

THE WARNING: WATCH AND PRAY FOR THE DAY OF JESUS' RETURN LUKE 21:34-36

Introduction

The universe is to suffer much in coming days. Sometime out in the future, the world will experience disasters and calamities as never before. There will be an increase...

- in wars and conflicts of nations (vv. 9-10).
- in natural disasters such as earthquakes, famines, disease (v. 11).
- in persecution of believers (vv. 12-19).
- in attacks upon Israel (vv. 20-24).
- in astronomical happenings (vv. 25-26).
- in distress of nations (v. 25).
- in ocean disturbances (v. 25).
- in men's hearts' failing and fearing (v. 26).

Jesus warned the believer. The believer must watch and pray for that day.

- I. It demands taking care (vv. 34-35).
- II. It demands watching and praying always (v. 36).

I. Luke 21: 34-35 The Day of the Return of Jesus Christ Demands Taking Care

That day (the end time and the day of the Lord's return) demands taking care. The word *careful* (prosexete) means to give attention, to focus one's mind, to guard, to beware, to take care. Note the believer is to *be careful*, that is, to guard his life. *How?* By not engaging in worldliness. His heart is not to be *weighed down* (barethosin): heavy, burdened, over-charged overloaded, filled up, indulged. Three worldly acts in particular are mentioned.

1. *Dissipation* or *careless ease* (kraipale). The words mean to be light-hearted, silly, frivolous, giddy. Medically, it referred to drunken nausea or headaches. It is the kind of light-heartedness, silliness, frivolity, and giddiness that comes from partying and drinking. It is the loose, giddy, suggestive movements and talk that take place...

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| • at parties | • at social gatherings |
| • on dates | • behind closed doors |
| • at clubs | • at luncheons and dinner engagements |
| • on business trips | • in the dark (1 Th. 5:5-10) |
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2. **Drunkenness** (methei). The word comes from the word meaning *wine* (methu). It means to be drunk with wine (or any other strong drink or drug), to be intoxicated. Drinking wine (or any other strong drink or drug) has several bad effects:

- => It indulges the lust, the appetite of the flesh.
- => It *loosens up* a person's moral restraints and allows the indulging of sexual and immoral cravings.
- => It dulls the mind to responsibility.
- => It burdens the heart and conscience and causes guilt, at least until a person becomes hardened in his sin.
- => It deadens feelings for spouses and loved ones, causing distance and withdrawal (such is seldom, if ever, regained).
- => It harms the body.

Rom 13:13 *Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness [revelling, carousing, partying, not in sexual immorality and debauchery sensuality, licentiousness], not in dissension and jealousy.*

Gal 5:19, 21 *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Eph 5:18 *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*

3. **Anxieties or cares of this life.** This means to indulge one's cravings for more and more of the things of this world. Man too often gives his attention and focuses his mind upon more and more of this world. *He desires far more than what he needs, more...*

- food and delicacies
- clothes and the latest styles
- houses and furnishings
- property and holdings
- cars and other vehicles
- free time and recreation
- money and wealth
- recognition and esteem

1 Pet 4:3-4 *For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do — living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you.*

2 Pet 2:12-13 *But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish. They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, revelling in their pleasures while they feast with you.*

Why is the believer to be careful, to guard himself against these things? The point is crucial. The believer can be focusing upon the things and possessions of the world so much that he is caught unaware, snared and entrapped in the end time. That day, the day of the Lord's return, can catch him unexpectedly and unprepared.

Mat 24:38-39 *For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.*

Eccl 9:12 *Moreover, no man knows when his hour will come: As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them.*

LUKE 21:34 END TIME TRAP / SNARE

*"Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap." **Luke 21:34***

The word *trap* (*pagis*) means to snare as in a net. That day, the end time, is going to catch the whole world unprepared. The terrible events and calamities of the end times are going to fall upon the earth and entrap all. All who dwell upon the earth shall be caught in the disastrous events, the destruction and devastation, distress and misery, misfortune and loss, suffering and affliction. (Lk. 21:5-33.)

