>>> As you're doing that, we're just coming off a phenomenal week. You have heard me say that Bible school is the most exciting week of the year and this week was no different than that. What an incredible time we had over this past week. We saw 328 different children from preschool through fourth grade who were in our building this past week for our Frozen in Summer Bible school and hopefully you have had a chance on Facebook to see a lot of the pictures, the videos. Just a lot of exciting stuff. Of course, best of all, we saw 68 children who spoke with a trained counselor and made salvation decisions for Jesus Christ this week. Phenomenal time here at Frozen in Summer.

I was also excited -- they did a penny war this week. It's amazing. If you want to see girls get pumped up, put them up against guys in a contest. Right? Because we had a penny war. The goal was to see $250 in pennies come in. All of that going to our partner ministry in Managua, Nicaragua, and the Verbo Sur church, for the child care center down there that we partner with. And not only did we meet the $250 goal in that penny war, not only did we double it, not only did we triple it, not only did we quadruple it, we actually saw over $1,400 in pennies come in from the boys and girls last week. So I'm thinking next week for the offering -- well, forget it. Anyway, it was just a great way all the way around.

Please don't remember that next -- please do remember that next Sunday we'll be asking the membership of our church to affirm the hiring of David Harstine as our new Pastor of Adult Ministries. And again, the way that will work is if you attend first service after first service our church chairman Andy Patrick will lead a ballot vote down in the Chapel. So if you're a member, you can just go down to the Chapel right after the service to be part of that. Only take a couple minutes and after the second service, we'll do the same thing in here in the Gospel Center. You should have got an information packet in the mail this week. If you didn't, call the church office. They'll make sure that you get one.

I also appreciate your prayers this week. I'll leave this afternoon to go out to Pleasant Valley Bible Camp, and this coming week I'll be speaking nine times out there for their high school camp. It's a ministry that's supporting by our church here at E-Free and we are excited to be part of that. And that partnership with those ministries is more than just writing a check. We partner in many ways and so when I have the opportunity to be able to share with ministries like that, we do that so I'll be doing that all this week out at the Pleasant Valley Bible Camp. We certainly appreciate your prayers for that.

Well, this morning, we want to continue our series through the Olivet Discourse that we have been calling "The Future: Don't Miss the Signs." And we're going to finish up chapter 24 today. We still have chapter 25 to go. Now, remember that over the first 44 verses of chapter 24 that we have been studying for many weeks now Jesus is giving the signs that will occur right before His second coming at the end of the tribulation to set up His kingdom. And we looked at all of those signs over the last several weeks. Now we reach the point in the discourse where Jesus now is going to drive home the point of how should that impact us in whatever generation we live in as followers of Jesus Christ.
Now, we have talked about the timeline of the future, and I realize not everybody agrees with the timeline and we all have different views out there, but no matter what your timeline of the future is, what we’re going to look at now applies to everyone. How should we respond knowing that Jesus is coming back? How should we respond realizing we don’t know the exact day or the hour in which Jesus will come back? And that’s what Jesus is going to discuss the rest of this discourse. Now, he’s going to do it in a very culturally normal way in that day. He’s going to do it by storytelling.

You have to keep in mind that in that day and age storytelling was huge. We’ve kind of lost the art of storytelling today. We watch stories. We read stories. But we’ve kind of lost the art of telling stories. Well, remember that back in Jesus’ day, obviously, when nighttime came, after dinner, the sun goes down, there’s not a whole lot to do. You don’t have a television. You can’t just pull out your iPhone or your iPad. There’s no gaming systems. You can’t run down to the Redbox and get a movie. Nothing like that. Okay?

Instead, they would sit around the fire and they would tell stories. And part of the Jewish culture was -- is called circle storytelling and that simply means this. If you wanted to teach a principle, you would tell three different stories. And those stories all really taught the same principle. You would just add some more detail with each story and at the end of the three stories you had the full picture. Well, that’s exactly what Jesus does. He’s been giving for 44 verses the signs of His second coming to establish His kingdom. Now He’s going to tell three stories. We are going to take one week for each story. And in these stories He’s going to teach us one particular principle, and the principle is this. We need to be ready. That’s the principle in all three stories.

