

VBS 2022

**THE RETURN
OF THE
KING**

Day 2: Getting Ready
1st-5th Grade

Getting Ready

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

Each day, the students will learn a memory verse. Students who learn all 5 memory verses this week will receive a prize.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will look at the Christian's response to the news that Jesus is coming back and teach what we need to do to be ready for Christ's return.

Key Verses

Matthew 24:42-51; 25:14-30—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Matthew 24:43

"But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into."

Hook

Review yesterday's memory verse, Matthew 24:42

Tell the kids that you're going to play a game. You will turn and face a wall, and they can move around, but as soon as you turn back, they have to freeze or they're out. The last person left wins. After the game, ask the winner how he/she won. Explain that the key is always being ready for the teacher to turn around.

Just as you needed to always be ready for the teacher to turn in order to win the game, yesterday we learned about something else we need to be ready for: Jesus' return. Jesus said we must always be ready for Him to come back. Today we are going to learn how to get ready.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Even before He ascended into heaven, Jesus often spoke about what His Second Coming would be like. In Matthew 24:42-51, Jesus told His disciples that His return will be unexpected and could happen at any time, so they need to be ready. He then gave two pictures of what being ready for His return looks like: a wise homeowner, who is always prepared in case a thief comes, and a faithful servant, who does the work his master gives him to do as he waits for his master's return. On the other hand, the wicked servant disregards his instructions and beats the other servants.

Then in Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus expands on the idea of the faithful servant with a parable. In the story, the master is going on a long trip and calls three of his servants. He gives each a different amount of money: five talents (a unit of weight) to the first, two to the second, and one to the third. The master tells each servant to take his money and multiply it by the time he comes back. The first servant trades his money and ends up with ten talents for his master, and the second servant does the same and earns four in total. But the last servant just buries his master's money.

When the master returns, he calls his servants to report on how they did. When the first two servants share that they doubled the master's money, he is delighted and tells them that he will make them rulers over much. But when the third servant explains that he buried the talent because he was afraid, the master is furious that this wicked and lazy servant failed to follow his instructions, and he takes the servant's talent away from him and casts him into the outer darkness.

LOOK

Yesterday, we looked at Jesus' promise to return to earth one day. Ever since the day Jesus went up into heaven almost 2000 years ago, Christians have been looking forward to His Second Coming. But in the meantime, we are not meant to sit around and wait. In today's passage, Jesus tells us why and how He expects us to be prepared for His return.

The first thing Jesus wants us to know is that we can't wait until later to prepare ourselves for His return. We need to be ready for Him to come back at any moment, like the wise homeowner in Matthew 24:43. Because thieves don't give warnings when they plan to rob a house, a wise homeowner must always be ready. That's why people lock their doors at night and hide their valuables. The same way, we don't know when Jesus is coming back. It could be 100 years from now... or it could be today! Since we don't know when He's coming, we can't wait until later to get ready. We need to be prepared now for Him to return at any moment.

Jesus then uses the analogy of servants to show us that being ready for His return means being obedient to complete the tasks that He tells us to do. As we wait for Jesus to come back, He has given us several jobs to

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

do. We are to grow in holiness, fight against sin in our lives, preach the Gospel to unbelievers, and more. If we get to work in obeying the Lord's commands, we will be like the faithful servant in Matthew 24:45-47, who is sure to please his master, whether the master returns quickly or after a long time. But if we think that Jesus won't be back for a while and fail to do the things He says, we are like the servant in verses 48-51, who was in for a rude awakening when the master came back unexpectedly and caught Him unprepared.

The parable in Matthew 25:14-30 builds on the idea of how to be a servant ready for the Master's return. In the parable, not only are the three servants given tasks (make money for their master), but they are given resources to fulfill those tasks (the talents). In the end, each one is judged on what they did with the resources they were given. The servant who ended up with four talents may not have made as much as the one who made ten, but both doubled their master's money, and were both found faithful. The third servant disobeyed his master's orders and squandered his money. His problem was not that he didn't make as much as the first two, but that he didn't even try to do anything at all.

God has given us all jobs to do, and He has given us "talents," or different resources, to do them as we wait for His return. Those talents include not only money, but time, relationships, and yes, actual talents and abilities. Each of us must use the resources we have been given to the best of our abilities in order to please the Lord. Your "talents," and your tasks, won't be the same as someone else's. God isn't asking you to be Billy Graham or Pastor Joe. He wants you to take what He has given you and do the tasks He has called you to do.

Jesus has given us all jobs to do, and He has given us all that we need in order to do them. He expects us to do these things as we await His return. When He comes, will He find you ready?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Matthew 24:42-43.

