

## Driven by Deadlines

What things do we tend to delay until the deadline?

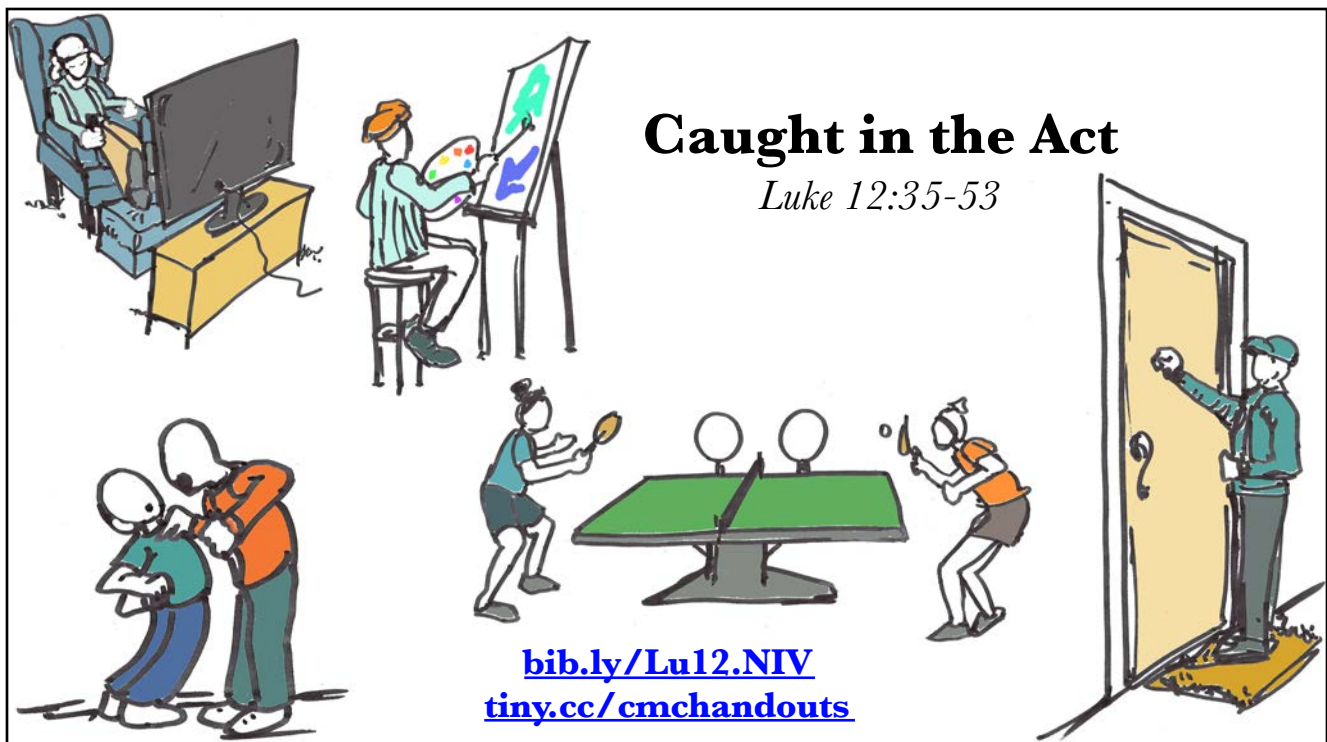
What things do we do without the need for a deadline?

What are some important things that might not happen because we don't have a deadline?

Stories from school: starting with the final exam, and a pop quiz

What should shape our lives as Christians, especially when we don't know when the deadline is?

