**August 10, 2025 Living Well: Stay Alert Romans 13:11-14; Luke 12:30-42**

“ ***…now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed” (Romans 13:11)***

***“You must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” (Luke 12:40)***

The closing statements of “You also must be ready” from Christ connect this week to last week’s passage, emphasizing how obedience brings us closer to God. Last week, the rich farmer forgot that he was not his own master, but a servant of God. After hearing Jesus’s warning in the parable, Jesus addresses his listeners’ fears this week: unlike the rich farmer, they have nothing to worry about if they are serving God.

In serving God, everything they do should prepare them for the coming of their Lord, whose timing is unknown. Jesus warned them to be dressed and ready for service, keeping their lamps lit, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet. When he comes and knocks, they should be ready to open the door for him immediately. This is not a threat but an invitation to be blessed by living the kingdom’s life now through our actions!

Jesus is not just inviting us to be awake, ready, and watchful. He is calling us to be fully alive and to stay alive. To choose the life of the Kingdom over certain death in the world. **Waiting for Jesus is having a rightly aligned heart, a body prepared for action**, and a lamp lit on a night. It is a deep desire to welcome and serve Jesus whenever and however he appears. It involves living on our tiptoes daily, keeping our eyes on the door, ready for the Master’s joyous arrival.

What would you do differently if you believed that God demands your lives every day? How should you live if your lives are demanded by you like the rich man’s? The answers to these questions are life-changing and challenging, and they would be a response to Jesus admonition of preparedness.

Many Christians await the return of Jesus Christ but often do not actively watch for it. The Bible instructs us to stay alert and watch, not just to passively wait. Being watchful helps maintain alertness and self-control, while simply waiting may lead to carelessness and shifting priorities.

The message of Jesus’ return conveys a sense of urgency. It encourages believers to prioritize their relationship with Christ and to live in a way that reflects this commitment. In Romans 13:11-12, Paul emphasizes this urgency: “**The hour has already come** …our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over: the day is almost here.”

Paul here was encouraging the Roman Christians to live as though the Lord could come today. Unfortunately, too many Christians have developed the “people have been saying that for years” attitude, and yet the Bible makes it clear that we are always supposed to be prepared not only for His return but also because we are never guaranteed tomorrow. This message is to encourage us. **The Lord has a plan, and all God is asking us to do is live in great anticipation of that plan**.

Part of why we live with anticipation of His return is that we will all choose to live more wisely if we truly believe that we might be standing in His presence today and held accountable for many decisions we are making. If you really thought time was running out, what would motivate you to accomplish? Would you dedicate yourself to fulfilling all God created you to do?

Jesus Christ himself says, “We are the light and salt of the world; thus, our lives should reflect our belief. We need to live lives that reflect the fact that the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us. **Our decisions and our behaviors ought to reflect Him.** We should be striving for more of Him to be revealed through everything we do.

The return of Christ is not a message of fear—it is a message of hope. For believers, it signifies the ultimate reunion with our Savior and the fulfillment of God’s plan. Understanding this gives us the courage to endure challenges and live with eternal purpose. **Jesus’ promise, “I am coming soon,” reminds us that this life is temporary**. It encourages us to lift our eyes from the distractions of the moment and focus on the glory to come.

Are you truly ready for Jesus' return? Are you making the most of your time as you wait for Him? These questions go beyond predicting dates or interpreting symbols; it's about your heart. Are you living in a way that demonstrates your love and anticipation for Christ? If not, now is the time to align your life with His Word. Jesus' return will be sudden and swift, just as He promised. **Whether it happens in your lifetime or later, the message remains the same: be prepared.** Live with urgency, faithfulness, and hope, knowing that the Bridegroom is coming for His bride. We are called to be on "Watchful" or "On Guard" duty. A good guard stays mentally alert and self-controlled. The church is moving closer to the day when Christ will come... so be on guard! **STAY ALERT!**