

A Heavenward Vigilance

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Preacher: Ray Park

[0 : 00] Good morning, friends. Good morning, good morning, brothers and sisters. For those who don't know me, my name is Ray Park, and along with Matt, I'm one of the pastoral interns here.

Matt preached last week. And so Sean Wu is our full-time pastor. He's on vacation right now. He preaches most Sundays. And Matt and I have the privilege of preaching every few weeks.

And as a pastoral intern, we're going to become bivocational ministers, biblicism preachers, and pastors sometime soon. And just like we're doing now, we're going to be working full-time while part-time we're serving in preaching and teaching roles.

And actually, our internships are coming to an end soon, hopefully, because over the next couple months, we're planning to sit for our written and oral exams.

And so if you could pray for us that we would pass those exams, that'd be great. That way we can spend our time that we've previously spent studying to serve you more and to seek God's kingdom here in this language.

[1 : 06] And I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind you to give us feedback and to share your thoughts with us about our qualifications as elders. So, per 1 Timothy 3, 1 Peter 5, 1 Peter 5, Titus 1, for me, becoming a pastor is similar to becoming a father.

I think it's super exciting. It's a privilege. But it's really sobering. Because Christians, you all are the children of God. Right? God loves you. And the shepherding of God's flock is a way to pass.

So I want to be sure that I'm well-equipped, that I'm qualified. And if you have feedback, please do share with Sean or with me in that direction. Today, we are studying Luke chapter 12, verses 35 through 13 to 9.

You can grab a blue Bible if you don't have a Bible with you on the middle table. And if you could turn with me there. Again, it's Luke chapter 12, verses 35. In the past couple weeks, Sean and Matt have preached from Luke 12, speaking of our need to reorient our lives in light of who Jesus is and the kingdom of God that is coming to this world.

So these themes continue in our passage today. Luke 12, 35 through 13.9 in the ESV. Luke 12, 36.9 in the ESV.

[2 : 55] Luke 12, 36.9 in the ESV.

Luke 12, 36.10 in the ESV.

a severe blood feeding. But the one who did not know and did what deserved the feeding will receive a light feeding. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required.

And from him, to whom they interested much, they will demand the more. I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished. Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on, in one house, there will be five divided, 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 her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.

He also said to the clouds, when you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, a shower is coming, so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, there will be scorching heat, and it happens. You hypocrites, you know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time? And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? As you go with your accuser before the magistrate, make an effort to settle with him on the way, lest he drag you to the judge. And the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer puts you in prison. I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny. There was some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had needed with their sacrifices. And he answered them, do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you. But unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

[5 : 46] Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloia fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you. But unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. And he told this parable. A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. And he came seeking fruit on it and found them. And he said to the vine dresser, look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground? And he answered him, sir, let it alone this year also. That's why I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good. But if not, you can cut it down. It worked out. Let me pray for us. Heavenly Father, thank you so much for your word. God, we live not by bread alone, but by every word that comes from your mouth. And we pray that you would open up our hearts and help us to see wondrous things in your word, that we might be strengthened to live our lives in faith and in wisdom.

We pray in Christ. Amen. So throughout chapter 12, the Lord Jesus has been instructing his disciples and the crowds around him how they ought to live in light of what is true. For example, it's true that we will all one day die. So it's foolish to lay up riches for ourselves in this life while being poured for God, because he might be stuck with us anyway. And it's true that God treasures us, so we don't need to be anxious about our life's needs. Instead, we can leave it to him to take care of our needs while we set ourselves to seek his purpose and his kingdom. So we make God's business our business, and God makes it his business to take care of us. And in our passage today, Jesus is telling us that just as he came about 2,000 years ago to earth, he will come again a second time at some point in the future. Therefore, it's foolish to live as if that weren't happening. And instead now, we should hear and respond to the gospel. Now we have time to do that. So for today's passage to be useful and effective in our lives, we need faith in our hearts. Jesus is telling us about things that we can't learn or conclude through our own observation and logic. Jesus is telling us about spiritual things that he sees and knows, but that we are naturally blind to. Is Jesus worthy of your trust and my trust?