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Eternity Past → God	Creation → All good	Fall → Sin	Jesus → Salvation	Church	Jesus' return → Eternity future
<b>A Christian View of Past, Present, and Future</b>					

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Eternity Past → God	Creation → All good	Fall → Sin	Jesus → Salvation	Church	Jesus' return → Eternity future
<p>In the beginning was the Word [the Son of God], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <i>John 1:1</i></p>					

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Eternity Past → God	Creation → All good	Fall → Sin	Jesus → Salvation	Church	Jesus' return → Eternity future
<p>Through [the Son of God] all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <i>John 1:2</i></p>					

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Eternity Past → God	Creation → All good	Fall → Sin	Jesus → Salvation	Church	Jesus' return → Eternity future
<p>There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have <u>sinned</u> and fall short of the glory of God. <i>Romans 3:22-23</i></p> <p>The wages of <u>sin</u> is death <i>Romans 6:23</i></p> <p><b>sin = attitudes, words, and actions that are immoral or disloyal to God</b></p>					


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Eternity Past → God	Creation → All good	Fall → Sin	Jesus → Salvation	Church	Jesus' return → Eternity future
<p>All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. <i>Romans 3:24</i></p> <p><b>Jesus is the perfect Son of God who lived a perfect life yet He died as if He were the worst of sinners in order to rescue sinners and all creation from the just consequences ("wages") of sin and He offers this rescue as a gift to all who trust in Him</b></p>					

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Eternity Past → God	Creation → All good	Fall → Sin	Jesus → Salvation	Church	Jesus' return → Eternity future
<p>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up <b>meeting together</b>, as some are in the habit of doing, but <b>encouraging one another</b>—and <b>all the more as you see the Day [of Jesus' return] approaching</b>. <i>Hebrews 10:24-25</i></p>					

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Eternity Past → God	Creation → All good	Fall → Sin	Jesus → Salvation	Church 	Jesus' return → Eternity future
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Jesus said: Do not let your hearts be troubled.  
You believe in God; believe also in me.  
... And if I go and prepare a place for you,  
**I will come back and take you to be with me**  
that you also may be where I am. *John 14:1,3*

**No one on earth knows when Jesus will come back**  
**It is taking longer than probably anyone expected**

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“Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.””

*2 Peter 3:3-4*

**Jesus was concerned about the temptation  
for us to give up waiting...**

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*Luke 12:35-40*

“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. 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. 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.

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*Luke 12:35-40*

“But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

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***Luke 12:35-53***

**35-40:** Always keep doing what Jesus taught, expecting Him

- Lamp burning = active awareness of the presence of God
  - Especially when His presence is not currently felt (night)
- Concern: people won't be ready because...
  - Jesus' return is taking longer than expected
  - Jesus' return is no longer even expected
    - "Look, I come **like a thief!** Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed." *Revelation 16:15*

- Radically surprising image:

Master clothes himself to serve the servants!

41: • Jesus said: "For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table?"

42-48: But **I am among you as one who serves.**" *Luke 22:27*

49-53: • Danger: distraction, tiredness, giving up, disbelief, ...

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***Luke 12:41***

Peter asked, "Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?"

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*Luke 12:35-53*

35-40: Always keep doing what Jesus taught, expecting Him

**41: Peter asked: Is this radical promise open to all?**

- “This parable”:
    - **radical promise:** the Master will dress himself to serve His servants when He comes
    - **warning:** keep obeying, even when it seems to be such a long time waiting. If not, you will be shamed
  - **Question:** Is this just for the Apostles or for all people?
    - An important question to ask!
    - **Why did Peter ask?** We don’t know
      - Peter knew it applied to apostles. But was it only for them?
- 42-48: • It is for our sake: **Jesus’ radical promise is for all who will keep serving with what God has given them**
- 49-53:

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*Luke 12:42-48*

The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise **manager**, whom the **master** puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that **servant** whom the master finds doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose the **servant** says to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and he then begins to beat the other servants, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

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***Luke 12:42-48***

“The servant who knows the master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

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***Luke 12:35-53***

35-40: Always keep doing what Jesus taught, expecting Him

41: Peter asked: Is this radical promise open to all?

**42-48: Parable is especially for all who know God’s will**

- Master had many servants, and one was appointed manager
- Jesus was not endorsing slavery, and especially not race-based chattel slavery (people owning other people as property)
  - Note that he expressed severe judgment for the manager in the story who mistreated his fellow servants
  - Jesus used imperfect life situations they understood to teach about our relationship with God
- Jesus highlighted four situations...

