

Watch and Be Ready

(Matthew 24:42-44)

Introduction:

1. In our lesson we are concentrating on 2 admonitions that Jesus gave in these verses.
 - a. In vs.42 He instructed His followers to "watch."
 - b. In vs.44 He also told His followers to "be ready."
2. We are presently being reminded of the importance of watching and being ready for a hurricane.
3. We are concerned with watching and being ready for something much greater than a hurricane.

Discussion:

- I. JESUS SAID THAT WE ARE TO WATCH AND BE READY FOR A VERY SPECIAL EVENT
 - A. That event is the Lord's return (vs.42, 44).
 - B. Jesus also said that He will return in John 14:1-3.
- II. JESUS EXPLAINED WHY WE ARE TO WATCH AND BE READY FOR HIS RETURN
 - A. No one knows when He will return (vs.36, 42, 44; 25:13).
 - B. However, God has appointed a day for His Son's return (Acts 17:31).
- III. THE LORD'S WORD TEACHES US HOW TO WATCH AND BE READY FOR HIS RETURN IN 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-22
 - A. (vs.16) *"Rejoice evermore."*
 1. Similar admonitions are given in Philippians 3:1a; 4:4.
 2. Most people are able to rejoice when things go well in their lives; however, Christians are to rejoice *"evermore."*
 3. Our joy is an inner peace of mind that we experience because of our relationship with God -- it is not based on external circumstances.
 4. One thing that will help us to rejoice evermore is to . . .
 - B. (vs.17) *"Pray without ceasing."*
 1. To help us understand what this means, consider:
 - a. (Luke 18:1) *"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."*
 - b. (Ephesians 6:18) *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication."*
 - c. (Colossians 4:2) *"Continue in prayer."*
 - d. We must be like Jesus who prayed often.
 2. Prayer shows that we depend upon God and not on ourselves.
 3. As we pray we must remember to . . .

- C. (vs.18) *"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*
1. God is the source of the many blessings we enjoy (James 1:17).
 2. We must express our gratitude to Him (Ephesians 5:20).
- D. (vs.19) *"Quench not the Spirit."*
1. (Ephesians 6:17) The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.
 2. (Hebrews 3:7) The Spirit speaks through the Scriptures which are described for us in Hebrews 4:12.
 3. If we turn a deaf ear to what He says, we quench Him.
 4. Rather than quench Him, we must *"be filled with the Spirit"* (Ephesians 5:18).
 5. Closely related is the next admonition.
- E. (vs.20) *"Despise not prophesyings."*
1. Prophesyings: messages from God
 2. Messages from God must not be despised because they are for our benefit.
 3. As we are taught we must not accept what we hear blindly -- we are to . . .
- F. (vs.21) *"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."*
1. All things are to be put to the test, and the Bible is the standard.
 2. If something is proved to be good, we must hold fast to it.
 3. If something is proved to be bad, . . .
- G. (vs.22) *"Abstain from all appearance of evil."*
1. When Jesus returns we will be judged by our works (2 Corinthians 5:10).
 2. We must be sure that our works have been good and not evil.

Conclusion:

1. In closing, let us examine Paul's request in 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
2. The instructions we have studied in vs.16-22 are designed to help us watch and be ready for the Lord's return.
3. Are you ready for that great day?