



Sermon  
Rev. Lang Yang

**“Be Ready”**

First Sunday after Christmas- New Year’s Eve  
Our Savior Lutheran Church  
12-31-17

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Luke 12:40** *“You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”* (NIV) This is the word of God. (Cross reference – Mark 13:33, Luke 21:34, 36)

Illustration “watchfulness” (Show hunting blind)



This is my hunting blind. You can see that it is nicely cover with dead tree and leaves. I have one whole in the middle to look out into the trail and the bait area. When I’m inside the tent, I must be ready and keep watch at all times because I don’t know when the deer will come. If I were to doze off and I got to admit, I do doze of often and when that happen, deer came through and I am not ready to shoot, so I miss the opportunity. But when I’m ready I keep watch and keep my eye open and when the deer come, it is a success hunt. So you must be ready and keep watch at all time or it is too late.

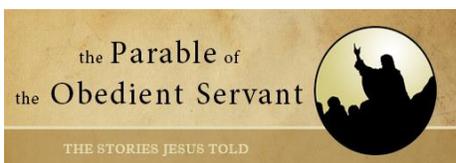
I. Today our theme is “Be Ready”. Jesus once told a story about the master had gone to a wedding banquet and the servant must be ready when he return. (Show Jewish Wedding)



When he return, if he finds that the servant are watching for him and ready then it is pleasing to him. Weddings in Jesus’ day were different. The groom was not ready to get married until he had finished building a place for him and his bride to live once they got married. When it was ready he called his best man and groomsmen together. They then went and collected the bride and her attendants. At the same time they issued an invitation to all the guests. They all gathered together for the wedding ceremony. The reception after the ceremony then lasted for several days, sometimes as long as a week! (Show Master and Servant)



Notice what happened when the master returned. Jesus said in verse 37 *“It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.”* The parable takes a surprising twist. Instead of the master sitting down and being served by his servants, he in fact serves the servants! Jesus said in verses 38, *“It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak.”* The master was delighted with their readiness to receive him upon his return! (Show obedient)



Now, perhaps the people listening to this parable might think differently to have a master serve his servants. However, for us our

Lord and Savior serve us by coming to this world, born of a virgin, suffer and die for the sin of the world. This is how our master serve us. Going to the cross so that you may have life in him. What a Savior!

II. *Hachi: (Show Hachi A Dog's Tale)*



*A Dog's Tale* is a delightful movie based on real story from Japan. When Parker Wilson, a college music professor, steps off his commuter train at the end of the day, he finds a stray Akita puppy. Wilson (played by Richard Gere) soon discovers the puppy escaped a damaged crate after being shipped from Japan to Woonsocket, Rhode Island. **(Show Japanese colleague with Hachi)**



Parker takes the dog home determined to find the owner. While waiting for responses to the posters he's placed around town, the professor and the little dog become fast friends. In spite of his wife's initial resistance, she agrees to let Parker keep the dog. A Japanese colleague at the university notices the collar tag on the Akita is Hachi (the Japanese word for the number 8). And that becomes the name by which Parker calls his new pet. **(Show Hachi waiting)**



One day Hachi follows Parker several blocks to the train station as he leaves for work. The dog refuses to return home and so his master has to walk him back to the house. At the end of the day, Hachi hears the train whistle and runs to the train platform where he curls up waiting for Parker to disembark. Parker is stunned by this demonstration of loyalty. The next day the dog is there to greet him again. A pattern has been established. Hachi's uncanny devotion to his master is remarkable. **(Show reunited)**



One day, Parker suffers a fatal heart attack in the classroom. Unaware what has happened, Hachi waits for hours at the station for his master to step off the train. For the next ten years the loyal dog waits at the train platform each evening. After the long wait, as Hachi drifts off to sleep one last time, he sees his master welcoming him fully alive as the dog runs toward him. His faithful waiting has paid off.

*(Editor's Note: The poignant that shows the final scene with Hachi dreaming of his reunion for his master begins and ends here: 1:24:08 to 1:26:52) So much of faithful of watchfulness and waiting. (Greg Asimakoupoulos, Mercer Island, Washington; source: Hachi: A Dog's Tale. DVD. Directed by Lasse Hallstrom. 2009; Culver City, CA: Stage 6 Films, 2009).*

III. Are you being patient, watchful, and be ready for your master return? Jesus calls each one of us to be ready for his return. He is coming back. **(Show OSL, Learn, Live, and Share)**



And when he comes back, will he find you faithful or faithless? Will he find you ready or not? Being ready means praying for the kingdom to come, asking God to expand his rule in our own lives, in the church, in our community, and around the world. It also means devoting our lives to Christ services. If we are God's servants, then we need to be learning, living, and sharing Jesus with others. Jesus may come today, tonight, or tomorrow. But whenever he comes, Jesus says we must be ready. Are you ready,

or not? (Show Ethelred the unready)



There was a king of England called Ethelred, who was never ready to meet his enemies, and had to try to buy them off. He earned the nickname ‘Ethelred the Unready’. In his reign the Danes made many successful invasions of his land. (Show Alpha and Omega)



Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, the Apostle John write in the last chapter of the book of Revelation that Jesus is coming back, for us! And what’s more, he is coming soon. Jesus said “Behold, I am coming soon ..... I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” (Revelation 22:12-13) Then in Vs. 20, just so we would have this promise ringing in our ears as we close the Bible, our Lord says the same thing a third time: “Yes, I am coming soon.” “Behold, I am coming soon.” The word “soon” adds an urgency to our expectation.

