



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Luke 12:22-34

22 Jesus said to his disciples, “I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. 23 For life is more than food, & the body more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, & yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! 25 Which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his life? 26 If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, & tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! 29 Do not seek what you are to eat & what you are to drink, nor be worried. 30 For all the nations of the world seek after these things, & your Father knows that you need them. 31 But, seek his kingdom, & these things will be added to you. 32 “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions, & give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches & no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Lk. 12:22-34)

1. Wider Context: Being ready for the coming judgment

a. The final judgment reveals everything (Lk. 12:1-2; 8:17; Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10)

- **“In Luke 12:1-13:9 , Jesus instructs his disciples & the crowd to *be ready for the coming judgment* . The section is composed of sayings & parables that have been drawn together around this theme...The theme of judgment is introduced in the opening verses: **‘Nothing is secret that will not become known’** (12:2).”** (Alan Culpepper, *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary, Vol. VIII Luke John* , p. 207)

- **“ Jesus’ teaching in this section [12:1-13:9] is profoundly shaped by the eschatological worldview he presupposes & depicts throughout . To take three prominent examples , we may note, first , how...12:32 reflects backward, & negatively, on all attempts to find one’s security in possessions . It has pleased God to give the kingdom to the disciples; hence, they are liberated from the peril of possessions & are enabled to reorder their lives in order to care for the needs of others. Similarly, Jesus’ portrait of the comportment of the Son of Man in the eschaton as a table servant determines the nature of faithfulness in the present for Jesus’ followers (12:37b). This portrait prohibits violence that accompanies conspicuous consumption (12:45) as well as those concerns with status that label as demeaning practices of servanthood such as those modeled by the Lord himself. Service & faithfulness to the task set before disciples – these are the responses sanctioned by the nature of Jesus’ eschatological vision. Third, Luke records material wherein the urgency of response, leading to faith & fecundity (8:4-21), is underscored (12:56-57; 13:3, 9). Here, too, is a reminder that Jesus is ‘on the way’ to Jerusalem, & it is on the road that people are challenged to orient themselves around the priorities of the kingdom of God (12:58: ‘on the way’; cf. v 31).”** (Joel B. Green, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: Luke* , p. 515)
 - **“Jesus turns his attention to the disciples in 12:1-12 as they deal with the huge crowds pressing around them. People are almost walking on top of each other. Their press raises an issue that becomes a temptation to the disciples: hypocrisy . Jesus warns them not to follow the example of the Pharisees... He calls them to be on guard against ‘the yeast of the Pharisees.’...To enhance the warning, Jesus emphasizes that everything will be disclosed before God in the coming day of judgment (Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 4:5), when our lives will be evaluated. Nothing will be concealed ... On that coming day, disciples will have their stewardship of God’s gifts and opportunities examined...”** (Darrell Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke* , p. 337)
- b. The parable of the rich fool: Not putting one’s security in wealth (Lk. 12:13-21)
- **“Continuing the theme of [being ready for the coming judgment, 12:13-21 focus on] forsaking the security of material possessions. Those who confess Jesus look to God for their security, not to their own ability to accumulate possessions & lay up wealth for the future.”** (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 210)
 - **“ A major obstacle to one’s spiritual life ... can be the misuse of resources ...The possessions & comfort pursued by this rich fool lead him to neglect a pursuit of God , so that he poorly uses the resources he has received.”** (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 343)
- c. Luke cautions about the dangers of money
- **“ The danger of riches is constantly emphasized in Luke , for the love of riches chokes out the seed of the gospel & keeps it from becoming fruitful. This danger is so great that Jesus often warns his readers not to set their hearts upon riches & to give generously to the poor . The woes pronounced upon haughty rich people stand in sharp contrast to the blessings pronounced upon the humble poor.”** (ESV Study Bible)
2. Anxiety Is An Obstacle On Our Journey With Jesus (Lk. 12:22-34)
- **“ The modern Western world is built on anxiety . You see it on the faces of people hurrying to work. You see it even more as they travel home, tired but without having solved life’s problems. The faces are weary, puzzled, living with the unanswerable question as to what it all means. This world thrives on people setting higher & higher goals for themselves, & each other, so that they can worry all day & all year about whether they will reach them. If they do, they will set new ones. If they don’t, they will feel they failed. Was this really how we were supposed to live? ”** (N. T. Wright, *Luke For Everyone* , p. 113)
 - **“The parable of the rich fool is followed by a collection of sayings linked by the catch word ‘worry’ (Gk. merimnao). These sayings drive home the lesson of the parable & offer further arguments regarding the futility of worrying over material goods.”** (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 213)
 - **“ The one who fears God & builds up treasure for him has nothing to fear . Jesus therefore underlines the importance of trusting God.”** (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 348)
- a. Medical Context:
- **“ We now know that anxiety itself can be a killer. Stress & worry can cause disease, & contribute to it – producing the enchanting prospect of people worrying about worrying, a downward spiral that perhaps only a good sense of humor can break. As with so much of his**

