



Watching  
For His  
RETURRN

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*Watching For His Return*

# INTRODUCTION

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WE ARE LIVING in the last days. The coming of the Son of Man is soon at hand. It is daily becoming more difficult to object to. After all, what generation has seen so many signs fulfilled?

Yet in spite of the many signs, many Christians do not believe. They seem content to allow the day to catch them by surprise. They ignore Jesus calling to stay awake (Mar 13:37). Instead, they live quite ignorant to the trial that is shortly coming.

For years, I lived in precisely this way. I paid little attention to Jesus call to watch. My walk was very similar to the Pharisees, who could interpret the sky, yet were blind to the season. I was therefore a poor example of godly leadership. For my life resembled the very people who caused Israel to miss their visitation.

The Lord has spoken strongly in his Word against such ignorance. Scripture compares it to walking in darkness (1 Thess 5:4). And walking in darkness speaks of compromise to carelessness. It indicates a life bent on temporal pursuits. Jesus expressly compared this condition to common “drunkenness” (Lk 21:34). For it betrays a profound lack of godly discernment.

Thankfully the Lord has since awakened my heart. He has alerted me to the urgency of the hour. While on a fast several years ago, the Lord slowly opened my eyes to the signs of the times. Since then, my life has never been the same. I now walk with greater sense of holy sobriety.

This is Jesus' desire for every one of us. He wants us to be aware of the nearness of his return. Now, does he know how challenging this message can be? Of course! For he knows our fleshly limits and is intimately acquainted with our frail hearts.

Yet he nevertheless calls us to be alert. He calls us to be awake to the times and the seasons. For this very reason he has urgently called us. In the book of Revelation, chapter 3, Jesus said: "...if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief and you will now know the very hour I will come against you." (vs. 3; esv).

Therefore, we must be cautious to stay awake. For we do not want to be unaware to Jesus's soon approaching.

Therefore fellow saint, let's seek to be awake. Let's purpose in our hearts to be sober, attentive and alert. As you do, I'm sure you'll be drawn to see the importance of of Jesus's call to be watchful.

So, before we move forward, I want to let you know that I've created a masterclass designed to equip you with end-time wisdom and awareness. The master-class is comprised of both prerecorded videos on the end times, as well as a LIVE, verse-by-verse interactive walk through of the entire book of Revelation. Trust me, you're to want to sign up for it.

So the let's move forward to what we will encounter in this book and beyond with great expectation in our hearts. For what you're about to read about in this tiny ebook just might change your life.



# THE CALL TO WATCH

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*"What I say unto you, I say unto all. Watch." (Mar 13:32; KJV)*

DO WE REALLY need to watch for Jesus' return?

This is a question that I have pondered deeply. Put another way, is it relevant for believers today? Is it truly necessary for the Church to focus on it?

As I considered this question, I was reminded of a story. It vividly illustrates why watching is so important. It's the account of the sinking of the famous ship Titanic. So

please pay close attention my friend. For the moral of the story relates powerfully to the overall theme of this ebook.

The Titanic sank after colliding with a giant iceberg. The tragedy happened on the morning of April 15th, 1912. It was, and still is, considered to be the single largest peacetime maritime disaster in modern history. Remembered now as the “unsinkable ship,” the Titanic roared out of Southampton across the North Atlantic, confident of a successful maiden voyage. With New York Harbor as it’s destination, her crew and passengers looked forward to a rich welcome at port.

However, the disaster that overtook the ship resulted in the death of nearly half the passengers and crew, along with the total loss of the vessel itself. Some fifteen hundred people were killed in the incident. It was a most unfortunate end for the famed British ship.

Of course, many of us are familiar with this tragic tale. It’s a story that hardly needs an introduction today. Yet, what most seem to be are unaware of is that the sinking of the Titanic was a needless tragedy. The reason?

Just one day earlier, the Titanic was warned. The essence of the message was simple and straight forward—watch! Unfortunately, the crew aboard the ship didn’t take the warning seriously. History recounts the woeful story like this...

## **THE CRITICAL ERROR**

ON APRIL 14th, 1912, US Naval ship, SS California, narrowly missed a massive ice field. Alarmed by the event, Captain Stanley Lord, commander of the naval boat, stormed into the radio room and ordered a wireless radio message to be sent to nearby ships. Then Cyril Evans, who was the radio operator aboard the California, promptly complied with the captain’s command. He sent out a wireless warning to *watch* for the ice ahead. However, amazingly, Jack Phillips, who was the radio operator aboard the

Titanic, overlooked the urgent warning! As a result, the ship, now ironically remembered as “unsinkable,” was utterly destroyed in the disaster that occurred.