Do you consider him to be dependable for something so important as your future life decisions, your future investments? Well, in order for anyone to be trustworthy, they need to have the will and the skill, right? They need the skill or the ability and the will. They need the desire to make something to make something happen. So let's say suddenly, for some reason, I was stricken with blindness up here on stage and I had to rely on somebody, one of you guys, to walk me down these steps so I don't care myself. I wouldn't trust a seven-year-old boy to do that because he's totally capable, right? I'm saying, like, Ray, the first step's coming, next step, be careful, last step, all right, you're good.

So although he's able, he might not be willing because he might take greater pleasure in seeing me fall, right? And on the other hand, I wouldn't trust my one-year-old daughter, Galadriel, because she's, she loves me, she wants me to be safe, she's fully invested in my safety. But she's not able to articulate what is needed with her, like, 10-word vocabulary, right? However, I would trust my wife, I would trust Matt, I would trust all of you guys to be able and willing, except maybe Josh, the guy playing guitar, that guy's in the show. But, you know, does God have the skill and the will, right? So Psalm 62, 11 through 12 says, one thing God has spoken, two things I have heard.

Power belongs to you, God, and with you, the Lord is unfairly to me. So yes, with God, there is the skill in the world. He is powerful, and he is loving, and he wants what is best for you, so place your trust in him. The passage has five sections, all wrapped around the main theme, that now is the time to hear and respond to the gospel. The first section, verse 35 to 48, is about Jesus returning, so you must be ready. Verses 49 to 53, Jesus brings not peace, but division in this sinful world.

[10 : 22] 54 through 56, interpret the time and respond accordingly, that's what we're called to do. 57 through 59, settle with God before he requires that we pay our debt. And 1 through 9, chapter 13, repent and bear fruit. So let's look at this first and longest section, verses 35 through 48.

Jesus instructs us in verse 35, stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning. That phrase, stay dressed for action, is literally, let your loins stay girded. So in the ancient world, long garments were worn and were drawn up, so they would flow at the bottom of your feet. And when you have to run and get ready, you have to draw them up and tie them around so you're going to trip up.

So the internet is wonderful. Here's a quick illustration of how to gird up your loins. You grab your garment, you take it, grab the slat, you pull it out the back between your legs, you grab it on both sides, you put it together, you tie it in the front, and now you're ready to run like this guy.

Right? And so that's the lesson of today's sermon. Go buy a long garment, burn some lamps, serve us over, best sermon ever. Right? No, that's some bad teaching. So the idea of what we have in mind is being ready for action. Right? That's, again, that's literally what it says, but what does that actually mean? Stay dressed for action. The Lord uses a few parables to expand on this point. In the first parable, a master has gone to a wedding feast and his servants wait for him to return.

Weddings are relatively short and scheduled events for us nowadays, usually happening in a day, maybe split into two, like reception and ceremony. But this is, the ancient weddings are more like Indian weddings, right? If you know them. They last for days, even for as long as a week. And so the master is off at this wedding party. And he's coming back for sure, but they just don't know when, so the servants are waiting for him. And then verse 38 talks about the second and third watches of the night. So in the Roman schedule, the night hours between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. were split into four watches. So there's 6 to 9 p.m., 9 to midnight, midnight to 3 a.m., and then 3 to 6 a.m. So the second and third watches would be from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. The Jewish schedule actually split it up into three watches. So from 6 to 10 p.m., 10 to 2, and then 2 to 6 a.m., right? So the second and third watches were from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. Either way, the point is clear that they were to be prepared when they might not normally be ready to do so, right? You're not normally going to be ready in this average private sleeping. The second parable speaks of a thief breaking into a home, and the thief is actually Jesus. Maybe it's surprising and evocative to think of Jesus as the thief, but remember what parables are. Parables are not strict allegories where it's like a one-to-one correlation between something in the story and something in real life. Parables, they communicate some fundamental point, right? So the point isn't that, you know, Jesus is going to come and steal your stuff. The point is that Jesus, the time of Jesus' return is unknown, like a thief coming into a home.