teaching, **what Jesus says here [Lk. 12:22-34] goes to the heart of the way we are** . To inhale a bracing lungful of his good sense is health-giving at every level.” (N. T. Wright, *Op Cit* , p. 113)

- 75-90% of all visits to primary care physicians are for stress-related ailments & complaints.
- Stress & anxiety may not be the sole cause of disease, but they are major contributing factors to both mental & physical illnesses (Mayo Clinic)
 - Cardiovascular disease – high blood pressure, erratic heart rates, & heart disease
 - Immune dysfunction – continuous elevation of stress hormones (adrenaline & cortisol) weakens the immune system making the body more susceptible to infections & increasing systemic inflammation
 - GI disorders – IBS, Crohn’s, Colitis
 - Psychiatric comorbidities – Anxiety often acts as a precursor or companion to other disorders: major depressive disorder, substance abuse & behavioural disorders
 - Neurological & Pain conditions – Stress is strongly correlated with severe headaches, sleep problems, & accelerated aging.

b. Principle: Don’t worry about your life (Lk. 12:22-26)

- *“Said the Robin to the Sparrow, ‘I should really like to know / Why these anxious human beings / Rush about & worry so.’ Said the Sparrow to the Robin, ‘Friend, I think that it must be / They have no Heavenly Father, / Such as cares for you & me.’”* (Elizabeth Cheney 1859-1953)

a. The basics of life: food, clothing, health

- *“ **The general exhortation in v. 22 sets the theme of this collection of sayings...[is ‘don’t worry about your life’] . Jesus speaks to the basic human anxiety for survival needs : food & clothing... These admonitions speak to the way we live ...”*** (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 213)
- *“Jesus begins with a call not to worry... **The issue in this passage concerns the basics of life** (v. 22): **food, health, & clothing** . We should not be excessively distracted about our physical circumstances, for food & clothes are but the wrapping paper around which true life revolves.”* (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 349) “
- *Two concerns illustrate the command not to be anxious...Verses 24-26 deal with anxiety over **food** , & vv. 27-28 treat anxiety over **clothing** . While these are natural & legitimate concerns, **real security does not come by simply being concerned about the means of life** .” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , pp. 213-14)*

b. Worry/Anxiety

- *“ **‘Worry’ is the key term of 12:22–30.** [In Luke] it has been used for the earthly concerns that choke the good seed (8:14) & for the domestic preoccupation that kept Martha from concentrating on ‘what is better’ (10:41). **It denotes not a proper responsibility in ensuring provision, but a distracting anxiety that closes the mind to higher concerns .”*** (R. T. France, *Teach the Text Commentary: Luke* , p. 414)
- *“The Greek present imperative...implies that **we should be constantly free of anxiety** .”* (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 349)
- *“The Greek verb for ‘to be anxious’ (merimnao) means also **‘to take anxious thought.’** It may also mean **‘to put forth an effort’** or **‘to strive after.’** The prohibition against anxiety may, therefore, be interpreted as an encouragement to **start making decisions that are not controlled by anxiety** .”* (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 213)