(Show United States Coast Guard the Marine Seal)



The United States Coast Guard Motto in Latin is called **Semper Paratus** and it mean “Always Ready”. The Marine motto said, “**Semper Fidelis – Always Faithful.**” Our nation armed forces are always ready to defend and protect this nation.

In a similar way Jesus could come at any time and are you ready and are you faithful? We are to grow in His word as we wait for his return. Rather, we are to be ready, always ready, for that glorious day.

When he comes, that day will be a day of judgment. That’s what we confess in the Nicene Creed, “*He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.*” Jesus promise to come back to take us home. (Show our home is in heaven)



The world in which we live is home for a little while. We enjoy living and working here. But we’re on this earth just temporarily. In a very real sense we are strangers here, because heaven is our home. Home is being with our heavenly Father, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the others members of God’s family. Home is God’s kingdom of glory, where there is no more death or crying or pain, where God will wipe away every tear from our eyes.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus’ life and ministry was largely conducted by a motto too: “**Semper Paratus – Always Ready**” “**Semper Fidelis – Always Faithful.**” (Show always ready)

*Always Ready*

Doesn’t that describe Jesus’ entire life? He was always ready and faithful, the Bible says, even to the point of death, death on a cross. He was always ready and faithful in following his Father’s will. He was always ready and faithful in obeying God’s law—he was born of a woman,

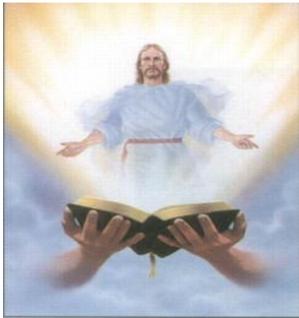
born under law—and yet the Bible still says he was without sin. As our faith and trusting in Jesus as Lord and Savior and with the help of the Holy Spirit we are always ready to serve until He come back and take us home to be with him forever and ever. (Show Are You Ready)



When Jesus shows on the last day, you don't want to be caught without being ready. That is to say, when Jesus shows on the last day, you don't want to be found without faith in Jesus Christ. When a person has no faith it mean that he's not ready. If you are not ready and when Jesus returns on the last day to take His believers to heaven, everyone will cried out '*Lord, Lord,*' they said, '*open the door for us!*' But when Jesus will answer '*Truly I tell you, I don't know you.*' (Matthew 25:11-12) (Show Admiral Fisher and Ship in fog)



Admiral fisher said, "The Navy never required time for preparation for war: It was always ready to strike, for the Navy was always at war, fighting fog and storm at sea. A Christian should never lose his alertness." (John MacBeth) (Show Jesus coming back)



Brothers and sisters, "Jesus is coming back," our risen and ascended Lord says to us today. Hold on, hold tight, it won't be long now. He who ascended into heaven will come again from heaven to take us home to himself. Until that day, then, hold on to his promise, "*be ready*". Be ready for the New Year. Always be ready. Stand firm in the faith so that you will not be found faithless. Christ is coming, Come, Lord Jesus! Have a wonderful Happy New Year. Amen. Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep our heart and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## Children Message

**Theme:** “Be Ready”

**Object Lesson:** (Pencil, paper, ruler, and book bag etc.)

**Luke 12:40** “*You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.*” This is the word of God.”

If you are planning to go to school, what do you need? (*Let them answer*) Yes! we need all those things! How about going to the grocery store? Can think of something we need to remember to bring there? (*Let them answer*) That's right - we need money or credit card that has money in the bank to pay for those items that we need.

Our lives involve a lot of planning ahead, don't they? We have to *be ready* to do certain things – like you have to have your book, pen or pencil before you go to school and if you *aren't ready* then some things just don't work out well at all.

In today's gospel reading Jesus tells a story about being ready. Jesus tells this story to remind us that we always need to “*be ready.*” Ready mean, coming to church to learn and doing his work. We never know when we'll be asked to do important work for God. When the times come we are ready to be help. Not only be ready to help but always ready to keep on believing and trusting Jesus Christ. Are you ready? Yes! Let's pray.

**Pray:**

Gracious God, We are ready to be your faithful servants on Earth. Help and guide us that we are ready when you come back to take us home to be with you in heaven. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.