



Christian Life Fellowship
Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



No Excuses at His Return

December 30, 2007

Rev. David Koch

Introduction:

Have you ever been expecting someone to visit you, you knew they were coming but you didn't know the exact time? It is very hard to prepare for something like that. Sometimes when Julie's mom and dad have come to visit us, we try to anticipate when they might arrive. If they are coming before or after a meal, we want to be at home and we want to have a meal ready just in case they haven't eaten. So being prepared is really important.

Today we are going to finish our NO EXCUSES series. We have come through the advent season and in conclusion to add the capstone to our series, we want to offer no excuses for being prepared for His return. When Jesus came the first time, there were people who were looking for His coming. They made no excuse for being alert, for searching, for praying, for preparing for His arrival. I think of Anna and Simeon. They went into the temple each day, praying, seeking for the promised Messiah among those bringing their children to be dedicated. They did not give up, they did not stop seeking and they did not waver in their faith. They persevered and as a result they saw the promise fulfilled with their own eyes.

Luke 12:40 - You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

There should be no excuse for not being ready and being busy until He comes back. No one will ever know the exact moment when Jesus will come back. However, Jesus was born in the fullness of time, so He will come again in the fullness of time. With hundreds of prophecies accurately fulfilled about His being born and coming to earth as a baby, there should be no question that the prophecies which are specific about His second coming will also be fulfilled.

I. No excuses for not being ready when He comes

Just because we don't know the exact moment when Christ will return doesn't mean we cannot prepare and be ready. When we look at the scriptures surrounding our text, we see that Jesus is teaching about His return, but He is also teaching about stewardship. In the verses surrounding our text, Jesus uses the example of the master who left his servants to manage his affairs for him while he was away. Stewardship has to do with how we can be

trusted to manage things which have been placed in trust to our care. That means how we manage distributing the gospel, how we manage the resources of time, money, possessions, power, our testimony, the authority of His Name and on and on.

Being ready means I have been a good steward, faithful, diligent, frugal and following the directives of the owner of the resources. We have been given signs that the Master's coming is near. Wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, pestilence, famine,

drought, plagues. When these things begin to come to pass – the scripture tells us to look up – make sure your attention and focus is in the right place.

II. No excuses for not staying busy until He comes.

Luke 19:13 - So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.'

Keeping busy is important. Not just looking busy, but keeping busy. I remember one of the places I worked during the summer months while I was in college. I worked for a county nursing home. I would do my job but some of my co-workers would cut corners. They would extend break time; they would work slowly on purpose. When our manager came around they would look busy but after he left, they would slough off. I put my heart into what I did. In fact, I was told that I was working too hard. It was making the other workers look bad.

When it comes to the kingdom, we are not compared to others nor should we compare ourselves to others but we should do the very best for the Lord without excuse, based on what He gives to us. In this story that Jesus is teaching, the servants were trusted with different amounts, as they had ability. Each of us is unique and different. We do not all have the same gifts and abilities but we can utilize to our best the opportunities we are given. There is plenty to do in the kingdom!

There should not be any excuse for not being profitable with what we have been entrusted. God expects a return on His investment in our lives. His expectation at His return is that we will have done something with what He has given to us that will have impacted His kingdom. When I put money in the bank, I expect that the money I have deposited in the bank will be there when I choose to withdraw it from my account. I also expect that for the time the bank used my money, I will receive interest on that money.

Christ should be able to expect the very same thing from those of us in whom He has invested into and who follow Him. At His coming, His investment in our lives should show an increase. We do not have to be concerned about losing, because if we seek

Him and follow His will, we will do exactly as He desires and there is no failure in the will of God.

III. No excuses for the way we live

Do not make excuses for living life carelessly, or selfishly or loosely. Live life the way it would please Him. He has given us His word, which shows us very clearly how He desires we should live our lives. He has also given us the power of His Holy Spirit so we have authority, we have power over the forces of darkness and we should live and walk in truth and the light.

We should not be burdened down with guilt, with anxiety, with fear, with doubt, with obligation. We should live our lives by faith, with confidence, and without guilt. Our lives should speak of His grace, His holiness, His peace, His joy, His redemption, His sanctification from sin and the old patterns by which we used to live.

Titus 2:12 - It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,

We need not offer excuses for living lives that give in to worldly passions and ungodliness. To live a life not giving in to worldly passions and ungodliness, means we must practice being self-controlled and disciplined. When Jesus comes back, He will look to see the kind of lives we lived. How did we respond to temptation, how did we respond to worldly passions? Did we make excuse for such things?

IV. No excuses for not continuing in Him.

Jesus will come back. He will appear and at his coming, we want to be confident and unashamed. We want to hear Him say, "Well done good and faithful servant." Faithfulness is something God looks for. Be faithful in your service, be faithful in your witness, be faithful in your giving, be faithful in your devotion, be faithful in your prayer life, be faithful in your obedience and you will be ready when He comes.

1 John 2:28 - And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

To continue in Him means to dwell, be present, remain, stand firm. Jesus uses the same word when He refers to Himself as the vine and we being the branches. If we remain in Him, we will bear much fruit. *Make no mistake about this: Jesus is looking for an increase.* He is looking for fruitfulness which is a result of the life and characteristics of the vine manifested through the production of fruit.

It's sometimes easier to stand behind excuses than to face truth. We use the excuse of weakness to excuse giving into temptation. We rationalize and justify our behavior for responding to worldly patterns of thought and action by saying we are human; we are surrounded by temptation and evil. While true statements, they excuse away the power of the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to be overcomers. By the power and help of the Holy Spirit and the strength and truth of the Word of God, we can live lives that please God and demonstrate our readiness for His return.

The secret of abiding is staying connected and giving Him place so His life is seen in us. Jesus said, "Be of good courage, I have overcome the world." We are instructed by His word to resist the devil and he will flee from us. We are instructed to be holy as

Conclusion:

There is no excuse for us not finishing strong. There is no excuse for us not to be ready when He comes back. There is no excuse for us not to complete the race set before us with excellence. No man knows the day or the hour when Jesus will come back, but we can be sure that He is coming and we can surely be prepared to meet Him at that moment.

***"Heaven is still waiting to pour promise into earth's most unlikely place." - Jack Hayford –
"THE CHRISTMAS MIRACLE"***

He is holy. Without being holy, no man will see God.

The Apostle writes this in **Philip. 4:13 - I can do everything through him who gives me strength.**

I believe the Apostle could say that because he did not make excuse for himself when he fell short. He was looking forward. His heart and mind were set on the return of Christ and his heavenly reward. My will is involved in doing everything through him. My will is to surrender to God. My will is to seek to do things God's way. My will is to serve God with heart, mind and strength. When I cooperate with God and I recognize that He gives me the strength, then I can do everything through Him. It is in the place of no excuses where we will find the miraculous power of God to live the life that prepares us to be with Him at His coming.

God is not finished with any of us yet. He is still working on each one of us. In **1 John 3:2** we read this about His appearing and our being like Him.

1 John 3:2 - Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see Him as He is.