c. Three reasons why disciples invite anxiety into their lives

a. The drive to acquire more & more

- *“The **first** is stated in v. 23: **‘Life is more than food, & the body more than clothing.’** **These words are not intended for persons who do not have enough to eat.** One cannot simply say to the starving, ‘Life is more than food.’ **These words are addressed to persons who have food to eat & clothes to wear & yet spend their lives trying to acquire more & more .** Is life not more than the things we spend our lives seeking? **The words of Jesus can free us from anxiety over what we have or do not have .** They can also refocus our energies on who we are rather than on what we have...”* (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 214)
- *“Do I ever consider that some people really don’t have enough? While I fret over designer clothes to go to a party, there are those who wonder how they will buy shoes for their children. **These people understandably might raise an eyebrow over a gospel that suggests they shouldn’t worry***

about what to eat or wear .” (Macrina Wiederkehr, *Abide: Keeping Vigil with the Word of God* , p. 117)

- b. Not trusting God’s ability to provide
 - **“The second reason ...is given in v. 24: ‘Consider the ravens they neither sow nor reap, but God takes care of them.’ ... A vigorous trust in God’s ability to care for God’s own will go a long way toward freeing us from the grasp of anxiety.”** (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 214)
- c. Ignoring common sense
 - **“The third reason is also just common sense: ‘Being anxious does not solve our problems’ (vv. 25-26)...Worry all you will, but you cannot make yourself an inch taller or add a day to the span of your life. V. 26 clinches the argument. If we cannot do such a small thing by being anxious, why be anxious about other things? Anxiety is ineffective as a means of improving our lot in life .”** (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 214)
- d. Trust God. Don’t strive (Lk. 12:27-30)
 - **“ Worry casts doubt on God’s care ... The essence of trust is to recognize that God will take care of what is in his hands ...This approach to life is different than ‘the pagan world,’ those who go through life without awareness of God’s presence. They scurry after physical concerns, but the Father knows what his disciples need .”** (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 349)
 - **“ Trust in God’s faithfulness relieves one of anxiety over what one will eat or drink.”** (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 214)
 - **“ Reflecting on the birds & the flowers isn’t meant to encourage a kind of romantic nature-mysticism, but to stimulate serious understanding: God, the creator, loves to give good gifts, loves to give you the kingdom – loves, that is, to bring his sovereign care & rescue right to your own door . At the heart of the appeal is the difference that Israel should have recognized, between the nations of the world & those who call God Father...If the gods you worship are distant & removed, or are simply nature gods without personhood of their own, then of course you will be worried. If your God is the Father who calls you his child, what is to stop you trusting him?”** (N. T. Wright, *Op Cit* , p. 114)
 - **“ The pivotal point in Jesus’ instruction is theological . The practices he condemns are rooted in an erroneous perception of the character of God . Those who know God as Father (11:1-13) will know God as the one capable of & committed to providing for his people . Knowing this, they are liberated from the consuming concerns of self-security .”** (Joel B. Green, *Op Cit* , p. 530)
- e. A disciple’s major focus: Seek God’s Kingdom (Lk. 12:31-34)
 - **“ Jesus calls for a single issue to be a disciple’s major concern: God’s Kingdom (v. 31). God will care for the rest. To ‘seek God’s Kingdom’ means to live as his representatives ... We must represent him & reflect his righteousness in a world unconcerned about knowing God. That is the constant call of the disciple, as the Greek present imperative ‘seek’ indicates. ”** (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 350)
 - **“ What does it mean in practical terms to seek God’s kingdom? Does it mean that everyone has to become a missionary or full-time Christian worker? Obviously, not! God’s kingdom is where He rules . To seek His kingdom means to put God first as Lord of everything in our lives & to aim each day at furthering His rule over us & over others...In other words, God is not just to be a slice of life on Sundays or whenever we find Him useful to further our agendas.”** (Steven Cole, *How To Solve Worries About Money*)
 - **“Vv 30-32 reference God as Father & God’s Kingdom. The combination evokes echoes of the model prayer & Jesus’ teachings on prayer. Two further reasons why anxiety cannot control the life of a disciple emerge from these verses: 1) anxiety reveals a lack of faith in God as heavenly Father , & 2) one whose life is devoted to the pursuit of the kingdom will not be anxious about other things .”** (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 214)
 - **“ In vv. 29–31...Jesus is saying there is no need to worry about what you will eat or drink , things that are of great concern to those who know no better (like the pagan world). The disciples are to know that God their Father knows that they need them , & he, better than they, is able to provide. Rather, the disciples are to be concerned with the things of God’s kingdom .”** (Craig Evans, *Understanding the Bible Commentary Series: Luke* , p. 200)
 - **“[Once disciples]...are liberated from the consuming concerns of self-security....they are able to orient their lives completely around the propagation in word & deed of God’s restorative project . This is the kingdom , the coming of which overturns those worldly systems & values at odds with God’s purpose .”** (Joel B. Green, *Op Cit* , p. 530)
- f. Generosity: The antidote to Anxiety (Lk. 12:33-34)
 - a. To grasp or give?

