1. **Intro:**
   1.1. We move from the stewardship of possessions to the stewardship of life & service!  
       1.1.1. It does this by dealing with a heart check towards Jesus' 2nd Coming.

   1.1.2. **Frank Robles** went home to Glory this week. (Kenny’s dad)
       1.1.2.1. Missionaries to the Samoan Islands; Alamos Mexico, then Pastor over Spanish Fellowship for CCCM.
       1.1.2.2. Last Baptism story! His son Kenny said, we didn’t have anything to go clean up. He didn’t need anything. He was about his wife, kids, grandkids, & getting people to Jesus.  
           1.1.2.2.1. A steward of life & service!!!

   1.2. **From last week** – Living for material possessions can blind us to the future, & make us unprepared for the Lord’s return.¹
       1.2.1. We can get so wrapped up in this world’s goods that we neglect eternity.

   1.3. **Outline:** Waiting; Watching; Working; - Dividing; Discerning; Reconciling.

   1.4. **Intro background:**
       1.4.1. When a Master is away on journey his servants have to wait for his return & keep watch of the door.
           1.4.1.1. Easterners follow no itinerary & didn’t have watches, so punctuality was unknown.

       1.4.2. When the Master is away the women & children eat, then the servants, then a portion is set aside for the Masters return.
           1.4.2.1. At bed time the women & children go to sleep but the servants must keep awake & be ready to serve their master when he gets back. [it is a disgrace for the Master of a house to wait on himself or be locked out]
           1.4.2.2. Shrewd servants would sneak in some shut eye doing their best to calculate the time of his return.
           1.4.2.3. Faithful servants would never sleep. No matter when he would return they would be on the watch; even at intervals going to the door, looking outside, & seeing if he’s coming.

       1.4.3. India illustration (GFA, KP, Kerala) – received us very late. Met us at car to bring our things in. Went to kitchen to make us some toast.

¹ Warren Wiersbe; Outlines of the NT.
2. **WAITING!** (35,36)
   2.1. **INSTRUCTION!** (35,36)
   2.2. Be ready! – He requires vigilance, attentiveness, alertness, awareness.
   2.3. Waist girded – long flowing robes gathered up, to free yourself for activity.
   2.4. Lamps burning – required keeping your wick trimmed, & oil replenished.

3. **WATCHING!** (37-40)
   3.1. **CELEBRATION!** (37,38)
   3.2. Prepared ones will experience great joy at His return.
   3.3. Note the double beatitude!
   3.4. **CAUTION!** (39,40)
   3.5. Constant watchfulness must be maintained.
   3.6. He comes as a thief so we must be ready. (1 Thes.5:2; Rev.16:15)
   3.7. We must be looking for His coming; loving it; & longing for His coming.
   3.7.1. 2 Tim.4:8 “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”
   3.8. (40) Therefore you also be ready!
   3.8.1. A visitor to an elementary school told the children that upon his return he would give a prize to the student who had their desk in best order. “When will you return” they asked. He said, “I cannot tell”. A little girl, who was known for keeping a messy desk said she meant to win the prize. “You!” her schoolmates jeered, “your desk is always out of order”. “Oh, but I will clean at the beginning of every week!” “But what if he comes back at the end of the week?” “Then I will keep it clean every morning”. “But he may come at the end of the day”.
   3.8.1.1. Our exhortation is to Get Ready & Be Ready!

3.10. During his 1960 presidential campaign, John F. Kennedy often closed his speeches with the story of Colonel Davenport, the Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives. One day in 1789, the sky of Hartford darkened ominously, and some of the representatives, glancing out the windows, feared the end was at hand. Quelling a clamor for immediate adjournment, Davenport rose and said, “The Day of Judgment is either approaching or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for adjournment. If it is, I choose to be found doing my duty. Therefore, I wish that candles be brought.” Rather than fearing what is to come, we are to be faithful till Christ returns. Instead of fearing the dark, we’re to be lights as we watch and wait. (Harry Heintz)
4. **WORKING!** *(41-48)*

4.1. To **us** or to **all people**? – Well I’m talking to My stewards; & of course you are stewards, but the door is open.

4.2. **REWARD!** *(41-44)*

4.3. **Faithfulness** during His absence = **Rewards** at His appearance.

4.4. **REBUKE!** *(45-48)*

4.5. **Faithlessness** during His absence = **Rebukes** at His appearance.

4.6. *(45)* As soon as we decide the Lord isn’t returning soon, then we start living for ourselves.

4.6.1. And this means judgment later*(46).*

4.6.2. To not look for, long for, nor love His coming, is to allow our hearts to grow cold & get worldly.

5. **DIVIDING!** *(49-53)*

5.1. **SUFFERING!** *(49,50)*

5.2. Fire – Primarily the refining fire of holiness & the ultimate fire of judgment against sin.²

5.3. He will literally be baptized*(immersed/submerged)* on the cross w/His Fathers Wrath.

5.3.1. **Used for:** as ship sunk beneath the waves; a man submerged in drink & therefore dead-drunk; a scholar submerged or sunk by an examiner’s questions; a man submerged in some grim & terrible experience.