Jesus warned the believer. He must "be careful," for in the end time the world will experience great tribulations unparalleled in history. A quick glance at the great distress or tribulation period covered in *Revelation* will give some idea of the trials (See Dan. 12:1-2.)

- => Thundering, lightning, and an earthquake (Rev. 8:5; see 8:1-5).
- => Natural catastrophes (Rev. 8:6-12).
- => Demonic-like locust or plagues (Rev. 8:13-9:11).
- => Demonic-like army (Rev. 9:12-21).
- => Nations angry and destroying the earth (Rev. 11:18; see 11:14-19).
- => An evil political ruler (Rev. 13:1-10).
- => A false and evil religious ruler (Rev. 13:11-18).
- => Terrible destruction and suffering both upon nature and men (Rev. 16:1-21).
- => An evil, deceptive world power (Rev. 17:1-18:24). □

II. ***Luke 21: 36 Demands: Watching and Praying***

That day (the end time and the day of the Lord's return) demands watching and praying *always*. The word "watch" (agrupneite) means to be sleepless, awake, on guard. It means a spirit of being wakeful, of being restless, of guarding.

Praying always means the believer is to live in a spirit of prayer...

- praying all day, as he walks throughout the day.
- praying on all occasions and about everything.
- praying at appointed times, times set aside for nothing but prayer and devotions or quiet times.

There are three reasons why the believer is to watch and pray.

1. Watching and praying cause God to count the believer "worthy." The man who watches and prays for the Lord's return truly believes in the Lord, and God takes that man's belief and counts it worthy. Note: God does not *make* the man worthy; He counts the man worthy. The man's faith, his watching and praying, are counted as righteousness. (See *Justification*, Lk. 20:35; *Justification*, Rom. 4:22. See Rom. 4:5 and 4:1-3; 4:1-25.)
2. Watching and praying cause the believer to escape the things coming to earth (See *Snare*, Lk. 21:34). This can mean...
 - to escape the presence of the coming judgments altogether (by being raptured away).
 - to escape the sufferings of the judgments (by being supernaturally protected; for example, Israel was protected during the Egyptian plagues, Exodus 5:1f).
3. Watching and praying cause the believer to stand justified before the Son of Man (See *Son of Man*, Mt. 8:20). The picture is that the faithful believer will have no fear or dread, no apprehension or hesitation in facing the Son of Man. He will stand before his Lord...
 - justified.
 - ready to be "transformed just like His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).
 - ready "to be conformed to His image" (Rom. 8:29).
 - ready to "see the face of the Father" (Mt. 18:10).
 - ready to "serve Him [God] day and night in His temple" or world (Rev. 7:15).

Mat 25:13 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour."

Luke 12:37 "It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them."

1 Th 5:5-6 *You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.*

Rev 3:11 *I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.*

Rev 16:15 *“Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.”*

Mat 26:41 *“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”*

1 Cor 10:12 *So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!*

Col 4:2 *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*

1 Pet 5:8 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ■*

LUKE 20: 35 JUSTIFICATION: HEAVEN AND WORLD

*“But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage.” **Luke 20:35***

Entrance into the two worlds differs. A man has nothing to do with his entrance into this world. He is conceived and born by the act of a man and a woman. But note three facts about the next world.

1. Only those who are considered, accounted worthy shall obtain that world. This is significant. A man does not work or earn his way into the next world. He is not worthy; he is only counted worthy. Worthiness is accounted to him, merely laid to his account: Scripture says that it is his faith that is counted as making him worthy. God takes a man's faith and counts, credits it as “righteousness” (See *Justification*, Rom. 4:22; 5:1. See Rom. 4:5; 4:1-3, 4:1-25).

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Rom 4:23-25 *The words “it [righteousness] was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness — for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.*

Gal 3:6 Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

2. Jesus was speaking of the resurrection of believers only. He did not say “the resurrection of the dead” which would mean all the dead, but He said “the resurrection from the dead” which means the resurrection of believers from among the dead.

John 5:25 “I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.”

