

# Joyful Generosity

Living with the End in Mind

Matthew 24:43 - 25:46

May 10, 2026

## Red Pin Project

You may have noticed the red pin stickers around the building over the past few weeks and maybe even wondered what those were about. Today, we're beginning something we're really excited about as a church family, the Red Pin Project.

This is a simple invitation for each of us to join what God is already doing around us by praying for and looking for opportunities to share the hope of Jesus with one person. When you came in, you received a booklet. Over the next five weeks, it's going to guide you through a simple journey: understanding your story, why it matters, how to share it, keeping Christ at the center, and trusting God with what happens next.

And you won't be walking through this alone.

Each week, you'll hear real stories, five testimonies from people right here in our church family, of how God is at work in everyday conversations. Our staff will also be sending weekly encouragement videos to help equip you and remind you that you're not doing this on your own. As a church, this is one way we live out our mission of cultivating the unwavering hope of Jesus in every generation and loving beyond ourselves as we step into the lives of others with the gospel.

This isn't about having all the right words. It's about being available and being faithful. " So this week, we want to invite you to begin with prayer. Ask the Lord, who are You placing on my heart? Who might He be inviting you to walk with, pray for, and share with in the coming weeks? And next Sunday, we'll take a step together by writing down their initials. Not to track names, but to remind us that we're in this together as a church, praying for God to move in real people's lives.

So today, we begin with prayer, asking the Lord to lead us, to give us clarity, and to prepare both our hearts and theirs. Let's go to the Lord together.

Stand Congregation

Turn and Greet

## Introduction

- Generosity is a matter of the gospel, not a matter of the law.
- Generosity is a matter of our hearts, not our circumstances.
- Generosity is a matter of mission, not donation.
- Generosity is a matter of maturity, not an option for some.

Matthew 6:24 ... where Jesus says that you cannot serve both God and money ... should tell you just how compelling and desirous it is for us to serve money. (Slide) In effect, **Jesus is saying that you cannot grow spiritually if you don't give God control of your money. Spiritual growth ... spiritual health ... sanctification ... becoming more like Jesus ... is stunted to the degree that you do not give God control over your resources.**

Last week it was a parable about what happens when we worship money. It makes us prideful and selfish and blind to the reality that God is a gracious provider. Jesus, in a story that alerts us to the brevity of our lives and the dangers of worshipping stuff, urges us in Luke 12 to be rich toward God.

So to close our series today, we turn to a series of parables in which Jesus tells us what it looks like to live rich toward God and HOW.

### Alert to the Inevitability

From v. 43 in this chapter, all the way to v. 13 in the next, Jesus makes one point from three different angles; **BE ALERT. There is simply no way our expectations regarding the timing of Jesus' return can ever line up, and indifference is not an option. So we have one path: BE ALERT.**

Angle #1 is in vv. 43-44. In that little parable, Jesus speaks to the person who would be surprised at His return because this person has zero expectations that Jesus would return. **Jesus' return was COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED.**

*If the homeowner had known what time the thief was coming, he would have stayed alert and not let his house be broken into. This is why you are also to be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

Angle #2 is in vv. 45-51. In that parable, **Jesus's return is SOONER than expected.**

*45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give them food at the proper time? 46 Blessed is that servant whom the master finds doing his job when he comes. 47 Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.*

*48 But if that wicked servant says in his heart, 'My master is delayed,' 49 and starts to beat his fellow servants, and eats and drinks with drunkards, 50 that servant's master will come on a day he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know.*

*51 He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Angle #3 is Matthew 25:1-13. In that parable, **Jesus' return is LATER than expected.**

*"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise.*

*3 When the foolish took their lamps, they didn't take oil with them; 4 but the wise ones took oil in their flasks with their lamps. 5 When the groom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep.*

*6 "In the middle of the night there was a shout: 'Here's the groom! Come out to meet him.'*

*7 "Then all the virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise ones, 'Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out.'*

*9 "The wise ones answered, 'No, there won't be enough for us and for you. Go instead to those who sell oil, and buy some for yourselves.'*

*10 "When they had gone to buy some, the groom arrived, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. 11 Later the rest of the virgins also came and said, 'Master, master, open up for us!'*

*12 "He replied, 'Truly I tell you, I don't know you!'*

*13 "Therefore be alert, because you don't know either the day or the hour.*

## Illustration - The Sentinel

Up until a few weeks ago, my parents had three dogs. One of them was a very anxious and reclusive long-haired dachshund who kept a steady watch of the mostly glass front door, while the other two did whatever else they wanted to do. And whenever someone came to the front door, Toughy (the ironically named dachshund) would bark immediately, alerting the others that someone was at the door, and then they would come barking and running to the door as well. So, TOUGHY was the “sentinel” ... the dog on watch and responsible for giving the alert to the others.