[13 : 51] So in verse 40, Jesus tells us explicitly, you also must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Jesus' return is certain. It's definitely happening. But the timing is unpredictable.

We can relate to this in other areas of our lives, right? We know something's definitely happening, just not sure when, so we need to stay prepared. It's like that slightly sadistic teacher in school who loved giving pop quizzes, just didn't know when, so you always have to stay on top of your schoolwork, right? Or maybe you're nine months pregnant and you're waiting for your baby. You know he or she is coming. You bought the crib. You have the diapers and your clothes already. You get the hospital bag ready, but you don't know exactly what's happening, so you're just waiting. So that's the situation here.

In verse 41, Peter asks a clarifying question. Maybe it goes on your mind too. Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all? So who is this meant for? Is it for us, your disciples, the people who are following you, or just like for the crowds all around you who aren't following you?

Jesus answers indirectly. He doesn't say, he doesn't get like a yes or no here. This is actually with a question. Through the next parable, that is, and the answer is the message is meant for everyone, but especially for those who have knowledge about God. It makes sense that Jesus is addressing everyone. Throughout this chapter, chapter 12, Jesus is speaking to his disciples, but we know that there's a crowd, there's a bunch of people around him, you know, all the time. In the next parable from 42 to 48, we see a picture of faithful and unfaithful servants managing their master's household. The servants are described in a few ways. There's the faithful and wise manager, who cares for his master's household. There's a deliberately irresponsible servant who beats other servants against drunk. There are servants who knew their master's will, but didn't act accordingly and receive a severe beating. And servants who act against their master's will, ignoring, and receive a light beating. So I like charts. Here's a chart that helps visualize what's going on here. There's faithfulness on one axis, right, and knowledge on the other.

And there's a low end and a high end for each axis here. So the faithful manager has high knowledge, high knowledge and high faithfulness, right, upper right quadrant. The severe beating servant has high knowledge, but low faithfulness. The light beating servant has low knowledge and low faithfulness.

[16 : 32] And there isn't anyone for the upper left quadrant in this parable, but if we want to, we could place young Christians there, maybe. Those who want to be faithful to God are trying to be, but they have a lot of room for growth in terms of knowing God and knowing Scripture, right? So that's what we're looking at.

Our aim, of course, is, of course, to be in the upper right quadrant, to know what God's will is and to live faithful. So thinking back about this phrase, about girding our loins, what does it mean to stay dressed for action? I think practically it means a couple things. One is to remind ourselves of what is true and to prioritize accordingly. So remind ourselves of what is true and prioritize. Because life is a marathon, right? You guys know. Like a marathon, if you start off well, it doesn't really matter, because if you lose sight of the finish line and the proper route of how to get there, you might get to the end and be like 10 miles off course, right? Our lives, it's a marathon of just like the small day-to-day things. We go to work, we attend school, there's taking tests, paying bills, watching Netflix, spending time with friends and family, going to college, changing diapers, a bunch of stuff, right? It's easy to go on autopilot and to drift from my priorities of seeking God's kingdom. So as Christians, we often just need to remind ourselves of what we already know to be true, but what hasn't quite blossomed yet in our lives. So vigilantly remind yourself of what is true and also be the kind of person who is open to other people of what is true. I hope together as a community we can grow to be a church that lovingly speaks and receives truth into each other's lives because we need it. So that's the first thing. Second thing with staying dressed for action is to take acts of faith, to act in steps of faith. So we need to take concrete steps to act out our priorities.

So for example, just thinking back about the past couple of times, you know, you could buy the brand new iPhone for like \$1,200, right? That's like 256 megs gigs. But you know that the phone is, it's just stuff, right? You're reminding yourself it's just stuff. And your current phone is perfectly fine.