- **“What greater denial of a life controlled by anxiety could there be than a devotion to *providing for the needs of others* ? If there are only two basic impulses, either to grasp or to give, then the alternative to anxiety...is to *release our grasp on that which we do control* .” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 215)**
- **“If we do not need to worry about the provisions of life, then *we can be generous with what God has given us* . So Jesus calls for selling possessions & being generous by giving to the poor.” (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 350)**

b. To lay up treasure on earth or in heaven?

- **“ *Jesus calls for selling possessions & being generous by giving to the poor* . Such generosity God honors; he gives us ‘treasure in heaven.’ Such treasure involves God’s commendation & reward for service that pleases him.” (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 350)**
- **“ *We can lay up treasure on earth or in heaven – but not in both places* ...Jesus...points them to purses that will not wear out & treasure that will not fail. *The...treasure one lays up in heaven through devotion to the kingdom is unfailing* .” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 215)**
- **“ *There is a connection between one’s heart & one’s treasure* . The aphorism can be *interpreted in several ways: the way we handle material goods* 1) *reveals* where our true commitments lie or 2) *determines* whether we have earthly treasures or treasures in heaven; & 3) *where we invest* our money determines where our heart will be. All three interpretations expose facets of truth in this aphorism, but the second fits its context best.” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 215)**
- **“ *Being generous reveals more than merely supplying aid to others*. Where our treasure is, there are heart will be as well. In other words, *how we use our resources communicates our values* . If we invest in earthly possessions, we show we care about things. *If we invest in care for people, we radiate our love for others. God’s kingdom is about people*. That is where our investment of time & resources should be, especially with those who have needs to be met.” (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , p. 350)**
- **“ *When Jesus speaks of treasure in heaven,...this doesn’t mean treasure that you will only possess after death* . ‘Heaven’ is God’s sphere...which...will one day colonize ‘earth,’ our sphere, completely. *What matters is that the kingdom of God is bringing the values & priorities of God himself to bear on the greed & anxiety of the world* . Those who welcome Jesus & his kingdom-message must learn to abandon the latter & live by the former.” (N. T. Wright, *Op Cit* , p. 114)**
- **“The disciples are to *be ready & willing to give to the poor* , because the Father has been pleased to give them the kingdom. *The kingdom of God outweighs everything else in value* . Nothing should stand in the way of entering & advancing the kingdom. *Proper disposition towards one’s earthly possessions will result in the acquisition of heavenly riches* .” (Craig Evans, *Op Cit* , p. 200)**
- **“ *Wherever one’s heart is, will inevitably be found one’s treasure* . People put their time, energies, & resources into those things they value, those things dear to their heart. Resources invested in material things are a sure sign that the things of this world are valued & not the things of God’s kingdom. *The disciple willing to use personal resources to help those in need & to further the work of the kingdom, however, demonstrates a heart inclined to God’s work* .” (Craig Evans, *Op Cit* , p. 201)**