Ask the kids to go over each of the illustrations and parables in today's passage. Ask what they tell us about what it means to be ready for Jesus' return. What does Jesus want us to do to be ready for His return?

Pray: Thank the Lord for giving us everything we need to be ready for His return. Pray that you all would be faithful to do the tasks He's given us.

Parent Question: What do I need to do to get ready for Jesus' return?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Matthew 24:40-51; 25:14-30 By David Guzik

3. ([Mat 24:40-44](#)) Jesus cautions His disciples to be ready for an unexpected coming.

“Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

a. **Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left:** Jesus here pointed to curious disappearances; to a catching away of some at the coming of the Son of Man (as also described in [1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)).

i. “Taken is the same verb used, e.g., in [Matthew 1:20](#); [17:1](#); [18:16](#); [20:17](#); it implies to take someone to be with you, and therefore here points to the salvation rather than the destruction of the one ‘taken’.” (France)

b. **Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming:** Since the day and hour of this coming are unknowable, Jesus’ followers must be on constant guard for His coming.

i. Here again is the Second Coming dilemma.

· Is it at an unexpected hour or is it positively predicted?

· Is it business as usual or worldwide cataclysm?

· Is it meeting Him in the air ([1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)) or is He coming with the saints ([Zechariah 14:5](#))?

ii. William Barclay describes one aspect of the difficulty here: “It is in two sections and they seem to contradict each other. The first ([verses 32-35](#)) seem to indicate that, as a man can tell by the signs of nature when summer is on the way, so he can tell by the signs of the world when the Second Coming is on the way... The second section ([verses 36-41](#)) says quite definitely that no one knows the time of the Second Coming, not the angels, not even Jesus himself, but only God; and that it will come upon men with the suddenness of a rain-storm out of a blue sky.”

iii. The dilemma is resolved by seeing that there are actually *two* second comings. One is in the air, for the church – commonly known as the *rapture*. The other is to the world, coming with the church, commonly known as the Second Coming of Jesus. The “contradictions” in [Matthew 24](#) (and much of the rest of prophecy) are often solved by seeing there are really references to “two” returns of Jesus.

c. **Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect:** We must not escape the emphasis. We must be ready, because His coming for us is without warning. Jesus follows with a few parables to drive home this point.

i. “Suetonius tells us that it was a piece of Julius Caesar’s policy never to fore-acquaint his soldiers of any set time of removal or onset, that he might ever have them in readiness to draw forth whithersoever he would.” (Trapp)

E. Parable of the two servants.

1. ([Mat 24:45-47](#)) The faithful servant.

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.”

a. **Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing:** Jesus told us that we must carry on with diligence while the Lord is gone. We must be that **faithful and wise servant** who takes care of his master’s business while the master is away.

b. **Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods:** Jesus also promised that we will be rewarded for our diligence. The servants serve the master, but the master knows how to take care of and reward the servants.

2. ([Mat 24:48-51](#)) The evil servant.

“But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

a. **If that evil servant says in his heart, “My master is delaying his coming”:** Jesus warns us of the attitude which says, **“my master is delaying his coming.”** We must live in constant anticipation of Jesus’ return, and that means being about our business for Him *now*.

i. The most dangerous lie is not “There is no God,” not “there is no hell”; but the most dangerous lie of Satan is “there is no hurry.” It is no small thing to say “Jesus is not coming today or for several years,” because your system of prophecy demands it. We need to be ready for the *imminent return* of Jesus Christ.

b. **Begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards:** The evil servant, who was not ready for the master’s return, sinned in at least three ways.

· He was not about the business that the master left for him.

· He fought with and mistreated **his fellow servants**.

· He gave himself to the pleasures of the world instead of serving his master.

i. This emphasis on constant readiness is a challenge for the Christian today. It can be said that many Christians are not ready in the same three ways. Each reader should be greatly impressed by the urgency of Jesus’ appeal.

c. **Cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites:** The faithful and wise servant was rewarded, but so was the evil servant. He was rewarded for His wickedness, and he would have the **portion with the hypocrites** he deserved.

i. **Cut him in two:** “The probable meaning is: will cut him in two (so to speak) with a *whip* = thrash him, the base slave, unmercifully. It is a strong word, selected to sympathy with the master’s rage.” (Bruce)

B. The parable of the talents.

1. ([Mat 25:14-15](#)) Jesus describes a master who gives instructions to his servants before departing on a long journey.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.”

a. **A man traveling to a far country, who called his servants and delivered his goods to them:** This was not a strange idea in the ancient world, where **servants** (slaves) were often given great responsibility. This was often the safest and smartest thing a man could do with his money.

