

Title: ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT, LUKE 21:34 – 36
(Chatham, NJ; 12/02/12, AM) [Pt – Two-Point Topical]

Theme: In the face of an impending catastrophe and for the long term outlook, Jesus demands that we be watchful.

Purpose: To take his admonitions to heart and to discover ways that we can maintain a watchful approach to our lives.

Introduction:

1. Do you think Jesus is coming back soon? (Revelation 22:20)
2. How do you feel about making preparations for the “thief in the night?” (1 Thess. 5:2-3)
3. Are you tired of watching for your adversary? (1 Peter 5:8-9)

I. Jesus Demands Vigilance from His Followers

A. Be Watchful

1. Luke 12:35ff. – “stay dressed,” “keep your lamps burning,” and “be like men waiting for the master to return.”
2. Think about each image:
 - Stay dressed
 - Keep the lights on
 - Be ready for the boss
3. The Son of Man is coming when you don't expect him, 40
4. Good servant/bad servant, a message for everyone, 41ff.

B. Watch yourselves, stay awake, Luke 21:34-36

1. Watch yourselves:
 - Dissipation
 - Drunkenness
 - Cares of this life: can be comfortable or anxious cares
2. The Day will come suddenly, 34
3. It will come upon all
4. Stay awake: be alert to dangers and temptations

C. The temptations we face

1. Giving in to momentary pleasures, Heb. 11:24-25, unspiritual people will praise you
2. Going along with the crowd, Mt. 7:13 – those who enter the gate to destruction are many in number
3. Allowing critics, mockers, and blasphemers to intimidate you into silence and inactivity

D. Take a lesson from the author of Psalm 73

1. Asaph – a Levite who was the chief singer when David brought the Ark to Jerusalem.
2. Beware the notion that you envy the rich, 3
3. Thanks to Karl Marx and others this has been elevated to a national policy
4. The psalmist is jealous of them because they have it better than he does (4-12)
5. “Why be good,” he wonders (13-14); “I want what they have,” he implies
6. Fortunately for us, he checks himself (16-17)
7. He sees the final end of the rich and godless (18-19)
8. He recognizes the foolishness of his own thinking (21-22)
9. He returns to his faith in God (28)
10. Justifying your anger and jealousy will inhibit your ability to watch

II. The Antidotes: How to Remain Watchful

A. We remember

1. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me," Luke 22:19
2. Every time we take communion we remember
3. We weaken our ability to be alert when we forget

B. We receive with thanksgiving

1. In 1 Tim. 4:1-5 Paul chastises those who forbid things that God has allowed
2. On the positive side of this we can receive good things with thanksgiving because they are gifts of God
3. We reinforce our ability to be watchful when we are thankful for gifts from God
4. We weaken it when we ignore God's hand in gift-giving

C. Do not allow roots of Bitterness to take hold, Hebrews 12:15

1. From Deut. 29:18 – a stubborn disposition that expresses itself in unbelief
2. Unresolved anger causes bitterness
3. Jealousy causes bitterness
4. An unforgiving attitude causes it
5. It causes us to lose the grace of God and affect the community adversely
6. Bitterness destroys our faith and ability to be watchful
7. This demands attention to the condition of our hearts

Conclusions:

1. Be watchful and alert at all times.
2. Remember the Lord; receive his blessings with thanksgiving; prevent roots of bitterness from taking hold.
3. Thus you may be sure that the Lord will find you watchful and ready when he returns.