

Christ's perfection in our life. On the cross, Jesus took the punishment for our sins and gave us His right standing with His Father. As believers, we are accepted by God totally, even though *we know we fall short*.

There is a warning in Jesus' parables that we should be conducting our lives in a holy and righteous manner. That way, we do not give a foothold for the devil to attack us. We can be strong and resist temptation because of God's power working in us. Because of His presence and grace, we can live holy lives.

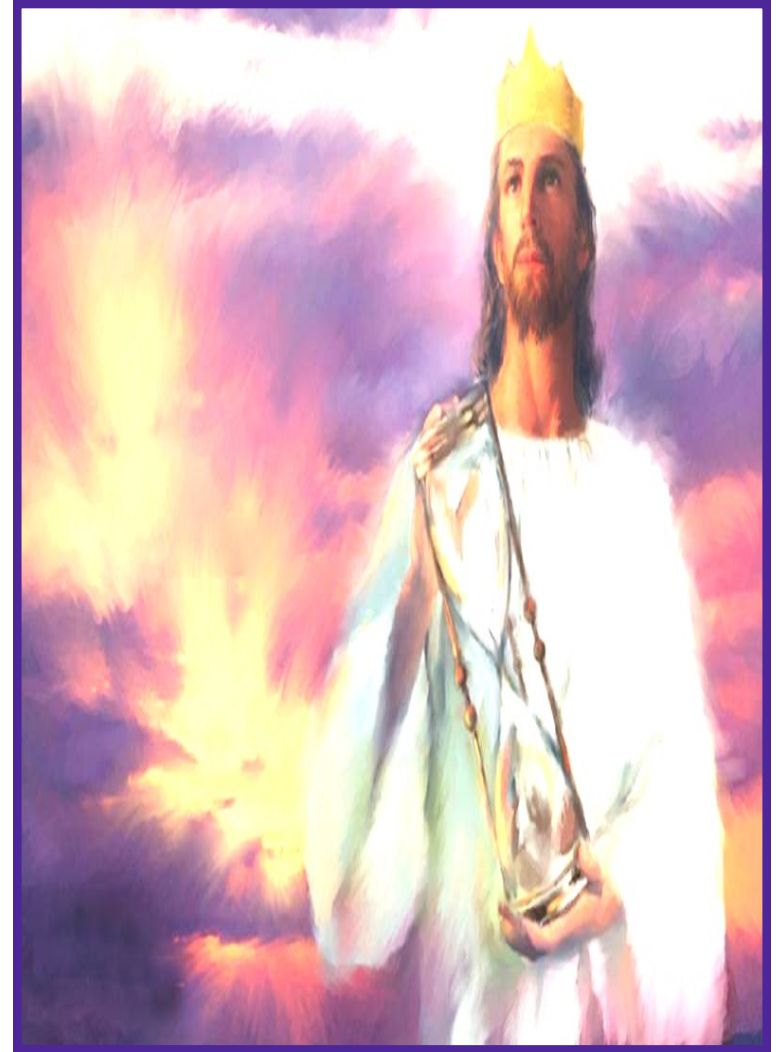
Holiness does not come from self-worth. It comes from the power and the enabling of the Holy Spirit through the grace of God, established by the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross for us. In this parable, Jesus is saying that we should be living in a manner that is ready for Him to come back at any time. We should be conducting our personal and public life appropriately -- in a way that brings honor to the Lord Jesus Christ.

\*(excerpted from: [www.parables-of-jesus-christ.net](http://www.parables-of-jesus-christ.net))



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## ***Parable of The Alert Servant***



***"Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.***

***Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."***

***(Matt. 24: 42-44)***

## ***Parable of The Alert Servant***

Mark 13: 33-37

A parable is a short, fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle. Parables are never meant to be taken for the letter of their word. When taken literally, at face value, the entirety of its meaning is lost.

\*In this parable, Jesus uses the character of a Master going away to a foreign country, to illustrate His ascending to Heaven and leaving earth behind until the Second Coming. At all times, Jesus was still with the people, but today Jesus has in fact gone to a far country. This is no longer just the topic of a parable. It says in the Scriptures just before this passage, concerning the Day of His second coming, that we cannot know exactly when Jesus will return. In Matthew 24: 36, Jesus said "But of that day and hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only." The plea of Jesus follows: "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." (Matt. 24: 42-44)...

The early disciples were expecting Jesus' return to happen in their lifetime. So too, down the centuries. His return has been the Christian's hope in every generation. Today, Christ's Church can see all the things that have been prophesied in the Old Testament and by the words of Jesus Himself, falling into place in a way that has never occurred before. The Church worldwide is excited and expectant that in their generation, Jesus will come for them: suddenly and secretly, like a "thief in the night," the Bible says.

We are told of a time when people who are longing for Jesus to return, will not experience death: but instead, will be suddenly caught up by God to meet Jesus in the air and will be forever with Him. People on earth will speculate why so many millions of people have disappeared all at the exact same moment! There will be devastating disasters all around the world: crashing planes, trains, buses, and cars. Surgeons and hospital staff snatched away, families separated and loved ones missing.

This event is known by believers as the "Rapture" -- a term meaning "snatched away" for that is what will happen. It will occur at some stage before Jesus "physically" returns to Israel as Judge and King. Then the nations will be judged. Because Jesus identified with us and suffered in our place, the Father has given Him the power and authority to be the Judge of all the earth. If you have not surrendered your life to Him before then, it will be too late... once Jesus physically returns to the Holy Land called Jerusalem.

In this particular parable (Mark 13: 33-37; the alert or waiting servant), Jesus is talking about coming back at a time no one knows. So, what is the purpose of leaving us behind -- what should we be doing? He has left His Church in charge! What should we be doing while we wait for our Master to return?

As Christians we should live our lives in such a way that should Jesus return tomorrow, He would find us ready for His arrival. This means, that we are to be in union with Him; resting in His love and peace and therefore bearing fruit that remains. In other words, there should be no fear of Jesus coming back and finding "hands in the cookie jar." As His children, our lives should reflect His love -- there should be none of us stealing or treating people indifferently or no one having a bad attitude. Jesus should not catch you off guard. Instead, you should be feeling joy, living a life of peace, regardless of life's day to day frustrations. You should feel inwardly contented, knowing that you are loved and accepted into God's own family.

Jesus knows first hand that life in this world's system is not easy! It has its hard, difficult times. This parable is certainly not saying that you must be perfect and without any sin in your life, so that if the Master was to return early, He would surprise you and reject you. No! He will never reject one of His children. His shed blood on the cross makes us perfect in His sight! If by faith, we accept this, we will manifest