

Puzzling Parables

Ready and Waiting

October 1, 2017

Welcome to where we're learning how to wait on the Lord.

What's it mean to wait on the Lord?

Who assumed this is referring to trust and patience?

Who assumed this is referring to serving and attending?

Know why we refer to servers as waiters and waitresses?

Their serving necessarily involves attentive waiting.



Ever sit at a restaurant waiting for a menu; waiting to have your order taken; waiting for more bread or water or coffee?

If you're the one doing the waiting there's something amiss with your server. They've reversed your roles.



They're making you wait on them!

So, how often do *you* make the *Lord* wait on *you* to do the basics of what it means to wait on and serve Him *as your Lord*?

If you're not waiting, you're not serving.



Are you a good waiter or a bad waiter?

When a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, [they're not good waiters] Jesus began to speak first to his disciples ... – Luke 12:1a NIV



He sent 72 followers in 36 pairs to every place He was about to go; (Lk 10:1) and He sent the Twelve 80 miles away into Judea. We're listening in as He prepares to send 'em into battle, unarmed, unfunded, and on their own with no change of clothes.

We left off on the parable of The Rich Fool; but, after *that* He uses the Ravens and the Lilies (which we covered in "Six Sets Sent") to further explain why He's stripping 'em down to send 'em out.

Now, the next thing Jesus says, concerns their one garment:

Be **dressed** ready for service and keep your lamps burning,

He actually says: **“Have your loins girded and lamps burning”**.

In other words: **Don’t worry about what you’ll wear; but, how you’re wearing it**. There were various ways to gird your loins (waist) that is, to tie up your lower garment between your legs.

Here’s a quick lesson on how to gird one’s loins.

1. Pull the back side between your legs, and tie it or tuck it.
2. For even better mobility, you can cuff the legs into shorts.



Remember how Jesus told ‘em: “When you’re persecuted in one place, flee to another”? (Mt 10:23) This helps with that; *and*, every place they go, it’ll communicate that they’re prepared to serve. **If I want to be a good waiter I must get myself ready to serve.**

How? By taking on the full armor of God, *which includes* ...

... having girded your loins with **truth**, – Ephesians 6:14 NAS

Oh. *But* how in the world do you gird your loins with *truth*?

Therefore **gird up the loins of your mind**, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but **as He who called you is holy, [follow His example, and] you also be holy [i.e. set apart] in all your conduct** ... – 1 Peter 1:13-15 NKJ



A good waiter is prepared to serve; *but*, **it’s not enough to just be ready. I must be watching and waiting and maintaining.**

Ever been the one table with the burnt out candle? And, you have to *ask* to have it lit; and then they can’t find a match? **Is that the table you set for Jesus?**

What’s the most common reason a bad waiter will make you wait?

They’re not watching. Not paying attention.

To be waiting is to be watching, paying attention, and not preoccupied with diversions that prevent us from serving well.



... [So] **keep your lamps burning**, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and **knocks** [on his own door] they can immediately **open the door** for him. **It will be good for** [lit. **blessed are**] those servants whose master **finds them watching** when he comes.

Why that detail about the master coming from a “**wedding banquet**”? Jesus’ point is that good servants are ready and waiting; so, what’s it matter where He’s coming from? Hold that thought.

First, you know what door He’s referring to, right? Your heart. He made it; He just posted you behind it. To open it. For Him. Whenever He comes.

To the lukewarm believers (in Revelation 3:16), Jesus says:

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, **and he with Me**. – Revelation 3:20 NKJ

And, *that’s why* it’ll be good for those waiters found watching.

I tell you the truth, **he will dress himself to serve**, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.

Why? It’s *late* (that’s why they had to stay awake and keep their lamps burning). Yes, *but* he’s coming from *that wedding banquet*. **He’s bringing back delicious delicacies that won’t keep.**

But, why does he serve His servants?

Why not just give ‘em the leftovers and go to bed?

Because, they’re *not* His servants.

They’re His *friends* – who are *employed* as His servants.

At the Last Supper ...

[Jesus] laid aside His garments, **took a towel and girded Himself**. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and **to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded**. – John 13:4-5 NKJ

Jesus always finds a way to take humble love to another level! And, it was a little later at the Last Supper that Jesus said:

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, **I have called you friends**, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. – John 15:15 NIV

Does that mean we're no longer servants?

No! It means that we're now officially His *fellow* servants!

The Master's servants aren't excitedly waiting simply because he's bringing a great midnight snack, but because he's caring and loving and weird and wonderful, and makes them sit at *his* table, and girds *himself* as *their* servant, and serves 'em with such joy!



Ever wait up for mom or dad to return from a trip, motivated by the joy of your reunion which is only heightened by the gifts they're surely bringing?

It's not even enough to just be ready and waiting; I must be eagerly anticipating my Friend and Father.

Or there's something *amiss*.

[Also at the Last Supper, Jesus said to His Twelve apprentices] The greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For **who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves?** [Your attitude on that will determine which you'll ultimately choose to be. Guess which one *Judas* chose!] **Is it not the one who is at the table?** [That's what everyone assumes] **But I am among you as one who serves.** [So, ponder that] You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, **so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom** ... – Luke 22:26-30 NIV

Jesus finishes up His parable of The Good Waiters by saying ...

It will be good for those servants whose master **finds them ready**, [not only to receive *Him*, but everything He's excited and eager to share with 'em] even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. – Luke 12:35-38 NIV



The **second** watch is 9:00 – midnight; the **third** is midnight – 3:00. **This is when servants were posted on guard.** His point with the second and third watch?

Don't be caught off guard when He comes.

He might come with an unexpected death ... *yours or mine!*

Or, He might come at the sound of the trumpet.

Or, He might come every day this week in His Word.

Jesus came to *serve*.

Let's not keep Him waiting.