

End of the Story Luke 12:35-48

Luke 12:25-48

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⁴¹ Peter said, “Lord, are you telling this parable for us, or for all?” ⁴² And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? ⁴³ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴ Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. ⁴⁵ But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant 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 put him with the unfaithful. ⁴⁷ And that servant who knew his master’s will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.”

This Is God’s Word
Thanks Be to God

Pray

Good morning, my name is Andrew, I am the youth minister here at Redeemer Christian Church. I love every opportunity I get to preach, but especially in this church. It is such a blessing that we get to come here and for a moment study God’s holy, perfect word together. So this morning I hope that I can help guide us through this particular section of scripture so that we may examine ourselves and worship the Lord.

I love stories, I love telling stories, and I love hearing stories, I love reading stories to my son, I love watching stories(tv shows and movies) with my wife. I’d go out on a limb that all of us love stories. Books, TV, Movies, podcasts... We love stories.

But maybe the most important part of a good story is the ending. I would even go so far as to say that a story is only as good as its ending. Right?

Probably the most popular story that has been told in the last 10 years, Game of Thrones, is ending this year. Its last season, where everyone will finally get the end of the story. And after seasons of people all over the world watching this story, sharing theories online, having watch parties...what if the ending is that all the characters die and the bad guys win?

It would ruin the story, right? The characters you thought were important weren't actually important at all, the chess game of power was all for nothing. Everyone who watched the show, their time will have been wasted.

Endings are important because they tell us so much about the purpose of the story and the characters place in the story. Now, Think if a movie with a great ending? I always think of the movie the Usual Suspects or The Prestige. The ending is unexpected and shocking, but it makes sense of everything else in the story. In light of the ending, all the events and characters have newfound significance, meaning, and purpose that we couldn't even see before!

I believe this is true of our stories as well. I believe the end of our own stories tell us a great deal. And that what we believe about the end of our story has a massive impact on how you see the whole of the story and your place in it.

In fact, everyone has an idea of how our story ends. Many believe that the planet that we live on is perfectly positioned in the galaxy in such a way that supports life, and that if this delicate balance were ever disrupted, even the slightest bit the little blue marble we call earth could be plunged into a deep freeze or scorched by the sun obliterating all life. Or perhaps we will be our own undoing, and we will nuke or pollute ourselves to death.

No matter the cause, the endings all seem fairly bleak. One theologian puts it this way: "according to science, there is no room for an optimistic outlook on the future"(Hermann Bavinck) In other words, the end of humanities' story isn't a good one.

But if our story is to end this way, what does that say about us and our role in that story?

According Famous Swiss historian Otto Henne am Rhyn :

"One day everything we have accomplished will be nowhere to be found."

This dark and bleak ending only comes with only one consolation...that hopefully this ending is a long way off.

And some would say, that's just how it is. If you don't like it, tough?

(coincidentally these people sound like my mother when I asked to hang out with my friends in high school)

Just because you don't like it doesn't mean it isn't true, to which I agree. But, if the end of our story reveals that humanity wasn't that important after all and that the world we live in today is only a grain of sand on the shore of history, why do we care about the wellbeing of others? Why do we push towards technological advancements, why do we widely value care for the poor and sick in our society? Why are we as a society so committed to human flourishing if human flourishing is not compatible with the inevitable end of our story?

I believe the answer is that we don't actually believe that this is the end of our story...we don't believe that in the end human life, human history, human flourishing is insignificant... that's why the end of the story is so important.

So here this morning we are going to talk about what Jesus wants to tell us about the end of the story.

There is a lot, especially in the Christian worldview about the end of our story and it is not my concern today to get into the weeds on end times theology because this section of scripture doesn't get into the weeds either. Jesus doesn't want us to miss the forest for the trees here; he wants us to be laser-focused on what matters:

- 1. Jesus is coming back.**
- 2. You won't know when he is coming back.**
- 3. You must be ready.**

1. Jesus is coming back

Luke 12:35-38

³⁵ *“Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶ and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸ If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants!*

Jesus begins to tell a story that would have been common for his audience at the time. A story of a master of a house who had left to attend a wedding feast. A Hebrew wedding ceremony could last several days, so it really is anyone's guess when the master would return. The primary focus here is obviously the servants, and we will come back and discuss them later, but for now, I want to focus on the master's return.

Even though the timetable for the master's return is uncertain, one thing is certain. **He is coming back.**

And the Bible makes this very clear that though Jesus is gone from this world now, and the timetable for his return is uncertain, he is coming back.

In fact, in the 260 chapters of the New Testament, Jesus' return is mentioned 318 times.