Now, He’s going to add some more details in story number two. He’s going to add some more detail in story number three. But all three stories really say the same thing. The need for us to live a life of preparedness. The need for us to be ready and what that looks like. Which, by the way, is why we have this graffiti up here on our wall the last several weeks to and to my amazement there are still many of you that haven’t figured out the graffiti and I keep having people say, what does "e" or not mean. And I just kind of shake my head. Listen. It says "e," yes, or not. But it’s a red "e" so it says ready or not. That’s what it says. And that’s really -- see, most of you just got it. It’s been up there for weeks and you just got it. Anyway, don’t go on "Jeopardy!" You will lose.

But nonetheless, that’s the theme for these three stories so we’re going to look at the first story today and I want to begin by reading that story in its totality so if you’re in Matthew 24, I want to read verses 45 to 51, and I’m going to ask you in honor of the Word of God to stand with me, please, as I do. Matthew 24, I’m going to begin in verse 45. Now, I want you to do me a favor before I read. Whether you’re here in the Gospel Center, whether you’re watching down in the Chapel, maybe you’re listening on radio, maybe you’re watching on the internet, I want you just to pretend with me for a moment. Pretend that you’re sitting up on the Mt. of Olives. It’s nighttime now. The disciples have started a fire. Jesus has been teaching through the early evening hours all the signs about His coming.

Now, as you sit around the fire on the Mt. of Olives, Jesus begins the cultural norm of storytelling. And He’s now going to tell you the first of three stories to try to drive home a point to you and that point is
our need to live lives of preparedness. And as you sit around the fire, Peter on one side, maybe Judas on
the other, who knows?

Here’s what Jesus said. Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his
household to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so
doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that
evil slave says in his heart, my master is not coming for a long time, and begins to beat his fellow slaves
and eat and drink with drunkards the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect
him and at an hour which he does not know. And will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the
hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Thank you. You may be seated.

Now, here’s what I’d like to do this morning. I’d like to spend just a couple minutes talking about the
picture of the story, making sure you understand what’s happening in the story, and then we’re going to
spend the majority of our time this morning looking at some principles about the story. What can we
learn based on the story? So let’s begin by talking about the picture of Christ’s story that He tells and I
want to start by noticing the people that are involved.

Now, remember whenever Jesus tells a parable, whenever Jesus tells an a story, the individuals involved
in the story almost always represent someone or some group. So it’s important to say who are the
individuals in the story and who do they represent. Well, there are three individuals in the story.

There’s the master. There’s the faithful slave. And there’s the evil slave. So we have to ask ourselves,
what do these three individuals, who do they represent? Well, I think the first one is pretty easy. It’s
pretty easy to see in the story that the master represents Jesus Himself. That’s who the master
represents in the story. And in the same way that the master before he left gave responsibility to his
servants, so Jesus before He ascended back into heaven after His death and resurrection, He gave
responsibilities to us and we’re going to talk about that in a little bit. So the master is representative of
Jesus.

Now, who is the faithful slave and the evil slave representative of? And there’s a lot of different views
out there. But as I read this story, and I read the next story and I read the third story and take it in the
context of what just is saying, my conclusion is that the faithful slave represents believers who are alive
when Jesus returns. And the evil slave represents unbelievers who are alive when Jesus returns. You
see, when Jesus returns, there will be two types of people on earth. Those who are ready because they
are genuine believers in Jesus. And those who are not ready because they are not genuine believers in
Jesus. And to me, it’s very clear in the story. When you look at the lifestyle of the evil slave, when you
look at the punishment the evil slave gets, it seems very clear to me that the evil slave represents
unbelievers at the time of the second coming. So keep that in mind.

Now, what happens in the story? Well, first, notice the preparedness of the faithful slave. Obviously,
the master entrusts the faithful slave with his household to care for his household. The master leaves
saying I’m going to come back. You don’t know when I’m going to come back, but I want you to be
faithful in doing what I’ve given you to do. And the faithful slave does exactly that. He lives a life while
the master is gone of faithfulness. Every day he takes seriously the responsibility the master gave him to
take care of his household. To feed his household. He takes it seriously every day because he knows the master is coming back. He just doesn’t know when the master is going to come back. And according to the story, when the master returns, he finds this slave faithful. And he, in turn, greatly rewards the faithful servant. Now, in a minute we'll talk about the principles we can learn from that. But in the story, that's what happens to the faithful slave.

