

Title: Faithful and Wise Servants  
Text: Matthew 24: 36-51  
Date: October  
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Every one of us will meet God, that is for certain. There is a day and hour fixed when Christ shall return the second time. The Lord Jesus gives us instruction that every faithful and wise servant of the Lord shall heed. That is how the Lord characterizes the believer in our text. We would all be wise to heed it.

**Title:** Faithful and Wise Servants.

**Proposition:** Every faithful and wise servant shall spend this life watching for the Lord's return and sowing to the Spirit, to his own spiritual well-being and those of his brethren.

## **I. DO NOT SEEK THE TIME OF THE LORD'S RETURN.**

**Matthew 24: 36: But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.**

The day and hour, no man knows, nor do the angels of heaven know. It manifests the pride of the deceitful heart when men attempt to use the scripture to predict the time of Christ's return. Christ said plainly, it is not for us to know. Not only is not for us to know the day and the hour, it is not for us to attempt to predict the general time or season of Christ's return.

Acts 1: 6: When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7: And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

True godly humility will not seek to know. While serving the Father in the earth, even Christ in his humanity, the very one who himself would be returning, did not know or seek to know the exact time.

Mark 13: 32: But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

The importance of not knowing the time is so that we live every day by faith—watching for his return. Considering how the natural man—even the fleshly tendency of believers—is to neglect spiritual matters, imagine if we knew the exact day and hour of Christ's return how we would live for this world and put the things that are truly important. It is best that we live everyday by faith trusting the word of God's promise.

## **II. DO NOT BE LIKE THOSE IN THE DAYS OF NOAH INSTEAD, GET IN CHRIST NOW.**

**Matthew 24: 37: But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38: For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39: And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

Noah preached the gospel in his day--a **preacher of righteousness**. He did so because God chose to be gracious to Noah—"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." God called Noah. God revealed his glory to Noah in Christ. So Noah preached the righteousness of God manifest in Christ Jesus.

**Noah's Gospel**

I know what Noah preached because his gospel is my gospel—there is only one gospel—the gospel of the righteousness of God manifest in Christ Jesus.

Noah declared that every man is guilty before God

Romans 3: 23: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

He could point to that ark which was a type of Christ and say that the ark manifests we are all sinners. Christ Jesus the Son of God coming into this earth declares that there is none good, no not one. Christ had to come, else all would perish. Noah declared, “God owes none of us anything but the flood of justice. And that flood of justice is coming.”

Noah declared that the LORD is merciful and gracious. Noah could say, “I am a sinner. I did nothing to merit grace—grace is unmerited favor. God chooses to be gracious to whom he will. And God keeps mercy for thousands—forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. What a merciful and gracious God! So what is the purpose of this ark, you might ask—it declares that in Christ God is merciful and gracious. That is the purpose of Christ coming forth into this earth?”

Noah declared God is holy and righteous in being merciful and forgiving. “God will by no means clear the guilty.” Noah could say, “See this ark—it typifies Christ to come. God has set forth this ark, to show us that in Christ, it is God who justifies freely by his grace.” Christ paid the price of redemption. The price each of his elect owed for our sins Christ paid by bearing the just demands of the broken law. And he justified each one he represented from our sins. Christ bore the flood of God’s justice in place of those God put in Christ, just as this ark bore it for those God put in the ark.

Romans 3: 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Noah declared Christ is set forth as the place of mercy—the propitiation. He could say, “God has set forth this ark to show us the place of propitiation—the place of mercy—is in Christ.”

Romans 3: 25: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God .

Noah declared God’s longsuffering and forbearance. Noah could preach that “God is longsuffering, his forbearance is great, God is abundant in goodness and truth. You see how God has waited for almost 120 years. He did it so I could preach the truth to you. He did it because God is longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth. Now believe on God, believe on Christ, get in the ark, get in Christ. If you perish it will not be because you are ignorant of the truth. And those who believe God, shall not glory in themselves but in God who justified us for we are saved by God’s grace alone.” That is our gospel today. Peter said, “God is longsuffering to usward—the elect of God—not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” And all those whom God is willing to save shall not perish but shall, by the effectual call of God’s grace, repent and believe on Christ Jesus and glory only in the Lord.