Peter Calls Jesus' Return "a living hope(I Peter 1:3)"

In Titus 2:13 Paul calls Jesus' return our "blessed hope--- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

The Master is returning, and this is an occasion that brings us hope. Why?

Revelation 21:1-5 tells us about Jesus return.

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also, he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

I am making all things new...these words are trustworthy and true. You can believe them to be certain.

Revelation 21 is a vision of creation that has been completely restored to its original state in Genesis 1 when God created everything, and it was good. And this is why Peter and Paul call Jesus' return "our blessed hope," because we are all uniquely and intimately aware of how "ungood" this world is in its present state. When Sin entered into God's "good" creation, it touched and tainted everything, and because of sin many of us have experience deep and incredible pain, sadness, heartache, mourning, and even death.

Jesus' return means that he too sees the world in its fallen state and is not content to leave it that way but that he means to redeem our fallen, sinful world and make all things new, and wipe away our tears in the process...The ending of the story is profoundly good. We see a world set to right, cleansed of all sin and evil.

The Drama of Scripture- Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen

“When God set out to redeem his creation from sin and sin’s effects, his ultimate purpose was that what he had once created “good” should be utterly restored, and that the entire cosmos should once again live and thrive under his generous and good rule... The goal(or the end) of the biblical story(our story) is renewed creation: healed, redeemed, restored.”

And this renewed, healed, redeemed, restored creation is ushered in by our master’s certain return.

2) You won’t know when he is coming back.

Luke 12:39-40

³⁹ But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

Here, the focus of Jesus story shifts. Away from the Master and Servant and onto a thief. The secret to being a good thief is that you come when no one is expecting you, and the Bible often likens Jesus’ return to that of a thief’s. (1 Thessalonians 5:2)

Jesus is coming, but we will not know when.

The uncertain timetable ought to stir in believers a sense of vigilant urgency where we are constantly waiting and ready for Christ’s inevitable return. Jesus could come back today, and Lord willing, He will!

Unfortunately, the magnitude of what we do know about the end of the story is sometimes obscured by endless and fruitless speculation about what we do not(and can not) know about the end of the story.

People have been wrongly predicting when Jesus will return, who is the antichrist, how Jesus will return, the events preceding Christ’s return for millennium.

Let me speak in no uncertain terms:

The New Testament contains absolutely NO doctrine concerning the time of Christ’s return. When we hear people who falsely predict Jesus return you must know that they are false teachers claiming to be privy to knowledge that Jesus himself doesn’t even know.

Mark 13:32-33

³² “But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come.

The servants of Christ are to be watchful and aware of the sign of the times, but calculation of precise timing is forbidden.

The reason the bible warns us of this type of foolish speculation is because these false teachings attempt rob us of our joy about what can be known about Christ's return.

Rather than rejoice, and wait diligently for our blessed hope, Jesus' return and the restoration of all creation. Many people fixate on all the details surrounding his return. Author David Lawrence tells us that that is like only "focusing on the nature, frequency, and strength of the birth pangs when we should be focusing on the baby."

Servants of Jesus, let us heed Jesus call and avoid all fruitless controversies surrounding our master's return. No matter how we disagree on the finer points about the end times, let us all be agreed on one thing. The only solution to the problems of this world is in the nail pierced hands of the king of kings who will someday make the kingdoms of this world his very own.

3.) You must be ready.

Luke 12:41-48

⁴¹ Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable for us, or for all?" ⁴² And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? ⁴³ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴ Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. ⁴⁵ But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant 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 put him with the unfaithful. ⁴⁷ And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.

Peter kind of breaks the 4th wall here and asks the question that many of us silently wonder as we study out bible.

"Is this for me?"

Jesus responds Yes! Of course, this is for you! I am coming back, and you will not know when, so you need to be ready! So, Jesus invites the disciples and the crowd and even us as readers into the little story he is telling so we can examine ourselves and see what part we are playing in the bigger story.

There are 2 types of servants he describes

- A. Faithful Servants
- B. Unfaithful Servants

A. Faithful Servants

Let's look back at the picture Jesus paints for us in verse 35

Luke 12:35-38

³⁵ “Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶ and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸ If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants!

While the master of the house is away attending a wedding feast, his servants remain at home. And these servants remain fully clothed, in fact, that phrase “dressed for action” means to “gird about” or to take your long flowing cloak and fold it up into your belt so that you could move more freely. These servants were prepared at a moments notice for their master’s return ready to spring into his service whenever he knocked on the door. They are paying attention to even the finest details assuring lamps are oiled, and wicks are trimmed, and a feast is ready for their master upon his return!