Now notice the opposite. That’s the good part of the story. But there's a negative part of the story. And now we see the peril of the evil slave. And by the way, all three stories will kind of divide like this. In the story next week of the ten virgins, five will be faithful and five will not be faithful. The same kind of division. So what happens to the evil slave? Well, the master puts him -- gives him responsibility but the evil slave does not take it seriously. In fact, the text says that the evil slave says, eh, it's going to be a long time before the master comes back, so the evil slave instead of taking seriously what he needs to do to be a faithful servant of the master, he does just the opposite. He decides, I can wait until down the road to get things in order with the master. For now, I'm going to live out my passions. I'm going to live for myself. And as a result, the story says that he beat the other servants. He abused the other servants because, folks, listen. Whenever you live a life focused on yourself, you will always mistreat others. And that's exactly what this servant does. He so focused on himself he mistreats himself. He is so focused on his passions that he just lives out those passions in drunkenness and foolishness thinking, I've got plenty of time until the master returns. But what happens in the story? The master returns when the evil slave is not expecting it. And he finds that the evil slave, unlike the faithful slave, is totally unprepared. And as a result, the master who greatly rewarded the faithful slave now greatly punishes the evil slave.

Now, that's the story that Jesus told. Now, what we have to do is to say, what can we learn from the story? And I -- as I look at the story, I see four principles. Four principles that if we will learn these principles, I believe it will greatly help us as believers in Jesus to live lives of preparedness for the return of Christ. So let me share with you this morning the four principles.

The first one I call the principle of responsibility. The principle of responsibility. Because in the story Jesus gave the servant responsibility while he was gone. It wasn't just, hey guys, I'm leaving. It wasn't just that at all. Before the master left, he gave his servant a responsibility to care for his household. And that faithful servant took the responsibility seriously. He kept the master’s interests in mind. He daily focused his attention on caring for the master’s household. He took the responsibility seriously.

Now, folks, listen. As believers in Jesus, as those who have put our faith in His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of our sin and for our eternal home in heaven, we have to understand that that's exactly what Jesus did for us. Jesus, after His death and resurrection, didn't just say, guys, I'm taking off for a couple thousand years. I'll see you sometime down the road. It wasn't just that at all. Before the master left, he gave his servant a responsibility to care for his household. And that faithful servant took the responsibility seriously. He kept the master’s interests in mind. He daily focused his attention on caring for the master’s household. He took the responsibility seriously.
and says, tada! Here I am! I’ve come back from the dead! And then He said to them these words recorded in Mark 16. He said, now, go into all the world and preach the gospel.

Now, what’s the gospel? Well, Paul defined it in 1 Corinthians 15. He said, the gospel is the fact that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day according to the scripture. Jesus walks into the upper room and says, disciples, guess what. I’ve got the gospel. I’ve got good news. I didn’t just die for your sins. I have risen from the dead. Now, go spread the good news. He gave the responsibility very clearly, didn’t He? He did it again at some point during the 40 days before He ascended back into heaven and at some point during that time frame Matthew records that He gave the responsibility again.

We often call it the great commandment. Or the great commission. In Matthew 28, Jesus said this. He said, I want you to go into all the world and make disciples. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observing all things that I have taught you. He made it clear again, didn’t He? Here’s your responsibility. I’m going to be leaving soon. I’m giving you a responsibility. Go into all the world and make disciples.

And just in case someone missed it, on the very day that He ascends into heaven 40 days after His resurrection, He does it again. And He says to the disciples and the followers that are there before He ascends into heaven, He says, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and as a result of that power you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the other most parts of the earth.

Now, what is Jesus doing three different times before He, the master, leaves? He is giving us our responsibility. While I am gone here’s what I want your focus to be. And not only does He give the responsibility but He gives us the resources we need to do the responsibility. He says, listen. Not only do I want you to focus on sharing Jesus with everybody, I’m going to give you the resources to do it. I’m going to give you 70 on the average years of life. Use those years to do your responsibility. I’m going to give you 24 hours in a day. Use those hours to do your responsibility. I’m going to give you talents, things you’ll be good at. Use those talents to fulfill your responsibility. I’m going to give you spiritual gifts. Use those gifts to fulfill your responsibility. I’m going to give you a job. Use that job to fulfill your responsibility. I’m going to give you a paycheck. Use that paycheck to fulfill your responsibility. I’m going to give you golf clubs. Use those golf clubs. Use that boat. Use that fishing rod. Use that camper to fulfill your responsibility. The same thing the master gave to the slave in the story, Jesus has given to us. And Paul said to the church at Corinth that we are stewards of all that God’s given to us to fulfill that responsibility. And the one thing God desires of a steward just like in the story is that we would be found faithful.