The most tragic point of the entire tale was the reason for Jack Phillip’s critical error. It is a sad commentary of the danger of living with bold, yet misplaced confidence.

According to reliable historical sources, Phillip’s had the volume on his radio headset turned all the way up. Apparently he had been carefully listening to a lengthy back log of civilian messages being sent ahead to a radio station. It seemed Phillip’s intent was to ensure that the passengers would be greeted with ticker-tape style fanfare upon their safe arrival in New York Harbor.

However, suddenly and unannounced, Evans’ urgent, siren-like message pipped loudly through the radio instruments aboard the Titanic. It sent a red hot signal into Phillips’ headset which nearly deafened the man. Therefore, incensed by the searing intrusion, Phillips shot an enraged message back at Evans. He angrily told him to stay off the airwaves. Meanwhile, Evans, believing he had done his duty, proceeded to turn in for the night.

Only hours later, Phillips’ fatal mistake became known to the crew aboard the Titanic. For in a short time, the mangled, luxurious pleasure liner made a quick descent into the icy waters of the North Atlantic. It was a shameful end to the ship’s maiden voyage, a tragedy that still captures our hearts and minds today.

## **A MODERN-DAY PARABLE**

THE story of the sinking of the Titanic relays a stirring message to the sleeping Church in our time. It portrays a powerful and sobering end-time parable, one which is well worth our consideration today. So let’s see if you don’t find my interpretation of this historical event to be as compelling as I did.

Imagine with me, if you would, that the Titanic were a symbol for the Church today. We are a virgin ship setting forth on a dangerous voyage towards our destination—our eternal heavenly city.

Next, let's consider the captain aboard the naval vessel, SS California. Ironically, the captain's name is Stanley *Lord*. Therefore, in our parable, he is a representation of our captain, the Lord Jesus Christ. As in the story of the Titanic, Jesus has accurately foreseen our future. He knows all the dangers that lie ahead of our present course. He further knows that apart from taking extreme precaution, collision with disaster is almost totally inevitable for the Church. He has therefore sent us an urgent warning, pleading with us to take every appropriate measure to ensure our safe arrival at our heavenly home.

Moving on, Cyril Evans is a symbol for the Lord's prophetic messenger. He is Stanley Lord's servant, commissioned with the task of alerting the Church to what's coming. His job is to listen intently to the words of his captain. He has been commissioned to faithfully obey without delay. He therefore follows his orders promptly. He sends the captain's warning to the Titanic, calling for watchfulness on behalf of the passengers and crew.

However, Evans' prophetic warning, goes completely unheeded. The reason? As is the case with so many prophetic voices of the past, Evans' alert is viewed as an unwelcome, disruptive and perhaps even rude message to the Titanic. Therefore, his warning is completely ignored to the detriment of all aboard the vessel.

Last of all, let's consider Jack Phillips. Phillips is a picture of the typical leader in the Church today. True to character, he chooses to ignore the loud, perhaps even brash warning delivered by the prophet. And why does he do this?

The answer is tragic!

Like so many Pastors and leaders in our time, Phillips assumed the safe arrival of the Titanic at her destination to be a sheer given. In other words, he placed his

confidence solely in the structural integrity of the boat, such that he felt unnecessary to pay heed the precautionary instructions of his Lord. He therefore, reviled the prophet for his insensitivity, haranguing him for his loud intrusion over the airwaves. He then turned his attention back to his previous signal, one which had a softer, more soothing tone to it. It was a costly mistake, one which could easily have been avoided if the call to *watch* had been taken seriously.

And now here's my urgent warning...

## THE CALL TO ALL

IT HAS BEEN my conviction for some years now that the Church today is facing a similar situation to the Titanic. We are asleep on our pleasure cruise, unaware of all the dangers that lie ahead of us. We therefore desperately need a wake-up call to quicken us to our condition. We need a clear alarm bell sounded to all crew and passengers to become watchful for Jesus' return!

