

Responding to the Thief in the Night

Matthew 24:36-51

Intro:

1. It's obvious that the Second Coming & the Rapture will happen together.
2. No one knows when these things are going to happen.
3. How would the Lord want you to respond?

I. v37-42 - Be Watchful: You Could Be Left!

A. What happened to people who were not watchful?

1. People heard Noah's preaching but ignored or ridiculed it — **II Pet 2:5**.
 - a. **Rom 10:17** — **Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.**
 - b. **II Thess 1:7-8** — **and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.**
2. **v38** — They had plenty of time.
 - a. It took 120 years to build the ark but the people ignored the signs: i. e., the preaching & the ark!
 - b. **v39** — the flood came unexpectedly.
 - c. You have the grace period of your lifetime to make your commitment to the Lord Jesus. That's your grace period!
3. **I Peter 3:20** says that only 8 were saved.

B. What will happen when the Lord returns?

1. **v38** — People will be conducting the affairs of their lives pretty much without God in the picture.
2. **v40-41** — The Rapture will take men from their employment & leave others behind. It will take women from their household duties & leave others behind.

II. v43-44 - Be Prepared: You Could Be Taken!

A. What happens to sleepy landlords?

1. He was careless — not making any preparations for handling burglars.
2. **I Thess 5:2** — **for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.**

B. How do you handle burglars?

1. You make it difficult for him by installing an alarm.
 - a. You install a car alarm or a club.
 - b. A church in Phoenix has an alarm that goes off at the local police station.
 - c. A drug store in Oxnard has an alarm that could be triggered if a mouse is detected.
2. You need to arm yourself spiritually.
 - a. **I Thess 5:8** - **But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.**
 - b. **Act 2:40** - **With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."**
3. Will you be asleep spiritually when the Lord comes?
 - a. In **Jn 14:6** the Lord says He is the only way to God.
 - b. A good moral life won't do it.
 - c. Attending church regularly won't do it if you haven't committed yourself to the Lord.

III. v45-51 - Be Faithful

A. **v45-47** - Being a Christian means remaining faithful.

1. We have all been given some responsibility in the body of Christ - your natural abilities & your spiritual gift.
2. Faithfulness is developing & using those gifts for Him.
3. **I Cor 4:2** - Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

B. **v48-51** - Putting off a decision for the Lord until later is risky business.

1. **ILL: The Foolish Farmer (Lk 12:16-21)**
2. The Lord could come any day - any hour!

The big question is not “When will Lord Jesus come again?”
but “Will I be ready when He comes?”

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