So here’s what I want to ask you this morning. Based on that definition, if Jesus came back today, would He find you faithful? Are you fulfilling the responsibility? Statistics tell us that 90% of Christ followers never share their faith with anybody. Jesus, the master, has given us a responsibility. He’s given us resources to do the responsibility. He says, now while I’m gone, be faithful. So the first principle we see is the principle of responsibility.
Principle number two I see in the story is the principle of return. The principle of return. And we saw this last Sunday. We see it today. And we’re going to continue to see it every single day that remains in this series because Jesus repeats it over and over again because He wants us to get it. And this principle simply says this. The master’s return will be unexpected and unannounced. We saw that last Sunday. Jesus said, no one knows the day or the hour. Jesus doesn’t want us to spend our time trying to find the secret formulas to predict the day that Jesus is coming. If you’re spending all your time trying to predict the day Jesus is coming, you’re probably not fulfilling your responsibility to tell others about Jesus.

I mean, think about it, folks. If we really believed that Jesus could come at any time wouldn’t we be a little more aggressive about fulfilling our responsibility? The evil servant in the story had a problem. His problem was he felt like there was no hurry. Plenty of time before the master comes back. And I feel like that's one of the lies that Satan has really put into the hearts and minds of Christians today. He's kind of put into this mind this idea that there’s no hurry to invite our co-workers to church. There’s no hurry to talk to someone else about Jesus. Folks, can I remind you based on the story that the coming of the master, the return of Jesus, will come unexpected and unannounced? We see that principle clearly in the story.

Notice principle number three. The principle of reward. The principle of reward. It's very clear in the story, isn't it? The faithful slave was greatly rewarded. The evil slave was greatly punished. So what do we learn? Well, here's what we learn. We learn very clearly, listen, that God rewards faithful service. Please don’t miss this. God rewards faithful service. Very clear in the story, isn’t it? Now, let me do this. Let me kind of hit the pause button for a minute.

We’ll come back to the story in a couple of minutes but let me just hit the pause button because maybe you’re thinking, well, what kind of rewards are we talking about? What rewards does Jesus give for faithful service? So let me hit the pause button from Matthew 24 and let me just really quickly share with you, I see three rewards in scripture. There might be more but I see three in which Jesus says here are three rewards I will give to faithful servants. Let me give them to you real quick. Hopefully they’ll encourage you today.

Number one, there is the reward of commendation. The reward of commendation. In fact, keep your finger in Matthew 24. Go over one chapter to chapter 25. We’ll get to this story in two weeks. It's the story of the talents. And in verse 21, notice what it says. It says, his master, that's representative of Jesus, said to him, a faithful servant representing believers, well done good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master. So the master representing Jesus says to the faithful slave representing genuine believers, well done good and faithful servant. There is the reward of commendation.

Now, let’s think about it. Folks, come on. Let’s just be honest. We all enjoy commendation. Don't we? I mean, we like to say, no, it's all about Jesus. And yes, it is. But the truth of the matter is we are human and we still like people to give us an attaboy once in a while, don't we? Hey, you did good. It just makes you feel good, doesn’t it? Especially when the commendation comes from someone you greatly admire. Can you think of a time in your life when someone you greatly admired said to you, good job?
I think of one particular time in mine. One of my spiritual heroes, since I was in junior high school, was the reverend Jerry Falwell. And I know some of you don’t even have a clue who Jerry Falwell was. He’s with the Lord today. And those of you who have a remembrance of Jerry Falwell, the problem is you probably have a tainted view because you only heard about Jerry Falwell in the news. And I know you and I realize in our head that the news is always tainted but we still tend to believe it when it comes through, don’t we? So many have kind of a bad view of Jerry Falwell. In fact, when I say to people that he’s my spiritual hero, I usually have to pucker or duck. One of the two, all right? Because some people love it, some people don’t. But if you never knew Jerry Falwell, you don’t understand what an amazing man he was, how much he loved people and the incredible things he did for the kingdom of God.