John 6:40 “For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Acts 24:15 And I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

3. Every man continues to exist after this world, but all will not enter “that age,” that is, heaven. Those who have not lived a life of faith in Christ, who are not counted worthy, will not enter “that age,” but will enter hell.

Luke 16:24 So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

John 5:28 - 29 “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.”

Acts 24:15 And I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Dan 12:2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. □

ROMANS 04: 22

JUSTIFICATION: FAITH, RIGHTEOUSNESS

*This is why “it is credited to him as righteousness.” **Romans 04:22***

In simple terms *justification* means that God takes the believer's faith and counts it as righteousness (Rom. 4:3; see Gen. 15:6)

When a person *really believes* that Jesus Christ is *his Saviour*, God takes that person's faith and counts it for righteousness (Rom. 4:3, 5, 9, 11, 22, 24). The person is not righteous; he has no righteousness of his own. He is still imperfect, still sinful, still corruptible, still short of God's glory as a sinful human being. But he does believe that Jesus Christ is *his Saviour*. Such belief honours God's Son (whom God loves very much), and because it honours God's Son, God accepts that person's faith for righteousness. God counts that person's faith as righteousness. Therefore, that person becomes acceptable to God. A person's belief — the right kind of belief — is critical.

Gen 15:6 *Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.*

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Gal 3:6 *Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”*

1 Cor 6:11 *And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

Phil 3:9 *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. □*

MATHEW 08:20 JESUS, THE SON OF MAN

*Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” **Mathew 08:20***

Jesus is not only what an ordinary man is, a son of man; Jesus is what every man ought to be, the Son of Man Himself. He is the Ideal Man, the Representative Man, the Perfect Man, the Pattern, the Embodiment of everything a man ought to be. Jesus Christ is the perfect picture of a man. Everything God wants a man to be is seen perfectly in Jesus Christ (see Jn. 1:14; Col. 2:9-10; Heb. 1:3.)

The title also means the Ideal Servant of man. It stresses His sympathy for the poor, the broken-hearted, the captives, the blind, the bruised, the outcasts, the bereaved (see Lk. 4:18). Jesus is the Pattern, the Model, the Perfect Example of concern and caring. He served and set a perfect example of how every man ought to serve other men.

Jesus calls Himself "the Son of Man" about eighty times. It is His favourite term. The title 'Son of Man' is probably based upon the Son of Man in Daniel (Dan. 7:13-14). Scripture also gives a picture of Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man contrasted with Adam as the earthly Man (1 Cor. 15:45-47). Each serves as a Representative Man for the human race in God's plan for world history.

Mat 9:6 *"But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."*

Mat 16:13,16 *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

Mat 20:28 *"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

Mark 8:38 *"If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."*

Luke 19:10 *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

John 5:26-27 *"For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man."*

John 13:31-32 *When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once."*

Acts 7:56 *"Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."*

Rev 1:12-13 *I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lamp stands, and among the lamp stands was someone "like a son of man", dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. □*

THE DAILY MINISTRY OF JESUS

LUKE 21:37–38

Introduction

This passage very simply tells how Jesus spent His days and nights during the last days of His life. The picture is both interesting and informative.

- I. The daytime: Jesus taught in the temple (v. 37).
- II. The night: Jesus was alone with God (v. 37).
- III. The morning: Jesus began early in the morning (v. 38).

I. Luke 21:37 Jesus Christ, the Teacher

During the daytime Jesus taught in the temple. Several facts are seen in this point.

1. Jesus was a tireless teacher. He taught not only on Sunday, but every day of the week. He taught at every opportunity, and He made as many opportunities as He could. He taught all through the day. He sought the chance to teach, using day-to-day events and experiences to teach. He never tired of teaching even in the face of exhaustion. (See all that happened during this last week of His life, beginning with the Triumphal Entry. Despite the pressure, tension and fatigue, He continued to teach.)

Luke 2:49 “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”

Luke 19:47 Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him.

John 4:34 “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

John 9:4 “As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.”

2. Jesus was a fearless teacher. The authorities were seeking to arrest and kill Him. The opposition was constant, questioning, arguing, plotting and threatening. However, He did not flee, nor did He retaliate. He simply went about fulfilling God’s will, teaching those who so desperately needed God’s message.

