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## Luke 12:35-59 – Jesus’ Surprising Sayings

**“Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.” -- Jesus, Luke 12:51**

Jesus’ discourse picks up with a pointed situation of servants awaiting the bridegroom’s return, a frequent theme Jesus employs throughout His ministry. **Read Luke 12:35-48.** Clearly, we are the servants in this parable, with Jesus being the returning bridegroom. Maintain your readiness, stay alert, keep the lights on. This is the posture of servants eagerly waiting for the master’s return. Those who do so receive blessing, in fact the master promises to have them “recline at table” so He can serve them. This very image finds fulfillment when Jesus, at the Last Supper, rose, tied a towel around His waist and washed the disciples’ feet (John 13:3-5)! This is just the first of surprising sayings by Jesus in this passage.

Jesus then mentions readiness, as of the master expecting a thief, only in this scenario Jesus comes like a thief in the night, at the time we do not expect. Do not waste time guessing or predicting His return, rather work as if it is in the next minute! Peter interjects a question--who is Christ talking to here, just the disciples or the entire crowd? Jesus does not answer the question directly but launches into another parable (which indicates He is addressing unbelievers in the crowd). This parable concerns His desire for faithful and wise managers of the gifts He gives in order to care for the master’s household. The idea here is that God’s family inhabits a household together and He calls some to care and feed those in it, most likely referring to pastors. There will be special blessings for faithful pastors who shepherd the flock assigned to them. But if those pastors are bad shepherds (see v 45) who, instead of being about the Lord’s business act like the rich fool earlier in the chapter and spend resources on themselves, at Jesus’ return they will be severely punished. Note it is dependent on how much they are entrusted that they will be judged and commensurately disciplined. There is a difference between unfaithful and ignorant, but ignorance is still not an excuse.

The next section continues the surprising tone of Jesus’ teaching. **Read 12:49-59.** Fire typically symbolizes God’s judgment, which Jesus’ return will inaugurate. He desires for all sin and death to be vanquished so He wishes that phase were already here. However, He has a “baptism” to undergo first which is to bear the sins of His sheep on the cross. Although He has set His face toward Jerusalem and this baptism, Jesus reveals here how distressed He is to be made sin for us and take God’s cup of wrath (see Matthew 26:38-39). Now we

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Our desire is to witness God’s work in transforming hearts.  
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come to verse 51, highlighted above; does it surprise you to hear the Prince of Peace say this? Did not the angels declare at His birth that He brings peace to the earth? Forget the Christmas card versions and look again at Luke 2:14. Here is the angelic proclamation: “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased.” All men do not experience the peace of Christ, although it is available to them. Instead, men divide over who He is. Only those who please God, (i.e., trust in Christ’s blood sacrifice for salvation) will know this peace, the peace that passes all understanding. Jesus’ gift of salvation divides people, even within the same family, which can be distressing to us. Often, a convert from another religion will be disowned for breaking from his or her culture. They then find new family relations within Christ’s body, the church, in which there should be no barriers of division between brothers and sisters in Christ.

In verse 54 Jesus even commends their ability to interpret the weather, but they miss the signs of the times—specifically, His coming to them. He had called the teaching of the Pharisees hypocrisy (12:1), meaning they were play acting instead of sincerely keeping the Law in their hearts. Now Jesus calls the crowds hypocrites for misinterpreting what was happening. If we are not careful, we too, can be caught play acting in church and not staying awake, and miss being prepared for the return of Christ.

He closes this section with an admonishment to make right judgments when encountering strife in the civil arena. The situation describes an accuser taking his brother to court (see Paul’s examination of this very thing in the church at Corinth, 1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Especially as it regards the church, there will be irritations and strife-causing incidents in the body. Settle them, do not let them on the way escalate in civil court.

Whatever may distract you, whether it is bad shepherding, distressing family divisions caused by Christ’s words, our own hypocrisy, or disagreements at church, do not let any of these things distract you from being watchful servants, anticipating the glorious return of Jesus. Let us be like those described in Hebrews 9:28:

*“so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”*

When He does appear, it will be as a bridegroom returning for His bride, the church. Be ready.

**Question To Ponder Further:** *How has God gifted you and how are you using what He has given? If you are a pastor or a teacher in Christ’s church, how well are you feeding His sheep? (1 Peter 5:1-4) We all may say we can do better, but be on guard that you are not neglecting something He has commanded you to do. And do not think that Jesus is late in returning; He will be right on time! (2 Peter 3:1-13).*

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I am very thankful for the positive feedback I have received from so many as I have endeavored to bring the Word of God to mind during this session. I am convinced that time in God’s Word is always time well spent and I pray that you will be inspired to delve daily into Bible reading yourself, if not already. I also pray for your safety as campaign season hits full tilt, that you will find peace in the Lord as you contend for your seats, and I look forward to being a minister of the Word to you next session, Lord willing. Blessings, Ron

**It has been my great pleasure to bring you Scriptural insights this session! As we break please feel free to contact me for prayer or conversation. All the best in your campaigns!**  
**Soli Deo Gloria!**