Keep Watch: The Imminent Return of our Lord (?)

Tony Mauck · Matthew 24:36–44

INTRODUCTION

- Is it imminent? Is it near? Is it about to happen? What do the scriptures say about that subject?
- The Lord had instructed his disciples to be ready and watching, and if they had believed that he would not return until centuries later, there would have been no occasion or need to watch for his return.
- But we don't know if it's going to be right around the corner, if it's going to be a hundred years from now or a thousand years from now. But we need to live in light of it.

1 Encourages Spiritual Focus and Activity

Luke 18:8; Psalm 139:23–24

- Living in view of the Lord's return encourages spiritual focus and activity.
- You trudge through all of that because you want to be ready. You want to stay ready.
- It motivates in the cultivation of holiness in our lives. When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?
- Jesus combines the terms watch and pray. There is an alertness to this that leads us to prayer and dependence upon God.
- We need to be telling the Lord all the time, I want to be ready when you return.
- Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts and see if there be any hurtful way in me. And lead me in the everlasting way.

2 Provokes a Conscious Attempt to Evangelize

2 Timothy 2:19

- It provokes a conscious attempt to evangelize. It sets a little bit of a fire under us in terms of folks that need to be rescued.
- We're heralds of the good news. That's what evangelize means.
- None of us have as many studies with unbelievers as we would like to have. But when you get one, take full advantage. Relish it.
- As the Lord knows those that are his, let everyone who names the name of Christ abstain from wickedness.
- Let's work on keeping those who are saved numbered among the saved as a part of this influence upon evangelism in our lives.
- Let's not just see this as reaching those without, but also encouraging those who are in our number already to remain faithful to the Lord.

3 Produces Sobriety Through Knowledge of the High Cost of Transgression

1 Peter 1:19; 1 John 3:15

- It produces sobriety through knowledge of the high cost of transgression.
- The cost of sin, the price that had to be paid, has been a tremendous cost already.
- Every transgression, no matter what it is, caused Jesus to go to Calvary and has a potential cost in terms of lessening the quality and impact of our lives.
- There is always a personal cost involved with sin, no matter its nature or type.
- When transgression and sin is committed, there's always the potential that one is going to be your undoing. What if it is a sin from which you do not recover?
- But what about the even greater cost of the sin that you did not remedy? Because you thought, I'll have more time.

4 Make Each Day Count for God

Ephesians 5:14–17

- A knowledge of the Lord's return should cultivate a desire to make each day count for God.
- Awake sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.
- Be careful how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of your time because the days are evil.
- So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
- Knowledge of the potentially imminent return of the Lord should motivate us to stay busy in the Lord's work and to make each day count for him.

THE CHALLENGE

If you're in this audience and you need to do something right now while there's time and opportunity, obey the gospel. This is motivation to do that. You don't know when the Lord will return.

MY NOTES