My prayer is that you, dear friend, will respond to the pressing call which the Lord has urgently given to us. For as we look to the scriptures, we quickly discover that this is a call as old as the gospel itself. Turning to Luke chapter 12, we find Jesus compelling his disciples to passionately embrace this calling to watch. Beginning with verse 35, Jesus says:

“Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch, or the third watch, and finds them awake,

blessed are those servants! But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Lk 12:35-40; ESV).

Now dear friend, Jesus’ story contains a similar moral to the lesson we saw in the story of the Titanic. It is a message given for one simple reason—to compel us to *watch*. Upon reading the story, we instantly see that the meaning of it is simple and straight forward. The master in the parable is once again a representation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is a picture of none other than our soon and coming King.

Next, we see that the servants are a picture of us. They are believers in the coming of the kingdom of heaven. It is their goal is to remain ready and awake so that they will be able to receive their master when he returns from his journey.

Last of all, we can clearly see that there are multiple possibilities as to the timing of the return of Christ. For we are told that the Master could return in the second watch, or even the third watch of the night. Therefore, we, as the servants, must face the challenge of remaining awake and alert so that we are ready for the coming of our Master, whenever he arrives.

As we consider this simple parable, we might imagine that it was clearly understood by all who heard it. For the message was sharp, clear, and easy to grasp. It hardly required a deeper explanation.

But then Peter burst in (as he often did!) and raised a question that just might have indicated the true heart condition of the rest of disciples. In verse 41, Peter replied to Jesus: “Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?” (ESV).

In many ways, Peter’s response is typical of our old human nature. It is similar to the question he asked of Jesus after his resurrection. When the Lord showed him the

kind of death he would die, by which he would glorify God, Peter pointed at John, and asked Jesus: “Lord, what about this man?” (Jn 21:21; ESV).

Many of us tend to do this. When the Word of God speaks something that sounds unfavorable or difficult, we squirm. In this case, Peter sensed the pressure of the high level of accountability Jesus was laying upon his disciples concerning the need to be aware of his return. So he asked a question, aimed at turning the pressure away from himself and towards the curious crowds that followed Jesus. In many ways, it was a subtle form of manipulation.

However, Jesus, not to be fooled, responded to Peter’s question by speaking yet another parable:

“Who then is the wise and faithful manager whom his master will set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is the servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and get drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day that he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him into pieces and put him with the unfaithful.” (Lk 12:41-46 (ESV))

Of course, as we consider Jesus’ response to Peter’s question, we find a challenging message emerging for the Last Days Church: **All Christians (not some Christians) are called to faithfully watch for the return of Jesus Christ.** We find this point further proven as we re-read and consider the key verse I noted at the beginning this chapter. In Mark 13:37, Jesus said to his disciples, “What I say unto you, I say unto *all*, Watch” (KJV; emphasis mine).

“But why,” we might ask. “Why is this so urgently called for? Why must we watch? Why be so cautious?”

The answer, however, is that according to Jesus, any believer—including Peter—could find themselves at the return of Christ in the place of the wicked servant; living an unprepared life characterized by neglect or even rebellion!

Of course, none of us start out their walk in this way! Instead, most of us begin our walk with Jesus fully intending to be faithful to the End. For we deeply desire to be true to our Lord. We earnestly want to follow him and please him.

However, over time, a loss of passion may occur. And when it does, crossing lines we know we shouldn't become easy. We begin to find ourselves taking risks that we previously wouldn't have dreamed of taking. Our hearts slowly, almost imperceptibly, become callous towards the Lord. For though we know that we will be held accountable for everything we say and do, we eventually lose touch with this critical, spiritual truth. For like the wicked servant, we forget that our Master will one day return, in precisely the unexpected manner he has forewarned...

## **MY STORY**

HAVING SAID THIS, let us now ask the question: What does it mean for you and me to be watchful? Allow me to offer the following definition:

To be watchful means to be resolute. It means to be fully committed to carefully giving heed to someone or something. The opposite of course to being watchful is to be careless. It would be to live in a state of being dazed or asleep.

Thus, as we take this definition then and apply it to the believer's life, we see that we're describing a person who is faithful, obedient and observant. Such people are eagerly looking forward to the return of their master. They are convinced that the Day will come, just as Jesus has foretold. In this way, they comfort themselves as they fight

spiritual fatigue. For like the great reformer Martin Luther, they live with only two days on their calendar—“this day and that Day.”

Having said this, however, let me now humbly admit that I have not always lived a lifestyle that could be described as “watchful.” In fact, through much of my life, I have struggled with being attentive. As a child, barely out of kindergarten, my teachers counseled my parents to place me in a special education program. My problem? I was exhibiting all the classic signs of attention deficit disorder!