i. “The best thing he could do with his money in his absence, dividing it among carefully selected slaves, and leaving them to do their best with it.” (Bruce)

ii. “This parable takes up the question which that of the bridesmaids left unanswered: what is ‘readiness?’” (France)

b. **To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one:** A **talent** was not an *ability* (though this parable has application to our abilities), but a unit of *money* worth at least \$1,200 in modern terms, and likely much more.

i. “The *talent* was not a *coin*, it was a *weight*; and therefore its value obviously depended on whether the coinage involved was copper, gold, or silver.” (Barclay)

ii. “The English use of ‘talent’ for a natural (or supernatural) aptitude derives from this parable...But of course the Greek *talanton* is simply a sum of money...it was generally regarded as equal to 6,000 denarii.” (France) “If a talent were worth six thousand denarii, then it would take a day laborer twenty years to earn so much.” (Carson)

iii. In the application of this parable it is appropriate to see these **talents** as life resources – such as time, money, abilities, and authority.

c. **To each according to his own ability:** The servants were given different amounts of money according to their **ability**. One servant only received one talent, yet we should see that this was not an insignificant amount. Some received more; but everyone received something and everyone received *a large amount*.

i. “The talent which each man has suits his *own* state best; and it is only *pride* and *insanity* which lead him to *desire* and *envy* the graces and talents of another. *Five* talents would be *too much* for some men: *one* talent would be *too little*.” (Clarke)

2. ([Mat 25:16-18](#)) The servants manage the master’s money.

“Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money.”

a. **He who had received the five talents went and traded with them:** Each of those who had received **talents** from their master did with them as they saw fit. Two of them **traded with** their talents and earned more talents (**made another five talents...gained two more also**).

i. **Went and traded** implies direct action. “The point is that the good servants felt the responsibility of their assignment and went to work without delay.” (Carson)

ii. We aren’t told how they **traded with** their talents. Perhaps they loaned the money at interest, perhaps they used the money and bought things and sold them for more money. The point is that they used what they had and gained more by using.

iii. We can say many good things about the work of the first two servants:

- They did their work *promptly*.
- They did their work with *perseverance*.
- They did their work with *success*.

· They were *ready* to give an account to their master.

b. **He who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money:** The third servant did almost *nothing* with his master's money. He took some care that it would not be lost (by hiding it), but he did nothing *positive* with his master's money, in contrast to the first two servants.

3. ([Mat 25:19-23](#)) The first two servants are judged.

“After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”

a. **After a long time the lord of those servants came:** The long delay would tempt the servants to think that they would *never* give an account for their management, yet they most certainly would.

b. **You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things:** The reward was the same for both servants, even though one was given **five talents** and the other was given **two talents**. Each performed the same according to the resources they had received.

c. **Well done, good and faithful servant:** This shows that the master looked for goodness and faithfulness in His servants. Whatever financial success these servants enjoyed came because they were **good and faithful**. The master looked first for these character qualities, not for a specific amount of money.

i. “It is not ‘Well done, thou good and brilliant servant;’ for perhaps the man never shone at all in the eyes of those who appreciate glare and glitter. It is not, ‘Well done, thou great and distinguished servant;’ for it is possible that he was never known beyond his native village.” (Spurgeon)

ii. “It is better to be faithful in the infant-school than to be unfaithful in a noble class of young men. Better to be faithful in a hamlet over two or three score of people, than to be unfaithful in a great-city parish, with thousands perishing in consequence. Better to be faithful in a cottage meeting, speaking of Christ crucified to half-a hundred villagers, than to be unfaithful in a great building where thousands congregate.” (Spurgeon)

d. **Enter into the joy of your lord:** This has the echo of heaven in it. The idea is that there is a place of **joy** belonging to the master of these servants, and they are invited to join the master in that place. There is a sense of heaven about this destiny for the two faithful servants.

i. “This is not the servant's portion, but the Master's portion shared with his faithful servants...not so much that we shall have a joy of our own as that we shall enter into the joy of our Lord.” (Spurgeon)

ii. We can say of the reward for the first two servants:

· They received praise from their master.

· They received a promise of future blessing.

· They received glory, “**the joy of your lord.**”

4. ([Mat 25:24-30](#)) The third servant gives account.

