Research: Luke 12:32-40

32Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

“*little flock* The address was primarily to disciples” (Cambridge Bible).

“Fear not, little flock. Another term of tender endearment addressed to his own who were grouped near him. In the earlier part of this discourse he had called them "my friends." He had told them of the troublous life which awaited them, but at the same time wished to show them how dear they were to him” (Pulpit Commentary).

“Little flock - Our Savior often represents himself as a shepherd, and his followers as a flock or as sheep. The figure was beautiful. In Judea it was a common employment to attend flocks. The shepherd was with them, defended them, provided for them, led them to green pastures and beside still waters. In all these things Jesus was and is eminently the Good Shepherd. His flock was small. Few "really" followed him, compared with the multitude who professed to love him. But, though small in number, they were not to fear. God was their Friend. He would provide for them. It was his purpose to give them the kingdom, and they had nothing to fear” (Barnes’ Notes).

33Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

“Sell that ye have - Sell your property. Exchange it for that which you can use in distributing charity. This was the condition of their being disciples. Their property they gave up; they forsook it, or they put it into common stock, for the sake of giving alms to the poor.

“By bags which wax not old Jesus means that we should lay up treasure in heaven; that our aim should be to be prepared to enter there, where all our wants will be forever provided for. Purses or bags, here, grow old and useless. Wealth takes to itself wings. Riches are easily scattered, or we must soon leave them; but that wealth which is in heaven abides forever. It never is corrupted; never flies away; never is to be left.

“Wax - This word is from an old Saxon word, and in the Bible means to "grow." (Barnes’ Notes).

34For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

“For where your treasure is, . . . Whether in heaven, or in earth, there will your heart be also: the heart is always set upon the treasure, and as is a man's treasure, such is his heart, that is, set upon it; if his treasure is only here, and he has not the true riches, his heart is only earthly and carnal; but if his treasure is heavenly, his heart and conversation will be in heaven” (Gill’s Exposition).

**Treasure** is *thesaurus* in Greek which means “the place in which good and precious things are collected and laid; where faluables are kept; a storehouse; a deposit of wealth.:

35Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning;

“**Let your loins be girded . . .**To “gird up the loins” was, in Eastern habits and with Eastern garments, the received symbol of readiness for active service.

**Girded** about is *perizonnymi* in Greek which means “to fasten garments with a girdle or belt; with trut h as a girdle; to equip one’s self with the knowledge of the truth.”

“The “lights” are the lamps which the watchful hold in their hands. What follows has the interest of presenting the germ of the thought which was afterwards developed into the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins” (Ellicott’s Commentary).

**Lights** in Greek is *lychnos* which means “a lamp; candle; an illuminator that is placed on a stand or candlestick.”

“Let your loins ... - This alludes to the ancient manner of dress. They wore a long flowing robe as their outer garment. When they labored, or walked, or ran, it was necessary to "gird" or tie this up by a "sash" or girdle about the body, that it might not impede their progress. Hence, to gird up the loins means to be "ready," to be active, to be diligent.

“Your lights burning - This expresses the same meaning. Be ready at all times to leave the world and enter into rest, when your Lord shall call you. Let every obstacle be out of the way; let every earthly care be removed, and be prepared to follow him into his rest. (Barnes’ Notes).

36And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

“Servants were expected to be ready for the coming of their lord. If in the night, they were expected to keep their lights trimmed and burning. When their master was away in attendance on a wedding, as they knew not the hour when he would return, they were to be continually ready. So we, as we know not the hour when God shall call us, should be always" ready” (Barnes’ Notes).

“that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately; and let him in without any delay, as soon as ever he comes to the door; and at the first knock, open it to him at once, having light, and being in a posture of readiness, and in constant expectation of him: so such who have believed in Christ, and have been faithful to his cause and interest, and have held fast the profession of their faith without wavering, when Christ shall either come and knock at their doors by death, or shall come to judgment, and sound the alarm of it, they shall be ready to obey the summons with the greatest cheerfulness, and meet him with the utmost pleasure” (Gill’s Exposition).

37Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

**Watching** is *gregoreuo* in Greek which means “to give strict attention to, be cautious, active, take heed lest through indolence some destructive calamity suddenly overtake one; to keep awake; to be vigilant.” “It means vigilance and expectancy as contrasted with laxity and indifference.” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of NT).

“Shall gird himself - Shall take the place of the servant himself. Servants who waited on the table were girded in the manner described above.

“Shall make them sit ... - Shall place them at his table and feast them. This evidently means that if we are faithful to Christ, and are ready to meet him when he returns, he will receive us into heaven - will admit us to all its blessings, and make us happy there - as if "he" should serve us and minister to our wants. It will be as if a master, instead of sitting down at the table "himself," should place his faithful "servants" there, and be himself the servant. This shows the exceeding kindness and condescension of our Lord” (Barnes’ Notes).

38And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

“second … third watch—To find them ready to receive Him at any hour of day or night, when one might least of all expect Him, is peculiarly blessed. A servant may be truly faithful, even though taken so far unawares that he has not everything in such order and readiness for his master's return as he thinks is due to him, and both could and would have had if he had had notice of the time of his coming, and so may not be willing to open to him "immediately," but fly to preparation, and let his master knock again ere he admit him, and even then not with full joy. A too common case this is with Christians. But if the servant have himself and all under his charge in such a state that at any hour when his master knocks, he can open to him "immediately," and hail his "return"—that is the most enviable, "blessed" servant of all” (Jamieson-Fasset-Brown).

“*come in the second watch*, *or come in the third watch*] It is not clear, nor very important, whether St Luke here alludes to the *three*watches of the Jews and Greeks or to the *four* of the Romans. But it *is* very important to observe that often as our Lord bade His disciples to *be ready*for His return, He as often indicates that His return might be long delayed, [Matthew 25:5-19](http://biblehub.com/context/matthew/25-5.htm). He always implied that He should come suddenly ([Luke 21:34-36](http://biblehub.com/context/luke/21-34.htm); [1 Thessalonians 5:2-6](http://biblehub.com/context/1_thessalonians/5-2.htm); [Revelation 3:3](http://biblehub.com/revelation/3-3.htm)) but not necessarily soon” (Cambridge Bible).

39And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

**Goodman of the house** is *oikodespotes* in Greek which means “master of the house, the head of the family; the householder.”

“The Lord abruptly changes the scene of his parable imagery, and with another striking and vivid example enforces his teaching on the subject of the urgent necessity of his servants keeping a sleepless and diligent watch and ward against his coming again in judgment. Very deeply must this image of the Lord's sudden return, as a thief breaks into the house in the still hours of the night, have impressed itself on the hearts of the awe-struck, listening disciples. Paul and Peter the very words and imagery, and in the case of St. John the imagery again made use of. The meaning of the simile is obvious. The disciples and all followers of Jesus would do well to remain always on the watch for the second advent of the Lord. The time of that awful return was unknown, never could be known; men, however, must not be deceived by the long tarrying; the day of the Lord would surely come on the world as a thief in the night” (Pulpit Commentary).

40Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

**Ready** is *hetoimos* in Greek which means “prepared; ready at hand; ready to do something or receive one coming.