**Folks, when it comes to Jesus’ return, being alert is everybody’s business. Be ALERT to its inevitability.**

## Be Prepared (like a Good Steward) — vv. 14-30

And not just alert ... but PREPARED. BE PREPARED, and we get that from the parable in vv. 14-30.

***14 “For it is just like a man about to go on a journey. He called his own servants and entrusted his possessions to them. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two talents, and to another one talent, depending on each one’s ability.***

***Then he went on a journey. Immediately 16 the man who had received five talents went, put them to work, and earned five more. 17 In the same way the man with two earned two more.***

***18 But the man who had received one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master’s money.***

***19 “After a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five talents approached, presented five more talents, and said, ‘Master, you gave me five talents. See, I’ve earned five more talents.’***

***21 “His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master’s joy.’***

***22 “The man with two talents also approached. He said, ‘Master, you gave me two talents. See, I’ve earned two more talents.’***

***23 “His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master’s joy.’***

***24 “The man who had received one talent also approached and said, ‘Master, I know you. You’re a harsh man, reaping where you haven’t sown and gathering where you haven’t***

*scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went off and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'*

*26 "His master replied to him, 'You evil, lazy servant! If you knew that I reap where I haven't sown and gather where I haven't scattered, 27 then you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and I would have received my money back with interest when I returned.*

*28 " 'So take the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents. 29 For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have more than enough. But from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 30 And throw this good-for-nothing servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

**Faithful stewardship now prepares us for accountability when Christ returns.**

## Illustration - Holly's Backyard

Or other.

## Be Sure (as a Sheep) – vv. 31-46

*31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.*

*33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

*35 "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me.'*

*37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and take you in, or without clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick, or in prison, and visit you?'*

*40 "And the King will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'*

***41 “Then he will also say to those on the left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels!’***

***42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink; 43 I was a stranger and you didn’t take me in; I was naked and you didn’t clothe me, sick and in prison and you didn’t take care of me.’***

***44 “Then they too will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or without clothes, or sick, or in prison, and not help you?’***

***45 “Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’***

***46 “And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”***

When Jesus returns, He will measure our stewardship not only by how we managed His gifts, but by how we used them to care for the least and advance His mission of love.

When we stand before God, we are going to give an account of our treatment of the oppressed. We cannot separate our relationship with God from our relationships with other people. Jesus does not want us to be ignorant of this reality. He wants us to be sure we are sheep. The emphasis is first on the responsibility for compassion and the warning that people will give account of their treatment of the oppressed.

## Conclusion

Church, the call of these passages is clear — Jesus is coming again. We don’t know when, but we do know He is. His return may come sooner, later, or when we least expect it, but He will come. And when He does, it will reveal who was ready — who belonged to Him.

But the good news — the gospel— is that Jesus Himself has made the way for us to be ready. The same Jesus who told these parables would soon go to the cross, bearing the judgment we deserve so that we might be counted among His sheep, receive His Spirit, and live prepared for His coming.

Readiness begins not with effort, but with surrender — with trusting in Christ’s finished work, repenting of sin, and receiving Him as Lord and Savior.

When you place your faith in Jesus, you are covered by His righteousness. He gives you His Spirit as the oil that keeps your lamp burning. He enables you to live faithfully and compassionately until He returns.

So today, the invitation is simple: Be alert — wake up to your need for Christ. Be prepared — place your trust not in works or religion, but in the grace of God through Jesus. Be sure — find your security in belonging to His flock.

Because one day, the door will close. The Groom will come. And those who are in Christ will enter into the joy of their Master — forever.

Will you be ready when he comes?