49-53:

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What they knew	What they did	Outcome
Knew the Master's will	Still doing His will: serving others with what was entrusted to them	Master serves them He entrusts more to them
	Did evil: used what was entrusted to them selfishly and to the harm of others (sins of <b>commission</b> )	Cut in pieces and cast out (covenant ceremony)
	Didn't get ready or do as commanded (sins of <b>omission</b> )	Severe beating
Didn't know the Master's will	Things deserving punishment	Light beating

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### *Luke 12:35-53*

35-40: Always keep doing what Jesus taught, expecting Him

41: Peter asks: Is this radical promise open to all?

**42-48: Parable is especially for all who know God's will**

- This is a **parable**, not an allegory
  - Allegory: there is a direct application of each part of the story
  - **Parable:** the story is to teach a powerful idea
  - **The idea: it is critical that all who know what Jesus wants done actually do what He wants done**
- Responses that are highlighted
  - Those who **continue to obey**
  - Those who **actively rebel**
  - Those who **fail to obey** → perhaps the bigger concern

49-53:

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*Luke 12:49-53*

“I have come to bring **fire** on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a **baptism** to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

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*Luke 12:35-53*

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41: Peter asked: Is this radical promise open to all?

42-48: Parable is especially for all who know God's will

**49-53: Today is the day to choose**

- Fire represents God's presence
  - Power and glory of God: Holy Spirit
  - Refining/purifying gold through testing
  - Judging for those outside of the grace of Christ
- Jesus' death & resurrection (His "baptism") opens the way for God's presence to be a blessing to all who come by faith
- Not all live by faith in Jesus, so not all are saved!
  - Emphasis: divisions even within households

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### **Prophecy when Jesus was born:**

Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

*Luke 2:34-35*

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### **The Big Idea**

**Jesus Christ will return at a time we can't predict  
and then He will judge people  
based on what He finds when He comes  
which should lead us to constant expectancy  
and to eager and active obedience to His call**

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*Our statement of faith*

**9. Christ's Return**

We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The coming of Christ,

at a time known only to God,

demands constant expectancy

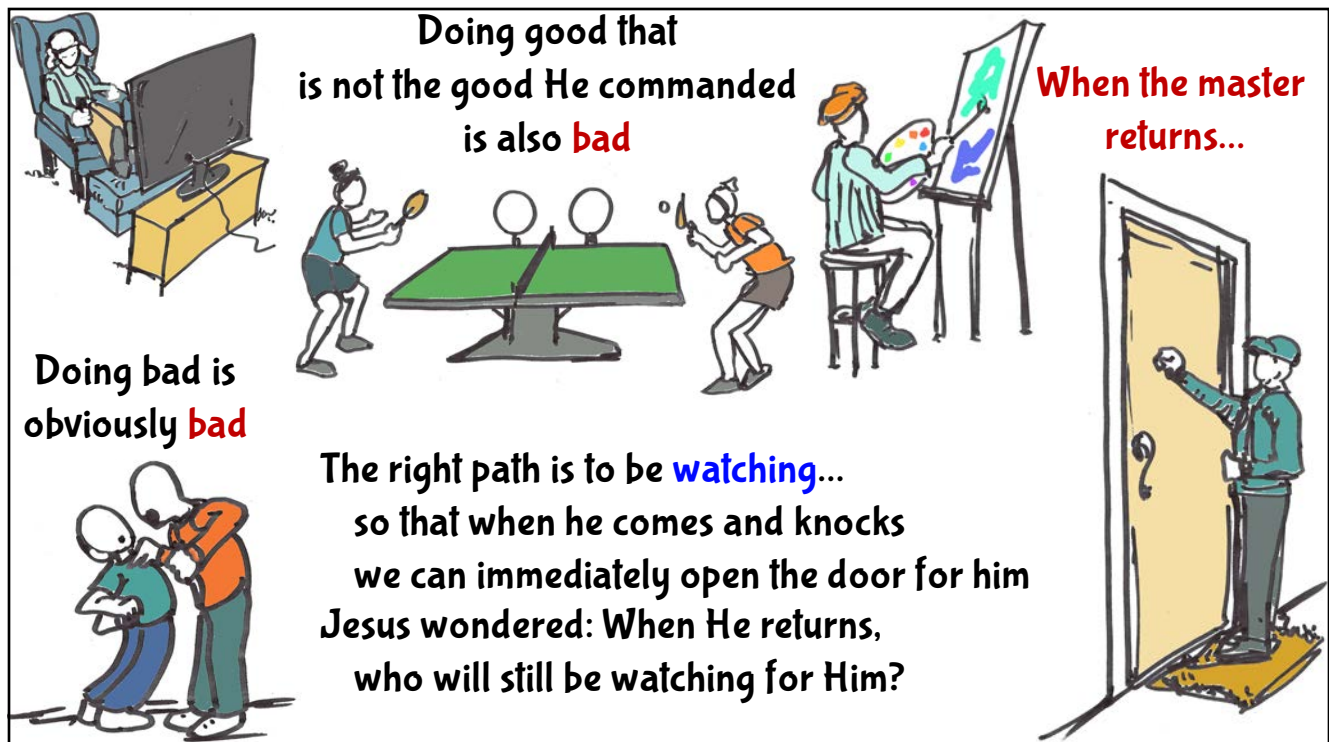
and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to

