

Sermon for July 18/19, 2026
"The Wedding and the Thief" Pastor Jeff Manion



SMALL GROUPS

Share Life | Pursue God | Invest In Others

THREE THINGS TO KNOW

DON'T MISS THIS. Each July, our **GIVING TABLES** focus on gathering school supplies for local schools we partner with through Kids Hope. These donations help meet practical needs and show care to students, teachers, and Kids Hope mentors. Shop the lists and drop off supplies during weekend services or shop the Amazon lists and send items directly to the campus. Learn more [HERE](#).

GROUP VALUES. This month, we continue focusing on the group value of **TOGETHER**. At Ada Bible Church, we believe growing together is a core part of a healthy small group—growing in your relationship with God alongside each other. This week, our focus is **intercede and hope**. Groups who intercede for one another bring each other's burdens before God in prayer, and groups who hope together remind each other that God is at work even when circumstances are hard. A simple act like praying for someone by name or writing them a note of encouragement can carry real weight. Discuss as a group how you could intercede and bring hope to each other this week.

GROW AS A LEADER. This parable reminds us that readiness is a posture we practice. As a leader, one of the best things you can do this week is model that same readiness for your group—pray before your group time and come having already sat with the questions yourself. Groups tend to go as deep as their leader has already gone.

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome to week four of our **PARABLES** series, where we're exploring the stories Jesus told to reveal his character and kingdom. This week, we explore the parable of the watchful servants and consider what it means to live ready for Jesus's return.

ICEBREAKER

What's the longest you've ever had to wait for something exciting, and how did you pass the time?

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Have someone read [Luke 12:35–40](#) aloud.

What instructions does the master give his servants in these verses?

What point is Jesus making by comparing his return to a thief breaking into a house?

What would have surprised the original hearers of this parable, and why?

THIS WEEK'S SERMON

This week, Pastor Jeff Manion continued our **PARABLES** series by unpacking the parable of the watchful servants. As a group, recall some of the sermon's big ideas and main points.

We live in a culture built around control and predictability—alarms, tracking apps, schedules down to the minute. How does that shape the way we respond to a God who calls us to wait on his timeline instead of our own?

If you're honest, which is more true of your daily life right now: living with real anticipation for Jesus's return, or rarely thinking about it at all? Share why.

Whether we realize it or not, we all ache for the day when brokenness will finally be undone. What's something in your life, or in the world right now, that makes you long for Christ to return and make all things new?

Jesus takes a surprising turn in this parable with a master who serves the servants who were waiting for him. He calls us to that same servant mindset. Who has been a good example of living with a servant mindset? What makes their example stand out to you?

We can be ready for Jesus's return by practicing ongoing confession—agreeing with God about specific sin. As you are comfortable, describe a time when you confessed a sin and experienced the cleansing nature of confession. Or what prevents you from confessing your sin to God?

Have someone read Titus 2:11–14 aloud. Grace is what trains us to live godly lives as we wait for Jesus. Where in your life have you been relying on your own effort instead of resting in his grace?

We can be ready for Jesus's return by living with a servant mindset, regular confession, and resting in grace. Which of those three do you most need to grow in right now, and what's one small step you could take this week to grow in it?

WRAP UP

Today we discussed a parable about waiting for Jesus to return and being ready when he comes. What's one piece of the conversation you didn't expect to hear, but needed?