These servants are not grumbling or complaining or huffing and puffing about the house; they are not distracted from their duties, These servants are waiting with active service, preparation, and anticipation of their masters return.

So what about us? Are we actively and faithfully anticipating our master’s return?

- Are you actively serving your church?
- Are you participating in a community of believers?
- Are you devoting yourself to reading the scriptures daily?
- Are you leading your family in the things of the Lord? Are you prioritizing eternal things over temporary things?
- What are you faithful in? What do you do consistently and regularly, by yourself, and with your family? Netflix, Sports, Video games, gym, pray, read the bible?

The best part of the story for the faithful servant is the master’s return. As soon as the master comes in the house, he is greeted with shouts of, “We have missed you, Welcome back.”

Somedays when I leave work I call Kelsey just before I leave the church to see if I need to bring anything home that night usually that means for her that I will be home in 10 minutes, and sometimes I will pull into the driveway and Kelsey, and my 9-month-old son James will be waiting at the door and when I come inside it is a joyous, and lovely reception! Mommy exclaims “DADDY’S HOME!” and James has a huge smile, and we hug and kiss!

That is the reception that is pictured here. What is clear about Jesus story he is telling is that the faithful servants, and the master love one another! Their reunion is a joyous and happy one. But instead of the master entering into the house and sitting at the table to be served, verse 37 tells us that the master is so moved by his servant’s faithfulness to him that he girds *himself* and tucks *his* long cloak into his own belt and begins to wait on his servants!

This is a party! The servants are seated at the table, and the Master is running around joyously serving his servants who love him and whom he loves.

The picture Jesus paints of his return is a joyous one; it is a feast! The book of Revelation calls it the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, it is a celebration for what Jesus has done. Eternity is not boring, sterile place, it is a celebration, a feast of mutual love between the master and his faithful servants!

B. Unfaithful Servants

Luke 12:45-46

⁴⁵ But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant 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 put him with the unfaithful.

The Servant described here is not simply lazy, but insanely unfaithful.

- Drunk, Glutton, Abuser of Men and Women, Abuser of the trust of his Master.
- This person is sluggish and slow, numb to his role in the house and his responsibility to the master. It seems as though this servant doesn’t serve the master of the house at all, rather he serves himself.

When the master of the house returns, justice is done, and this unfaithful servant suffers a terrible end because it is revealed that this servant was faithful to himself and his own desires, he had made himself master all while denying that the true Lord of the house would return.

If you want to know who your master is, look at the things you are faithful in. Your Lord is whoever you serve faithfully. Who do you serve faithfully? God, yourself, man? When

Jesus returns, justice will be done on those who are revealed to have faithfully served other masters.

Everything will be revealed when Jesus returns.

That's actually what the term Revelation means. It comes from Greek word **αποκαλιψις**: to Disclose or Reveal.

That's why the last book of the bible is called Revelation or The Apocalypse of John. It is the cosmic end of the story that reveals what the story was about all along. It is the ending that reveals the purpose of creation and each character's place in the story.

The End of the story is Jesus. John 1 Tells us that all things were created through Jesus, and all creation is longing to be redeemed by him on the day of his return. Jesus is origin and the destiny of all created things; he is the alpha and omega, beginning and end. **Everything was always about him. And he is the one true master who we are to serve faithfully.**

And just like any other ending, this ending unveils or reveals what the story was about all along. The end of our story is a booming revelation that humanity is not an accident that will eventually be forgotten and washed away from history, but that because we are created by God, in his image we have a purpose and a role to play in this grand story weaved throughout history by God himself. All eternity is telling the story of Jesus' redemption of the universe and some will find themselves a part of God's great story of redemption and will faithfully serve him and anticipate his return.

So the question that I want to leave you with today is:

What story do you find yourself a part of?

-Your's

-God's

If you find yourself as a part of God's story you will be like the faithful servant because God's story is not about you, it is about his life, death, resurrection and inevitable return! And when you see him on that day, your heart will leap with joy because of the coming of our Lord. For you, the end of your story is a testament that the God from whom all creation emanates and eventually returns, **LOVES YOU, AND DIED FOR YOU, AND HAS RETURNED TO DWELL WITH YOU AND RESTORE ALL THINGS!**

Discussion Starters

- 1) Since Jesus is returning, what does that say about the story we live in, and our part to play in that story?
- 2) What are the tasks that Jesus has entrusted you to manage and keep until he returns?
- 3) How can we see Jesus' return as "our blessed hope?"