Romans 3: 26: To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

### **When Christ Returns It Shall be the Same as in Noah’s Day**

They did in Noah’s day what folks are doing in this day as the gospel is being preached.

**Matthew 24: 38: They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, v39: And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away;**

They were not thirsty and hungry for Christ our Righteousness; not married to Christ our Husband. Instead, they were busy eating and drinking of the cares of this world; married to this world, giving their sons and daughters to be married to this world.

They sought not to keep the lamps of their inner man filled with the oil of the Spirit—like the wise virgins--but only their earthly receptacles full of this world's goods—like the unwise virgins. They sought not to sow and increase in the spiritual talents—like the two faithful servants. Noah sowed the spiritual riches which Christ our Master gave to Noah, seeking the profitable increase of God's kingdom. But the selfish-worldling in Noah's day had his mind set on sowing and increasing in earthly pursuits and earthly riches—like the unfaithful servant. So it is today.

Right up unto the very day Noah entered the ark—**they knew not**—they slumbered at the gospel Noah preached while they gave their full attention to their business in the world. Like a brute beast only concerned with his belly.

The flood **took them all away**. Scripture tells us that in Christ all are One—no distinctions between rich or poor, learned or unlearned, Jew or Gentile. So it is for all outside of Christ: many were wealthy and many were poor. But the pauper out of the ark perished as well as the prince. There were learned men in the world. But their knowledge could not deliver them. They perished alongside the unlearned. There were many zealous in vain religion and many wicked outside of religion. Both perished side-by-side. The oldest with the youngest, the oppressor with the oppressed, all perished in the righteous judgment of God. The Lord said, **“So shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”**

Paul called it “A great falling away”—The Lord said, “when the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” Eight souls were saved in the flood. So it shall be when Christ returns. Few shall be found who truly believe and watch, just as it was in Noah's day.

**Illustration:** Standing at the edge of the cliffs in Australia. Who would be so foolish as to stand on the edge of eternity and be more concerned about his carnal security in this life rather than the security of his eternal soul?

**III. KNOW THAT WHEN CHRIST'S COMES HE WILL SEPARATE HIS BELIEVING REDEEMED CHILDREN FROM THE REPROBATE AND HIS GRACE WILL BE THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IN THE TWO.**

**Matthew 24: 40: Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41: Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.**

Believers and reprobate men and women live, work and worship side-by-side. Some sleep in the same bed, some live in the same house, go to ballgames at the same ballfield, work side-by-side at the same jobs and set beside each other in the same church building. But when Christ returns he will separate his elect from the unbelieving reprobate.

Matthew 24:31: And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

One shall be taken to be with the Lord forever. The other left to suffer the judgment and fiery wrath of hell forever. And it shall be the same for those already in the graves.

Daniels 12:2: And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Though two work side-by-side at the same occupation and appear by the sight of the eye to be the same, grace has made a difference. God has quickened that one whom he shall receive to himself so that their heart, their thoughts, are set on Christ and his righteousness. The one left, is just as he was when he was born into this world the first time.

Ps 10:4: The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

In Noah's day they **knew not** until God had shut Noah up in the ark. Then it was too late. So it shall be when the Lord returns in the twinkling of an eye. There will be no time then for repentance, only judgment.

**Application:** Brethren, our Lord is instructing us not to have our minds carried away with this world. Think of today: where we so busy today that the thought never crossed our minds that today might be the day the Lord returns? The next word is concerning just that.

#### **IV. ALWAYS BE WATCHING AND READY FOR THE DAY OF HIS RETURN.**

**Matthew 24: 42: Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.**

The Lord is teaching us that though we have our day-to-day responsibilities in this world, we must never let those things become preeminent in our hearts and minds but have Christ and his return ever in our hearts.

**Illustration:** Friday night—working and watching. When we are looking forward to the arrival of someone that we are eager to see, though we continue with our necessary work, we watch. The Lord says, **v42: Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come...**

Having our minds set on this world, allowing our daily responsibilities to occupy all our thoughts, is compared to those who sleep in the night and to those who are drunk in the night. Paul said,

1 Thessalonians 5:6: Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

**The Lord gives an illustration in our text.**

**Matthew 24: 43: But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.**

If you were told in what watch a thief would come to your earthly house, you would watch for him. Is Christ not better to watch for than a thief? A thief comes to rob our goods—Christ comes to give us our inheritance.