So it'll last year, probably another year or two, and maybe you choose to support a missionary this year for \$100 a month instead of getting that phone. Or you're driving and someone else almost hits you on the road, which can happen often in Boston. So you want to get out in front and cut them off and you know, show them the business. But you remember that God created that person in his image, and therefore he is inherently valuable, right? And you remember how much God has been patient with you and forgiven you. So you forgive them in your heart. You stay self-controlled, right? And so that might be a couple things that we see. Why might we fail to be faithful servants? Why might we fail to be in that upper right quadrant? One reason is we just might lack knowledge, right? We just might not know.

If that's the case, all we need to do is ask and seek, because God delights to give us good things. In Matthew chapter 7, we read, Right?

[20 : 31] We need to be faithful to the Bible. We need to be faithful to the Bible, right? We need to stay true to live out what we've learned. That's one reason. Another reason is maybe a lack of captivation. As Christians, we know we should be eagerly awaiting our masses' return.

But sometimes we're just more excited about other things. Sometimes I'm just more excited about that new iPhone, right? We're too captivated by the things of this world and not enough on the life to come.

Now, I'm not saying we shouldn't enjoy the things of this world because God made them. God made them for us to enjoy. They're good things. But we should recognize that our final destination is heaven.

And it will pass away. Our world is full of sickness and poverty. It's full of natural disasters. I was in India last week. And one of the cities, Chennai is, they're running out of water. That was happening in Cape Town last year, right?

You have major cities of, like, in China, it's like 9 million people running out of water. I think there's some government report saying that maybe some 21 cities will be running out of groundwater in India by 2020. It's insane.

[21 : 49] And so we have that happen. There's a lot of inequality and injustice in our world. And then, I mean, not least, there's our own sick hearts. There's my sick heart where every day I do the battle, self-centeredness implied, right?

I can't feel that. It's not going away. But with the Lord Jesus, there is hope. There's hope beyond what we have here. He died for us to secure our salvation, including a new heaven and a new earth.

He thinks about us, and he intercedes for us on our behalf. When Jesus returns, all are held accountable so everything that's unjust, unequal, we can entrust to him.

We will receive new heavenly bodies and live forever, living with purpose and love and community because he loved us and gave himself for us. Do you know that Jesus loves you?

One of my favorite things right now with my daughter, Caladriel, when we ask her yes or no questions, sometimes she'll say yes. But she simply grunts, mm, that's her yes, right?

[22 : 55] So if she says that, she means yes. And when I ask her, do you know that Daddy loves you? She'll just say, mm, right? And no hesitation, she'll say mm, which is very sweet. I love that, right? She just takes it for granted.

Do you know that Jesus loves you? He gave up his privileged spot, his blessed place in heaven, to become a helpless and dirty baby. He grew up in this world as a perfect man before God, like a lamb without blemish, than like a lamb who was led to the slaughter on our behalf so that we could be forgiven.

So I don't want you to have less joy in this world, but more joy, lasting joy, overflowing joy in the Lord. So where are you in that chart that I showed earlier?

Have you heard about Jesus and decided to respond to him yet? Are you being faithful with what God has given you, what he has revealed to you, both in the big decisions and in the little decisions of life?

Is there anything that God has been saying to you through his word that you've been ignoring or disobeyed? Remember, disobedience comes in two ways.

[24 : 12] It can be sins of commission or sins of omission, right? You can actively commit a sinful act, or you can passively omit or fail to obey, right?

So if I go to collateral, she's playing with her for trains, and I tell her, it's time to eat dinner. Let's go to the table. She could either freak out and start throwing Thomas engines at my head and start screaming and running away, or she could simply say, like, I'm good, Daddy.

You go ahead. You do you. I'll do me. I'm fine. Either way, there would be disobedience. So some of us with God tend to go kicking and screaming, hard for him.

Others simply just turn away with a smile and with a friendly wink, right? But either way, those are both acts of rejection to God, who made us and has authority over us.

So let's keep looking at our passage. Let's look at 49, verse 49 through 52. It says, I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already committed.

[25 : 20] I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished. Do you think that I've come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.