“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have *what is yours.*’”

a. **Then he who had received the one talent came:** The master judged each of the servants *individually*. If they were taken as a group, they did very well: 8 talents given and 15 talents returned. Yet each one was judged on their individual faithfulness and effort.

i. “Remember, my hearer, that in the day of judgment thy account must be personal; God will not ask you what your church did – he will ask you what you did yourself.” (Spurgeon)

b. **I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown:** The servant who merely buried his talent tried to excuse himself because of his master’s great power. In fact, he believed his master to be in some sense omnipotent: **reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.**

i. **A hard man:** “Grasping, ungenerous, taking all to himself, offering no inducements to his servants.” (Bruce)

ii. F.B. Meyer expressed the thinking of this servant: “I can do very little; it will not make much difference if I do nothing; I shall not be missed; my tiny push is not needed to turn the scale.”

iii. “It is the genius of wicked men to lay the blame of their miscarriages upon others, oftentimes upon God himself.” (Poole)

c. **Look, there you have what is yours:** The third servant seemed proud of himself. Because the master was so powerful and (in the mind of the servant) didn’t need his help, the third servant thought that the master would be *pleased* that he did nothing and could say, **“Look, there you have what is yours.”** He seemed to have no idea how much he had displeased his master.

i. We can say in the third servant’s favor that at least he still understood that what he had been given belonged to his master. He said, **“you have what is yours.”** Many modern servants of God think that when God gives them something, it no longer belongs to God; it belongs to *them* and they can do with it as they please.

ii. Yet “albeit this man was doing nothing for his master, he did not think himself an unprofitable servant. He exhibited no self-depreciation, no humbling, no contrition. He was as bold as brass, and said unblushingly, ‘Lo, there thou hast that is thine.’” (Spurgeon)

iii. We can say of the work of the third servant:

- He didn’t *think*.
- He didn’t *work*.
- He didn’t even *try*.
- He made *excuses*.

5. ([Mat 25:26-30](#)) The third servant is judged.

“But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

a. **You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown:** The condemnation of this third servant – here called a **wicked and lazy servant** – was strong. The sovereignty of the master never excused the laziness of the servant. It condemned that laziness all the more.

i. Those who don’t work for the Lord, or pray, or don’t evangelize because God is sovereign condemn them-

selves by their laziness. By their actions (or lack of action) they show that they are like the wicked servant in the parable. They do not know their Master's heart at all. "The lord of the unprofitable servant tells him, that the fault lay in his own sloth and wickedness, and his dread of his lord's security was but a mere frivolous pretence and unreasonable excuse." (Poole)

ii. The charge against this servant who merely buried his talent was that he was **wicked and lazy**. We rarely see laziness as a real sin, something that must be repented of before the Lord. If laziness were a calling or a spiritual gift, this man would have been excellent.

iii. "Not dishonest – the master had not misjudged as to that – but indolent, unenterprising, timid...Slothful, a poor creature altogether: suspicious, timid, heartless, spiritless, idle." (Bruce)

iv. We might say that this servant did not have a proper fear of his master, but an unfitting fear of risk and failure.

b. **So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest:** This man could have done *something* with what he had. Even if it had not doubled, it would have gained some **interest** for the master's money.

i. "If we cannot trade directly and personally on our Lord's account, if we have not the skill nor the tact to manage a society or an enterprise for him, we may at least contribute to what others are doing, and join our capital to theirs, so that, by some means, our Master may have the interest to which he is entitled." (Spurgeon)

ii. "The Old Testament forbade Israelites from charging interest against one another ([Exodus 22:25](#); [Leviticus 25:35-37](#); [Deuteronomy 23:19](#); cf. [Psalm 15:5](#)...); but interest on money loaned to Gentiles was permitted ([Deuteronomy 23:20](#))...By New Testament times Jewish scholars had already distinguished between 'lending at interest' and 'usury' (in the modern sense)." (Carson)

c. **For to everyone who has, more will be given...but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away:** There are those who have things (like the servant with one talent), but hold them in such a way that it is as if they have nothing. These ones will find what they had **taken away**. Those who hold what they have received as faithful men and women, to them **more will be given**.

i. "See that ye receive not any grace of God in vain; neither envy those that have much; a proportion is expected." (Trapp)

ii. "We need not wait for the great future, to obtain this multiplication or withdrawal of our talents. They are already waxing or waning in our hands." (Meyer)

d. **Cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness:** Because he was **wicked and lazy**, the third servant demonstrated that he was not a true servant of his master at all. It is fitting that he (and those who show the same heart) was cast forever out of the master's presence.

i. Just as there was a sense of heaven in the destiny for the two faithful servants, there is a strong sense of *hell* in the destiny for the **wicked and lazy servant**.

ii. In the larger context of [Matthew 25](#), the main point of this parable is clear: our readiness for Jesus' return is determined by our stewardship of the resources that He has given us.

iii. Some think that readiness for Jesus' return is a very spiritual and abstract thing. It really isn't – it is a matter of being about our business for the Lord. In light of this parable, we must ask ourselves: What have we done with our knowledge? Our time? Our money? Our abilities? The sins of *omission* [what we don't do] may ultimately be more dangerous than the sins of *commission* [what we do].