5.3.2. Jesus’ baptism was “**total identification**” w/sinful mankind, in which he bears our sins & their punishment.

5.3.3. On the cross He felt sorrow like the sea billows of God’s judgment roll upon Him.

5.3.4. He could sing like Horatio Spafford’s famous hymn, “When peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll. Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, It is well with my soul.” *(story from 101 Hymn Stories)*

5.4. The cross ever before his eyes!

5.5. *There was a Knight of Bethlehem, Whose wealth was tears & sorrows, His men-at-arms were little lambs, His trumpeters were sparrows. His castle was a wooden Cross On which he hung so high; His helmet was a crown of thorns, Whose crest did touch the sky.* Barclay

5.6. **DIVISIONS!** *(51-53)*

5.7. The Gospel message will divide entire families.

5.7.1. Show of hands if when you got saved it caused some family frictions?

5.7.1.1. Families will be spilt down the middle over this issue.

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² Jewish NT Commentary; Stern.
5.7.1.2. Jesus saw his outcome would be a crisis out of which would come judgment & division.
5.7.1.2.1. It is not Jesus’ goal but it is inevitable. Some chose to follow & some would chose to reject him!

5.7.2. Over & over again man had to decide whether he loved better his kith-&-kin, or Christ!
5.7.2.1. The essence of Christianity is that loyalty to Christ has to take precedence over the dearest loyalties of this earth.
5.7.2.2. To Count all things lost for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

5.7.3. Wait! Isn’t Jesus Pro-family? Yes, “Pro-heavenly family 1st, & Pro-earthly family 2nd.” - There’s the true “Focus on the Family!”

6. **DISCERNING!** (54-56)

6.1. To his own disciples he entrusts them with information about His ministry, & about how to obey Him.
6.1.1. With the crowds His goal was to awaken them to their need to commit their lives to Him, & to become His disciples.

6.2. **WEATHER-WISE!** (54,55)
6.3. Can discern weather, sky, clouds.
6.4. Clouds out of the west – i.e. from over the Mediterranean Sea, they knew rain was on the way.
6.5. South wind blow – Sirocco winds are hot, humid, & dusty. They begin in the Sahara, come across the Mediterranean, thus picking up moisture.

6.6. Especially in our modern world – We can predict storms, give 15 day forecasts, tell you the day Halley’s comet will return(2061), even put a man on the moon!
6.6.1. Isn’t it amazing that we can take a Katrina category 5 hurricane, (U.S. history’s deadliest hurricane) & reduce it to the size of our TV sets... 1 manageable little swirl of white clouds.

6.7. Make your own illustration… what are you great at discerning?
6.7.1. Are you a News Junkie? Consider yourself a Political Analyst that can tell what’s going on in every nation, with every country’s leader?
6.7.2. It’s not wrong to be weather-wise, matter of fact it is perfectly normal, but it should also be normal to seek spiritual things.

6.8. **SPIRITUALLY-FOOLISH!** (56)
6.9. Cannot discern the spiritual crisis all around them.
6.9.1. Weather-wise & Spiritually-foolish!
6.9.1.1. You know all about the wind but nothing of the wind of the Spirit
6.9.1.2. You know all about the sky but have never looked past it!
6.9.2. Either they could not or would not discern the signs of the times!
6.9.3. But how is it???
7. **RECONCILING! (57-59)**

7.1. A great appeal to “get right with God!”

7.2. **SETTLEMENT! (57,58a)**

7.3. Try to settle before court!

7.4. A very vivid illustration for when one is threatened with a lawsuit.

7.5. **IMPRISONMENT! (58b,59)**

7.6. It may result in imprisonment!

7.7. Last mite = lepton “the thin one”; the smallest of coins worth 1/32 of 1 penny.

7.8. He names 4 officers of the court:

7.8.1. **Adversary** – The legal opponent.

7.8.2. **Magistrate** – The ruler, the 1st in rank.

7.8.3. **Judge** – The one who made the decisions.

7.8.4. **Officer** – The one who carried out the sentence of the judge.

7.8.5. In the ultimate court of life: the **adversary** is God; the **magistrate** is God; the **judge** is God; the **officer** is God.

7.8.5.1. Our 1st & last allegiance is to God!

7.8.5.2. Read what Isaiah says regarding how God judges Is.11:3,4a.

7.9. The assumption is that the **defendant** has a bad case which will inevitably go against him.

7.9.1. **Every man** has a bad case in the presence of God; & if you are wise, you will make your **peace w/God** while yet there is time!³

7.9.2. Some things a man cannot afford to put off; above all, making his **peace with God**.

7.9.3. **Q**: Have you made yours? – “make every effort along the way to settle with Him”…here is another chance along your way.

7.9.3.1. **On the cross** the Father looked upon the **Son** as if he lived your life; & looks upon you as if you lived His!

³ William Barclay; Luke.