c. Sell your possessions

- **“ *The final appeal,...is not necessarily for all followers of Jesus to get rid of all their possessions* . Luke himself, in Acts, describes Christian communities in which most members live in their own houses with their own goods around them, & there is no suggestion that they are second class or rebellious members of God’s people. *Jesus is...advocating the opposite attitude to the grasping & greed which he saw ...*” (N. T. Wright, *Op Cit* , p. 114)**
- **“ *Disinvestment & almsgiving, grounded in an ongoing commitment to the kingdom of God, are to be practiced in recognition that God is the Supreme Benefactor who provides both for the giver & for the recipient* . Such giving has the effect not of placing persons in debt, but rather of embracing the needy as members of one’s own inner circle. *In the economy intrinsic to the kingdom, those who give without exacting reciprocation...are actually repaid by God*. Such giving, then, is translated into solidarity with the needy on earth & into heavenly treasure (see 6:35).” (Joel B. Green, *Op Cit* , p. 531)**
- **“ *Within the larger context of Luke 12:1-13:9* , which warns us to be ready for the judgment, *the cluster of sayings* on anxiety & possessions... *warns against trying to secure the future by laying up earthly treasure & counsels instead ...wholehearted devotion to God’s Kingdom* . True security is to be found not in wealth but in God’s providence.” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 215)**

c. Reflections

- **“ *Faith in Jesus Christ awakens our consciousness of the spiritual dimensions of life* . By doing so, faith allows & even forces us to *see our lives from a new perspective* . Then we can see that some of the things we have been so concerned about are not all that important. We may also see that *we have not given enough attention to important things: family, friends, a more just & peaceful society, or our own personal, intellectual, &***

spiritual development .When the rat race of materialism threatens to control you, remember Jesus' words; **there is more to life** ." (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , pp. 215-16)

- "How does one apply a call not to worry & to be generous? The issues that lead to application reach deep into the human psyche. We all want to feel secure. We like being in control, but we are fooling ourselves if we think we have life by the throat." (Darrell Bock, *Op Cit* , pp. 350-1)
- "**Followers of Jesus should be the freest persons** – free from anxiety, free from the social conventions of materialism, free with their generosity to others. The lives of Jesus' disciples count for more than the pursuit of material wealth. They are devoted to higher things. This cluster of sayings offers both the challenge to center one's life on promoting concerns related to God's kingdom & the extravagant promise of God's providence for those who will do so." (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 216)
- "**One of Jesus' most difficult words is this: 'Sell your possessions, & give to the poor.'** ... [This] saying **contains a tension between two responses to the dangers of wealth & materialism. The first is divestment** : 'Sell your possessions.' **The second is generosity** in almsgiving. In our culture, the latter has always been easier to consider than the first. Obviously, there are good reasons why divestment should not become the norm for all Christians. On the other hand, this provocative call needs to be considered. **Most of us have possessions we do not need. Yet, we hold on to them while others are homeless & hungry** . Perhaps it is time for churches to hold 'discipleship sales,' & call on all who will to sell all the goods they do not need in order to give to charities & human services. Such detachment from our materialism would also be a dramatic declaration of the values by which we live." (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit* , p. 216)
- "We struggle with the temptation to hoard & stockpile, to build bigger houses, to create exclusive neighborhoods. Hoarding ordinarily comes from insecurity. **Our affluent society appears to be imprisoned by a paralyzing fear that there won't be enough** . **Actually, the 'enough' question haunts us all** ...Do I have enough food, enough stylish clothes, enough status & power, enough influential friends, enough gadgets that will make my life easier, enough possessions to be accepted by my popular peers? **It is easy to become obsessed with accumulating things that add nothing to my heart's dearest desire** ." (Macrina Wiederkehr, *Op Cit* , p. 116)
- "**How different our lives might be if we could learn to put the emphasis on storing up the kind of gift that neither rust nor fade** . What if we were to ask another kind question? Do I have enough **compassion** to notice the person who needs my assistance? Do I have enough **gratitude** to appreciate the gifts I've been given? Do I have enough **integrity** not to hoard more than I need? Do I have enough **joy** to create a comfortable home in the house where I live? Do I have enough **trust** to believe I will be amply cared for? Do I have enough **hospitality** to share what I have with others? Do I have enough **wisdom** to recognize the things that truly make me happy? Do I have enough **contentment** to keep me from obsessing over things beyond my means? Although we may not have arrived at the graced state of being totally free from desiring things beyond our reach, **let us hope that we have not lost our ability to recognize that we are richly blessed even when we don't have everything we want** ." (Macrina Wiederkehr, *Op Cit* , p. 117)
- "When people's lives become complicated & overburdened, they sometimes begin to discuss ways of living a more simple life. But **what is a simple life?** Surely it doesn't mean that we have to move to the country, raise cows & chickens, & grow all the vegetables we eat. Might it rather be **a call to learn how to live more attentively?** Could it be **a nudge from our deep self to discern the things that truly lift our spirits & bring us joy?** " (Macrina Wiederkehr, *Op Cit* , pp. 117-18)
- **A prayer:** "Lord, your magnificent creation teaches me to be content & to never be settled or uncaring. **Reveal to me how to use things well & enjoy them without clinging & hoarding** . **I want to live with open hands** . Give me a heart for sharing. Open my eyes to beauty so that I may always remember your command to 'consider the lilies.' Instill in me an awareness of the healing power of creation. Don't ever let me turn away from the hard questions. **Let me live simply, beautifully, & generously all the days of my life** ." (Macrina Wiederkehr, *Op Cit* , p. 119)