And when I was in junior high school every single Sunday morning when I would get ready for church, on a little five-inch black and white TV in my -- literally five-inch, I would watch the old-time gospel hour and Jerry Falwell and I wanted to be just like Jerry Falwell. I wanted to preach just like Jerry Falwell. And when I heard that Jerry Falwell had a college, my search for a college ended that day. If Jerry Falwell had a college, I was going to Jerry Falwell’s college. And I spent four years at Liberty Baptist College. Now known as Liberty University. And they were four of the greatest years of my life sitting under Dr. Fallwell’s ministry. It was just amazing the impact it had on my life.

My senior year what they would do every year, I don't know if they still do this, but back then, every year they would -- the pastoral department, the professors would pick one pastoral major. They called him preacher of the year and he would get to preach in chapel and my senior year I was selected with that honor and I got to preach in chapel to 4,000 faculty, students, staff, live on WRVL radio and Dr. Jerry Falwell sitting right behind me. I was never so scared in all my life. I had diarrhea. That’s not part of the story. But I did. Okay? You can edit that out for radio or TV later. Who knows? Anyway, and I preached that day.

Two weeks later, it was graduation. And my grandpa, I've told you about my grandpa. He was a preacher for over 50 years before he went home to be with the Lord and my grandpa was at graduation and baccalaureate was held at Thomas Road Baptist Church and after baccalaureate we were talking. Spent time. We all kind of left and my grandpa realized he left his Bible inside the church. And so, my grandpa went back inside the church to get his Bible and he ran into Jerry Falwell and if you know Jerry Falwell, if you run into Jerry Falwell, he's going to talk to you. You're going to have a conversation. He's going to get to know you. And by the way, he had a photographic memory. If you met you one time, he always remembered you. Amazing.

But nonetheless, he runs into Jerry Falwell and Jerry Falwell obviously puts together that he must have a grandchild graduating so he says to him, he says, do you have a grandchild graduating? Yes, my grandson is. Well, who is your grandson? And my grandpa said, well, he's Scott Distler. And my grandpa told me when he came back outside, he said Jerry Falwell looked at him and said, oh, now that boy can preach. Now, let me tell you something, folks. 5,000 different people could say good job on the sermon and that's always nice but none of those meant anything to me near like hearing that. That my spiritual hero, a man that I admired so much who so impacted my life would give me that kind of commendation.
But folks, listen. That's nothing compared to what reward that could happen someday if maybe, just maybe, I am a faithful enough servant that one day when I look into the eyes of the one I admire the most and on that day I'll be going, Jerry who? You know? When I look into the eyes of Jesus and maybe just maybe hear Him say, well done, good and faithful servant. He's given us a responsibility. He's given us resources to fulfill the responsibility. He wants to fulfill us for doing the responsibility. Are we living a life of preparedness?

There's another reward, a second reward is what we call the reward of charge. He'll give you charge over more. That's what he did with the servant in the story. He was faithful then so he gave him more to be in charge of. By the way, I think this happens today. When we're faithful with what God's entrusted to us today, I believe God gives us more so that we can be faithfully using that, as well. I believe in the millennial kingdom we will reign with Christ and what we will reign over, the amount we reign over will in a large way be dependent on how faithful we were to fulfilling our responsibility today. The reward of charge.

Then there's the reward of crowns. And the Bible teaches that there's at least five crowns, maybe there's more. The Bible gives us at least five. Let me just give them to you real quick. You can write them down. You can read the verses for yourself later. There's the crown of righteousness. Paul talked about that. By the way, this says 1 Timothy. That should be 2 Timothy. My mistake. Sorry about that. And Paul said that this is a crown that will be given for all those who love the appearing of Jesus, who love the appearing of Jesus.

Now, by the way, that doesn't mean that that's crown for those who just are prophesy buffs and love to study prophesy. That's not what it means to love the appearing of Jesus. It means to be so in love with the fact that Jesus may come today that it changes the way I live. That's what it means. The crown of righteousness. The Bible teaches there's the incorruptible crown. Paul talked about that. To the church at Corinth. A crown that will be given for those who live lives of self control, like an athlete. Will live lives of self control about their schedule, what they eat, their workout, everything. Discipline. In order to try to win the race. He said this is a crown that's given for the believer who lives that self disciplined life so that everything about what they're doing is bringing glory to God. The crown, the incorruptible crown.

