

TFTD 2025.15 Friday March 21st

Ready for action: Luke 12.35-48



When we moved to North Wales some years ago (and where I spend half my time currently) we came with several preconceptions; not about the mountains or the lakes or beautiful beaches but about church-going or, to be more specific, chapel-going. The image the English often have of Wales is of choirs, devout people quietly going about their business and of life focussed on the chapel. We were surprised to learn that most are now closed, derelict. What is left is in steep decline. In almost every village and town stands a forlorn looking empty chapel, looking out on its once devoted streets with empty eyes. It's sad, but a sign of the times we live in.

There's one man, a lay preacher, who wants to turn it all around, to bring back the chapel and give it its rightful place again at the heart of local community. So, each time one comes on for sale (which is often) he buys it. He now owns dozens and is waiting for what he calls the revival, when Wales will finally recognise the error of its ways and return to the Lord. He is convinced this will happen in his lifetime.

His lamps are trimmed. He is ready for action.

He may be ready, but ready for what? How realistic is he?

Our reading today is one we know well, and it offers really good advice especially as we read it during Lent, but how do we read this and apply it to our lives? How do we ready ourselves for Jesus?

Unlike perhaps, our lay preacher we need to be realistic. Many of us are time-poor, rushing around preoccupied with the tasks of daily life. We're ready for the school run, for work or for all the many things which fill our time.

What about Christ? How do we prepare ourselves to meet him?

One way is through reading these daily emails. Sit with the words of scripture and let them fill your heart. Another is to pause and to sit. We know that readiness is not just about doing, but is also very much about being. This can sometimes be harder, as running around and busying ourselves often feels more useful. Being realistic, can we manage ten minutes a day, or even just five to sit and be, to prepare for what is to come?

Like our Welsh friend, watching and waiting can be frustrating, but also life-giving and rewarding.

Just as Elizabeth prepared and waited for a promised and longed for child 'as soon as the sound reached her ears' (Luke 1: 41-44) her joy began. Or the woman who was ready and prepared to see Jesus and ask for healing 'if she could just see him' (Mark 5:28) Or just like old Simeon, who spent a lifetime in preparation and after meeting Jesus declared 'now Lord, you can let me depart in peace' let us ready OURSELVES this Lent for transformation, revelation and restoration as we wait with longing for what is to come.

God bless,
Nathan Jarvis