For from now on, in one house, there will be divided. There will be five divided, three against two, and two against three. A couple of things to point out in these verses.

First, Jesus came not to give peace on earth, but division. This might seem surprising. I mean, earlier in the book, in Luke chapter 2, at the birth of Jesus, angels appeared to shepherds and declared to them, glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace among those with whom he is pleased.

So how do we reconcile these seemingly different purposes? Well, it's true that Jesus brings peace to the earth, because he offers to us peace with God. But this is a peace that we either choose to receive or reject, by receiving or rejecting him.

And our decision on that will determine our relationship with the world around us. This world, it's not neutral towards God, but it is at enmity within.

[26 : 37] It is in hostility. Therefore, those who receive Jesus and are at peace with God will be at enmity with the world around us. And that's why there's division. It's like we're all fish swimming one way down a stream, and then we realize that we've been swimming the wrong way towards food, and we turn around, and now we're going against the flow of everyone else.

This division happens not just between acquaintances, friends, coworkers, but Jesus is saying that it goes into the family, the most intimate of relationships.

So be warned that there is a cause to following Jesus. And one of them is this division. It's not the easiest or safest journey to go with Jesus, but it's good and it's worth it.

Even though you might lose the good opinion of others or relationships with them, you gain God. You gain the one who loves you. Psalm 27:10 comforts us.

It says, Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Second in these verses, here we have an example of Jesus wanting something, but having to wait for him.

[27 : 52] He wants to bring the fire of division on the earth. He wants to cast it. He wants to get to his goal, bring about his purposes. And he has great distress until his baptism, his death on the cross, where he experiences God's wrath.

So he can accomplish that. But he has to wait. And I think that this is a comforting thing for us. Have you ever wanted something and not gotten it?

Either in the timing, you want it faster than God's giving it to you, or God actually says no to you. Be comforted because Jesus knows how you feel. In Hebrews chapter 4, it says, For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one with every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

So you can cast your hardships on Jesus. He knows what you're going through. He understands it. And I find that super comforting, because even though people have experienced similar things to you, no one's ever experienced your specific situations in life that Jesus needs.

After this, we have verses 54 through 56. The people in these verses, Jesus points out, they were able to forecast the weather based on what they saw.

[29 : 15] So in this passage, we have a bunch of stories, a bunch of parables put together, and this one is about forecasting weather. Israel was located to the east of the Mediterranean Sea.

So when a cloud arose from the west, that would mean rain on the land. And south of Israel was the desert. So when a south wind blew up, that meant the desert heat would be coming up and frying that land.

And I think that's what's happening in like Europe right now, like there was usually wave. So the crowds were able to predict these things easily. Yet, to Jesus and his signs, they were still blind.

Jesus is born of the house of David. He's born from a virgin mother. He preaches with authority, casts out demons. He heals the sick and raises the dead. And still, Jesus did not command the hearts of all those in the crowd.

Still, they failed to enter into God's kingdom. And like the crowds, we should see the signs around us and not be blind, but be wise. The next short story is in verse 57 through 59.

[30 : 25] We see a parable of someone being dragged to the judge by his accuser. So here, the point is that we should be motivated to see and respond to the signs of God's kingdom because we are all God's debtors.

Our sin demands justice from God, who is holy and just. And God has offered us a way out of paying this debt through his son, who has died for us, who paid it for us, and so we can settle accounts with God and be forgiven.

And now it's time to do that because, yeah, we, all of us owe a debt to God, and the time is limited. God is being gracious, but the need is urgent to do that quickly.

This is echoed in the last chunk of our passage in verses 1 through 9 of chapter 13. So we read of a couple of tragic events first.

These events aren't reported elsewhere, but we read one of where Jewish pilgrims were killed while offering their sacrifices, and another where a coward fell and killed 18 people.

[31 : 38] So amidst these stories, there's an underlying assumption by the people that being a worse sinner leads to greater judgment from God or greater suffering, right?

So, of course, you can't see the sin, but if you see that someone's really suffering or is being judged, they must be a really bad sinner. But, and along with that, there might be some self-justification and pride from these guys, right, who are pointing it out.

