but all have enough to be accountable and responsible to God. So this is gospel opportunity- an opportunity to come to the Truth. And if anyone turns from this or hardens their hearts- they are without excuse. But when the Lord comes back, He will say in verse 43,

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

So if Jesus comes back and He finds you ready and eager and you've taken your opportunity and you've responded to it in an appropriate way and you've obeyed the Call of the Gospel and you have followed the reasoning of your mind to that first cause in the necessity of a God Who is a Creator and you followed the Law of God in your heart to a moral lawgiver and your conscience has reacted in convicting you of sin. And you have looked for a solution and you've come to the Gospel and you're ready for His coming- then Jesus says here that you're going to be blessed.

"He will put him in charge of all His possessions."

... the Lord will gladly give you His Kingdom. And that's what eternity is going to be for believers- it's going to be the opening up of everything God has- all the Goodness and Glory of God in that perfect environment of eternal bliss.

But, that's for the faithful- what about the unfaithful? Look at verses 45-48:

45 But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, *both* men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;

46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect *him* and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

47 And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes,

48 but the one who did not know *it*, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

So instead of distributing- this type of slave engages in gluttony and drunkenness, and he abuses the people that he's been given responsibility to care for. So instead of feeding them- he beats them and engages himself in self-indulgent abuse and dissipation. And he says, "*Ah, the master is going to be a long time in coming- so I've got plenty of time and so I'm not going to worry about it. The Master is not coming any time soon.*"

And so he engages himself in this kind of illusion that tells him that at that some point down the road- he'll get everything right- but right now- it is time to eat, drink, and be merry. And just before the Master comes back- I'm going to slide in there at the end just before he comes.

But Jesus says that that's a foolish illusion, dear friend- yet it is one that deceives many people in our day. This illusion says, *"I want to live my life and I want to sow my wild oats and I want to fulfill my desires and I want to live by my lusts and passions, and I don't want to say "no" to anything that I want- I want to do everything that I can and just before the end- I'll get it all right with God."*

But you're very deceived if you think like that because first of all, you don't know how much time you have- but even more important than that- you have no idea when Jesus is coming back.

The trap of that logic is that the longer you stay on that road- where do you think you're going to find a spark that's going to turn you around before Jesus Returns? Because the deeper and deeper you go into sin- the further you are from any deliverance. There's nothing you're going to find down that road if you turn against the truth.

So that's the foolish person. Now does this teach us that eternal judgment will have degrees of punishment because it mentions here that some will be beaten with few and others will be beaten with many?

That is certainly possible because the Bible says that Judas went to "his own place" in hell, and it also seems that there will be rewards in Heaven as well. But in reality- I don't think that really matters because all in hell will be in torment and will be punished forever, and I really don't think anybody burning in a lake of fire will take any comfort knowing that they could have been punished even worse.

So Jesus is coming and there's only two possibilities. Who is this for?...Peter asks- Who needs to be afraid?

Well, not the faithful servant- the faithful sensible slave- he's ready. And when the master arrives- that slave is going to be blessed and he's going to be given the Kingdom.

But that slave who is aggressively disobedient- that slave who is indifferent, that slave who is willfully ignorant- they're going to be punished. And the more you know- the more dangerous your condition. That's an important word to those of you who may sit and hear and hear and hear and hear and never respond.

So Jesus came the first time to deal with sin. And He is coming back- not to deal with sin- but to save us from the Wrath of God's Judgment. The first time Jesus came to purchase our Salvation by bearing our sins. The second time- He comes to *apply* our Salvation by shielding us from the wrath of God.

As we saw last week- **Hebrews 10:27** describes the "judgment" the writer has in mind, namely,

"a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries."

And this is what Christ is coming the second time to save us from. Christ *bought* the first time what He *gives* the second time—safety in the Judgment.

So the question before us all is:

Are we included in the "many" whose sins Jesus bore? And will we be saved by his coming "for salvation"?

... and the answer of **Hebrews 9:28** is, "Yes," *if we are "eagerly awaiting Him."* We can know that our sins are taken away and that we will be safe in the Judgment *if we trust Christ in such a way that it makes us eager for His Return.*

So there is a phony faith that claims to believe in Christ, but is only a fire insurance policy. Phony faith "believes" only to escape hell. It has no real desire for Christ. In fact, it would prefer that He not come- so that we can have as much of this world's pleasures as possible. This shows that a heart is not with Christ, but with the world. And that is not saving faith. **"He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me"** (**Matthew 10:37**).

So the issue for us today is: Do we eagerly long for the coming of Christ? Do we want to see his kingdom established and do we want to be reunited to him in closer personal fellowship? Or do we want him to wait while our love affair with the world runs its course? That is the question that tests the authenticity of faith.

So let us be like the Corinthians who were **"awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ"** (**1 Corinthians 1:7**), and like the

Philippians whose **“citizenship was in heaven, from which also [they] eagerly waited for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20).**

And let us remember the words of Paul in **2 Timothy 4:8** that **“there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to *all who have loved his appearing.*”**

So that’s the issue for us. Do we *love* His appearing? Or do we love the world and hope that His appearing will not interrupt our worldly plans? Eternity hangs on the answer to this question.

Amen. Let’s pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.