We would watch if it were our earthly house. Is not our spiritual house—our inner man, our new heart—better to guard than our earthly houses?

If we knew what watch the thief was coming, though we knew not the exact hour, we would know which watch in the night, so we would be ready in that watch, looking for the unexpected hour. Christ has told us he is coming in this watch—these are the last days—the last watch of the night.

**Matthew 24: 44: Therefore be ye also READY: for in such an HOUR AS YE THINK NOT THE SON OF MAN COMETH.**

Unbeliever, are you indifferent about the good of your own eternal soul? Are you indifferent about what you are hearing now? You have been given a tremendous privilege to hear the unsearchable riches of Christ preached to you week after week—to whom much is given much shall be required! Do you give diligence to search the scriptures to see if these things be so? Do you give the same diligence to spiritual matters as you do to your school work, or sports or some other earthly thing? These are the words of eternal life. Which one will benefit you eternally the plays in your coach's playbook or these words of God with whom we all must face? Today is the day of salvation. This is the time to prepare.

In the parable of the virgins—they all slept at midnight. We have to care for our families, be faithful employees, and so on. But the five were wise because they had oil in their lamps. When the cry was made at midnight, they were ready. Be diligent to sow to the Spirit, to seek spiritual, heavenly, eternal matters.

For us brethren, who believe, are we as diligent in watching our heart, watching for the Lord's coming as we are about our day-to-day lives? This helps me put my daily affairs in perspective. When I become overly concerned—*anxious*—about things in this earth, I should ask myself this question, "If I knew I would die today and meet my Redeemer would this earthly matter really be as important as I am making it out to be? What if the Lord was returning today, is this matter something that is vital?"

2 Peter 3:11: Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,...<sup>14</sup> Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Philippians 3: 8: Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9: And BE FOUND IN HIM, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10: That I may KNOW HIM, and the power of HIS RESURRECTION, and the fellowship of HIS SUFFERINGS, being made conformable unto HIS DEATH; 11: If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12: Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14: I PRESS toward the MARK FOR THE PRIZE of the HIGH CALLING of God in Christ Jesus. 15: Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded:

In the parable of the talents, the two faithful servants diligently sowed the riches their master provided and they profited thereby. Christ has given the believer spiritual riches—*grace FOR grace*. Not for the purpose of sowing to the world but to sow to our own hearts and to fellow believers and to the hearts of those he shall call. Christ promises to give more grace. Only God gives the increase. But the unfaithful servant was slothful. He sowed what his master gave into the earth, rather than into that spiritual bank where God gives the increase. So the unfaithful servant made no increase in spiritual riches. If a man is not faithful with less, he will not be faithful with more. But to him that is faithful in the least, he shall be given more of the Lord.

Galatians 6: 7: Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8: For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

So shall we be wise and faithful servants or unwise and hypocritical servants? The Lord shall publicly reveal each and shall reward each.

**Matthew 24: 45: Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46: Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47: Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.**

Our reward in this life is more grace, more light personally and greater opportunities to serve God in his church. Our reward in the life to come is that every believer shall be joint-heirs with Christ

**Matthew 24: 48: But and if that evil servant** [not faithful, but evil; called a servant in title only, a hypocrite--but the LORD is the sovereign over false servants as well as his true servants] **shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;**

Remember when Moses delayed to come out of the mount. The people gathered unto Aaron, and said, “Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.” (Ex 32: 1) When they did that they did the following:

**Matthew 24: 49: And shall begin to SMITE *his* FELLOWSERVANTS, and to eat and drink WITH THE DRUNKEN;**

But the wicked hypocritical servant shall his public reward as well.

**Matthew 24: 50: The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51: And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

**So let's go home heeding these three words of our Lord:**

- 1) Get in Christ the ark. Be not as those in Noah's day, as those in the world around us.
- 2) Watch and be ready for the coming of the Lord. It shall be in this watch. Guard your spiritual house until he comes.
- 3) Use the grace God has given us to wisely and faithfully sow to the Spirit, feeding one another as fellowservants in God's house. The Lord honors faithfulness. He gives more grace. And one day soon we shall reign with our King for all eternity.

**Amen!**