35 "**Be ready for service** & have your lamps lit. 36 You are to be like people waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet so that when he comes & knocks, they can open the

door for him at once. 37 Blessed will be those servants the master finds alert when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will get ready, have them recline at the table, then come & serve them. 38 If he comes in the middle of the night, or even near dawn, & finds them alert, blessed are those servants. 39 But know this: If the homeowner had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. 40 **You also be ready**, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (Lk. 12:35-40)

3. Watchfulness Is Needed As We Journey With Jesus (Lk. 12:35-40)

- “The sayings that follow [in Luke 12:35-40] move directly to the theme of...12:1-13:9 **watchfulness**. They contain at least the rudiments of two parables: 1) servants awaiting the bridegroom & 2) the householder. **The first assures blessing on the faithful; the second warns of judgment on the unprepared**.” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 216)
 - a. Servants awaiting the bridegroom (vv. 35-38)
 - “The situation assumed in v. 36 is that the master of the house has gone to his bride’s home to be married. His servants await his return, but they don’t know when he will come. **Verse 37 is a beatitude announcing blessing on those who are watchful**. The promise of the master’s generosity towards his servants takes the form of a dramatic reversal of roles. Instead of serving the master, the servants will find that he serves them...Verse 38 reiterates the beatitudes but as the need for watchfulness even late into the night.” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 217)
 - b. The householder (vv. 39-40)
 - “**The second parable** (v. 39) **warns of the alternative [being unprepared for the master’s return]**. For some the master’s coming will be like the approach of a thief in the night...From instructions in earlier contexts, the reader may assume that **readiness means trust in God as a heavenly Father**, ... **handling one’s material possessions faithfully**, obeying the ethic of the kingdom, & making life a matter of constant prayer.” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 217)
 - “Not only is **Jesus saying that God’s kingdom now demands a complete reordering of priorities**. He is warning that **a crisis is coming [God’s judgment]**, a great showdown for which one must be prepared in the same way as servants who listen eagerly for their master’s footfall & knock at the door.” (N. T. Wright, *Op Cit*, p. 114)
 - c. Reflections:
 - “[Luke 12:35-40] exhorts listeners to **watchfulness**, which means **living in such a consistently moral & obedient way that we would be ready to give an account to God of how we have lived**. [But] there is more. **Servants need to be devoted to their tasks, refusing to let distractions, fatigue, or delay divert them from their duties**. They must make the fulfillment of what their master has asked them to do their highest obligation & their greatest concern.” (Alan Culpepper, *Op Cit*, p. 219)