Luke 19:47-48 Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

3. Jesus was a faithful teacher, ever meeting the needs of people. Men needed the gospel of God, needed to hear the glorious message of the Kingdom of God. The only way they could ever know how to live day by day was to be taught. Christ wanted to grasp every opportunity He could before He departed this world. (See *Kingdom of God*, Mt. 19:23-24.)
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1 Cor 7:29 *What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none.*

Eph 5:16 *Making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*

4. Jesus was a teacher of conviction. Note where He taught: in the temple. The temple was corrupt, being misused and abused and made into a centre of commercialism. Yet, the temple was supposed to be God's house of prayer. Jesus refused to desert it; He used the temple as it should be used, making it the centre for teaching the gospel of God.

John 2:17 *His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."*

II. Luke 21:37 Jesus' Devotion and Prayer Life

During the night, Jesus got all alone with God. This is a striking point, for it is information about our Lord that deeply moves and touches the heart. "Each evening, He went out, to spend the night on a hill called the Mount of Olives." He was facing so much, the final preparation of His disciples and His own final hours on earth, and He was facing it all in just *one week's time*. He needed time alone with God, a very special time, for He needed great strength, and the source of His strength was God. Every muscle in His body and every thought of His mind must have been craving for God's presence and wisdom and strength. He needed...

- to make maximum use of time in teaching the disciples, teaching exactly what they needed in these final hours.
- to have His own heart prepared to the maximum, ready to bear all the punishment of sin that was to be laid upon Him.

Mark 1:35 *Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.*

Mark 6:46 *After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.*

Luke 5:16 *But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.*

Luke 9:18 *Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"*

Luke 22:41 *He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed.*

Psa 91:15 *He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him.*

Jer 33:3 *'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'*

Rom 8:26 *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.*

LUKE 21:37 MOUNT OF OLIVES OR OLIVET

The mountain range was a little more than one-half mile from the city limits of Jerusalem. The range of mountains lie on the east of Jerusalem and stretch only about one or two miles across. The mountain range was loved by Jesus. It was...

- where Jesus often resorted (Lk. 22:39).
- where Jesus often spent the night when in Jerusalem (Jn. 7:53-8:1).
- where Jesus spent the nights of His last week on earth — praying and seeking God (Lk. 29:37).
- where Jesus first went when He approached Jerusalem to face His last week on earth (Mt. 21:1f; Mk. 11:1f).
- where the great sermon on the end time was preached (Mt. 24:3f; Mk. 13:3f).
- where (at the descent) the Triumphal Entry began (Lk. 19:37f).
- where Jesus' terrible agony in the Garden of Gethsemane took place. The Garden of Gethsemane was on the side of the mountain (Mt. 26:30f; Mk. 14:26).
- where the ascension took place (Acts 1:12). □

III. *Luke 21:38 Jesus' Prayer and Teaching*

Jesus began early in the morning. Note four significant facts.

1. The first thing Jesus did after prayer and spending time alone with God was teaching.
2. Jesus spent time alone with God before teaching. The *presence and power* of God was necessary before teaching.

Psa 5:3 In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Psa 55:17 Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears me voice.

Psa 57:8 Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.

Psa 119:147 I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.

1 Th 3:10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. (see Dan. 6:10)

3. The first duty of Jesus after prayer was teaching the gospel. He did not seek relaxation, recreation, fellowship or some social function. After praying, He sought to teach the message of the glorious gospel.

Mark 1:38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else — to the nearby villages — so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."

Luke 4:43 *But he said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent."*

4. The people hungered and thirsted for righteousness. Note the word "all." All the people came early in the morning to hear Him.

Thought 1. What a difference between the people of that day and other generations! Why? Is it because people's hearts no longer cry out for righteousness? Or, is it because ministers do not seek the face of God *all night* in prayer like Jesus was doing?

Luke 6:21 *"Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh."*

John 4:14 *"But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

John 7:37 *On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."*

Psa 38:9 *All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you.*

Psa 107:9 *For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.*

Isa 55:1 *"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost." ■*