The third crown is the crown of life. It's often called the martyr's crown. It's a crown given for those who suffer greatly because of their belief in Jesus. This is a crown that's given for those who die as a result of their faith in Jesus. There's the crown of rejoicing. It's often called the soul winner's crown. This is a crown that's given to those who are faithful in telling others about Jesus. And then the Bible talks about the crown of glory. Peter talked about this crown, a crown that will be given for faithful pastors and elders who shepherd the flock of God faithfully. You see, the Bible's very clear that Jesus rewards faithful service. He did in the story. He'll do it in glory. No question about it.

But notice the flip side of it. Go back to the story. The reward went both ways, didn't it? Not only did Jesus reward the faithful servant for the way he took seriously his responsibility while the master was gone, but he also gave a just reward for the evil servant, as well. And it's very clear in the story that that
evil servant who I believe represents unbelievers, that the unbeliever who was not prepared for Christ’s
coming through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus received the just reward of eternal
punishment. In fact, Jesus said that they would be in a place where there’s weeping and gnashing of
teeth. Do you realize that that phrase alone is used five times just in the book of Matthew? And each
time it is describing hell. Each time.

Now, see some of you are going you just ruined Father’s Day right there. You were doing really good
until right then. And, folks, you need to understand something. You need to understand that the reality
of hell is not a pleasant topic. The reality of hell is not a topic that we relish talking about. In fact, we
would often just rather not talk about it. In fact, to a degree, there’s some out there under the umbrella
of Christianity that will tell you, well, it doesn’t really exist. And I need you to know two things. Two
things. Two mayor things the Bible teaches about hell. Please don’t miss this. Please don’t miss this.
Two things the Bible teaches about the reality of hell.

Number one is this. You cannot erase it. Even if you don't like it, even if you’re going to choose to say,
well, I just don't believe it isn't true, you can do anything you want in your mind but you cannot erase
the reality that the Bible teaches it is a very real place. You cannot erase hell, folks. No matter how
much it unsettles you. No matter how much it disturbs you. You cannot erase the reality of hell. It’s
there. But number two, listen. Even though you can't erase it, listen, you can escape it. You can’t erase
it. It’s there. But you can escape it. How? By putting your faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus
Christ. You can’t erase the reality of hell. But you can escape it. Which is all part of being prepared.
Ready or not.

You see, I'll be honest with you. It doesn’t -- it doesn't really amaze me that God would send some to
hell. That doesn’t amaze me. Because we all deserve to go there. We’re all sinners. That doesn’t
amaze me at all. That makes sense to me. You know what amazes me? That some of us don't have to
go there. That's what amazes me. That God made a way so that some of us could escape hell. What
amazes me is that God is going to allow some of us who've put our faith in the death and resurrection of
Jesus to live with Him forever in heaven. That's what amazes me. You see, I think there's three things
that will amaze us when we get to heaven.

Number one, I think we'll be amazed at the people that are there that we didn't think had a prayer. I
think we'll be amazed at that. I think we’ll be amazed, number two, at the people that are missing that
we thought was going to be there. But I think number three the thing that will amaze us the most is that
God in His grace let us in. Not because of anything we did. We deserve hell. But because we put our
faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So, we saw the principle of responsibility, the principle of return, the principle of reward. And finally it's
what the story's really all about. The principle of readiness. That's what Jesus is teaching. To be ready.
How can we be ready? Well, if you have never put your faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus
Christ, that's where it begins, folks. You cannot be ready unless you've put your faith in Jesus. And if
you have put your faith in Jesus, it’s understanding that before the Master left He gave you a
responsibility and that responsibility is to share the story of Jesus with everybody. And he’s given you
resources to fulfill the responsibility. Being ready means I live a daily life faithful to the responsibility that God has given to me.

Would you stand with me, please, for prayer? Father, You are a good, good Father. And it amazes me, it really just amazes me that You loved me enough to send Jesus to die for me. That You love me enough to draw me to Yourself that when I put my faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus You forgave me. That amazes me. You gave me eternal life. God, I don't deserve it. You're a good, good Father. And I think of so many different people in northern Michigan who are going through Father's Day today and they have no idea what a good, good Father You are. So, God, I pray that You would help us as individuals who know You as Savior. Help us as a church corporately. Help us to take very seriously the responsibility You've given us to be faithful to meet as many people as possible right where they're at so we can move them to where You want them to be. So on this Father's Day, thank You for being a good, good Father to us. And we sing to You now that very song. In Jesus' name, amen.

[ Music ]

You're a good good Father

It's who You are

It's who You are