They might think, you know, like, they died like that, but I'm still here, so they must have been bad. I must be better than them, right? And maybe they're thinking to Jesus, you know, all this judgment talk, Jesus, it's only for the really sinful people, right?

Not me. It must be for those guys. But Jesus points this assumption out, and he denies it, right? He says that's not true. The Lord flips this conversation on his head in a way that he's so good at doing.

He doesn't delve further into a couple of things that he could have. He doesn't delve into disbelief that worse things happen to worse people. He doesn't get political, right? Because in the first tragedy, Pilate, a Roman official, is the one who kills these people.

[32 : 51] But Jesus points to the spiritual reality that they'll all die in this life. The real tragedy is dying ultimately before God, who has the power to cast us away from him forever.

So have you guys played Mario Kart? Hopefully most people have played Mario Kart. You get weapons in Mario Kart. It's a racing game. And all these weapons, all these items, you get them by driving through an item box, and you can get banana skins, turtle shells, mushrooms, etc.

And one of the weapons is a thunder cloud. I hate it because it's an anti-weapon, right? It doesn't help you, but it hurts you. And after a few seconds, there's a sun and cloud up over you, and the cloud will zap you with thunder.

And it tricks you down, makes you slower. And that's what happens. It hurts you. Unless in those few seconds before you get zapped, you pass it off to somebody else by bumping into them, right?

And the thunder cloud will transfer over to them, and then you get to share your love that way. So the people in the crowd are saying, man, those people who died really must have deserved that thunder cloud.

[33 : 59] But the rest of us are fine. And Jesus is correcting them to say, no, what's actually happening is everyone has a thunder cloud. Everyone has a thunder cloud above your heads. And it's only a matter of time until the lightning's going to strike them.

And Jesus is saying, pass it on to me, right? You should repent, turn away from your sins. Don't die, but pass it on to me. And Jesus finishes with this parable about a fig tree.

There's an owner of the vineyard, and he's allowed this fig tree to grow for years and take up space and resources, only to find out that it has never borne fruit.

It's a useless tree. So it might seem like harsh or not compassionate, but it's kind of a wise decision. You're growing a bunch of trees, and it's the wisest thing to get rid of this thing and put another plant in there that will take its place and actually produce something, right?

But the vine dresser, the guy who's managing this vineyard, has compassion. He says, sir, let it alone this year also, and so I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well, good.

[35 : 10] But if not, you can cut it down. So the tree is given the opportunity to change and bear fruit. Again, the time is short, but the opportunity is there for them.

So God has given all of us the opportunity to repent and live at a time of shame. Now is the time to repent and believe and bear fruit. In 2 Corinthians 6, it says, Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain, for he says, in a favorable time, I listened to you, and in a day of salvation, I helped you.

Behold, now is the favorable time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. Now is the time to repent for all of us, to turn away from our life of rebellion and indifference to God, to turn away from our sin, to rely on Jesus to save us from our sin, from its penalty and power and its presence in our lives.

I'll end with a story from Swami Kierkegaard. He's a 19th century philosopher, and he wrote a story about some geese.

So in this story, the geese are like us. They can think, they can talk, they even go to church. That's great. And every week, they would go to church, and every week, they heard the pastor preach.

[36 : 29] Their geese pastor would preach of the glorious destiny of geese, that they had wings, high way to the distance they belonged, for they were only pilgrims on this earth. The sermons were essentially the same each week.

He kept on preaching about these wings that they had. Every week, the geese would go to church, listen to the sermon, they would respond reverently, and every week after church, the geese would waddle back home.

And I encourage you not to waddle back home, but to consider what Jesus says in our passage today. Will you accept or reject what he says?

For the many of us who have accepted, do our lives show that we're living in accordance with what we hope to be true? How do we remind ourselves and try to live it out?

I hope that each of us will knock away, but determine to be faithful and wise servants of our Lord Jesus. So please take a moment to consider the message, and we'll continue our service with the prayers of the people.