godly living,

sacrificial service and

energetic mission.

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## Application

### **Not: hoping for good timing**

- The point is to be still doing what the Lord wants
- Ongoing actions are the visible expression of the invisible heart

### **Not: only doing "ministry"**

- God still values the whole of human experience
- Rest is still a good thing...He wasn't saying that we should stay up all the time, hoping He won't catch us sleeping
  - The master's return late at night is a metaphor for the times when we are tempted to give up waiting

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### Application

**It is about what we do and why we do it**

- **If we have a job, why? And why this job?**
- **If we work more than 40 hours a week (or less), why?**
- **If we are in college, why? And why this major?**
- **If we are a student in K–12 school, why?**
- **If we care for family members, why?**
- **If we have a hobby, why? And why this hobby?**

**The what and the why of our lives should be shaped by the reality of Jesus' return at any time**

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### *Our statement of faith*

#### **9. Christ's Return**

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The coming of Christ,

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## Application

### Constant expectancy

- **The Kingdom of Heaven is the real thing!**
  - Not my career, or country, or family, or political views, or (dis)abilities, or social standing, or education, or...
- **Keep our lamps burning = active awareness that what we are experiencing now is only a shadow of the real thing**
  - Especially important to keep our lamps burning the longer that time goes on (“and all the more...”)
  - “I’ll think about it later” = not “keeping” our lamps lit
- **When Jesus returns, the Kingdom of Heaven will become the most visible and real thing**
- **And that could come at any time...**

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## Application

### Constant expectancy

### Godly living

- **Jesus’ return makes our actions today matter more, not less**
- **What is contrary to Jesus’ teaching always brings harm**
  - To us AND to others
- **When Jesus returns, we will answer for what we have done**
  - “We make it our goal to please God... For we must **all** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.” *2 Corinthians 5:9–10*
  - Christians will not be condemned
  - Christians will be rewarded based on what we have done

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### Application

**Constant expectancy**

**Godly living**

**Sacrificial service**

- **“Jesus said to them all: ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple **must** deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.’”**  
*Luke 9:23*
- **“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”** *Matthew 20:26–28*
- **We are called to follow the model of the One we worship**

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### Application

**Constant expectancy**

**Godly living**

**Sacrificial service**

**Energetic mission**

- **Make disciples of all nations**
  - **Near and far**
  - **New believers**
  - **Maturing believers**
- **Because when Jesus returns, the opportunity for people to turn to Him will be past**

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“Now **fear the Lord** and **serve him with all faithfulness**. Throw away the gods [that the world around you serves], and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then **choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods [that the world around you serves, or the gods of your childhood]. But as for me and my household, **we will serve the Lord.**”

*Joshua 24:14*

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**Jesus Christ will return at a time we can't predict  
and He will judge people  
based on what He finds when He comes  
which should lead us to constant expectancy  
and to eager and active obedience to His call**

**We all have a literal deadline: death**

**One day, Jesus will come and bring this age to an end**

**And we don't know when either of those will be**

**“When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”**

**“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance,  
the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.”**

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