For this reason, growing up, I had a very short attention span. I lacked such important character qualities as patience and long suffering. I possessed little of the drive it takes to be steadfast and resolute. Instead, I moved through life, from project to project, quickly and carelessly, giving little heed to the fruit of my ways.

Of course, my attention issues did not stem from a possessing a low IQ. (In fact, right now, I serve in the area of Christian higher-education!) The real issue was that I had grown up addicted to living in my own fantasy world. I cared little about my relationships and the importance of finishing well. The concept of obeying to completion was foreign to me. I often despised exerting sustained mental effort. Therefore, if I found that something wasn’t immediately interesting to me, I could easily toss it aside and mentally “check out.”

And so for this reason, I have found it downright humorous and ironic that the Lord would call a man diagnosed with “attention deficit disorder” to preach to the Church about the importance of being watchful! Truly, the Lord chooses “what is foolish in the world to shame the wise” and “the weak things in this world to shame the strong,” so that, as Paul writes, “no human being might boast in the presence of God” (see 1 Cor 1:27, 29; ESV).

The call to watch first came to me in my early years of ministry. The Lord used three different men to speak into my life out of the book of Ezekiel. For those unaware, the prophet Ezekiel had previously served the Lord as a priest. He was given a special

and unique assignment from the Lord. He was called by God to “eat the scroll” (Ezek 2:8). At its core, it was a call to a lifestyle of deep digestion of the Word of God. It would be the Lord’s way of making Ezekiel into an able watchman for his people (Ezek 3:12). It would cause him to be an effective messenger of God.

However, after hearing the call, I must admit, I was wholly uninterested. For at the time, I was completely ignorant of the broader subject of Bible prophecy. The call seemed totally alien to me. Even after the second man approached me, I remained largely unresponsive. To my ears, the call was “far out.” It felt hard to relate to or understand. For the sheer amount of work required to enter into the calling seemed daunting and difficult to me. It felt like a weighty and impossible task. (Can you relate?)

However, after the third man approached me, speaking the same message, I gradually came to see it as a message from God. I began to wonder, “What if Jesus is really trying to reach me? Could I live with myself if I shunned this urgent plea?”

I therefore decided that I needed to begin to take the message seriously. So from that point onward, I began deeply studying scriptural prophecy. I fervently devoted myself to learning the end-time scriptures. In the years that followed, the Lord showed himself faithful. He gradually fashioned me into a watchful believer.

Thus the good news is that even if you struggle the way that I did, the Holy Spirit is nevertheless on your side. For he has been sent to be our counselor and to teach us all things. In him there is truly nothing we cannot do. Therefore, no matter what the Lord will call you to do, you can always count on him to give you all the power you will need! For as the Lord has reminded us through his Word, it is not by might, nor by power, but “by my Spirit says the Lord” (Zech 4:6; ESV).

So if you are beginning to become filled with godly anticipation, then let’s seek to make some final preparations for our journey. We will do this by examining two important, foundational issues. They are both related to Jesus’ calling to watch. Both

of them will deeply inspire us to say yes to the Lord. They are the wisdom of watching, and the eternal glory of watching.

So let's consider them one at a time together, beginning first with the wisdom of watching.

## THE WISDOM OF WATCHING

SCRIPTURE HIGHLY ESTEEMS believers who watch for Jesus' return. They are honored in the Bible by being referred to simply as "the wise." They are those who fully invest themselves to seek out the knowledge of God. They set their hearts to deeply know the prophetic scriptures. Their ministry will begin at the start of the Last Days. For as the final moments of history arrive, these champions of truth will arise to take their place. We find them described in the following, Old Testament passage:

"But the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. *And the wise among the people shall make many understand...*" Dan 11:32-33 (ESV; emphasis mine).

Now fellow saint, please notice the key phrase in this passage: "The wise will make many understand." From this, we can clearly see the plan of God for the Last Days Church. The Lord desires to use us to bring illumination. He wants to equip us to declare his purposes. Another way to say this is that he wants us *watching* for the sake of *witnessing*. For he wants us to help the world to understand the times.

Through the knowledge God will give us, he will speak through us powerfully. He will help many people to interpret the end-time trials. This will cause the world to flock to the Church for answers. I have affectionately nick-named it "**God's end-time evangelization strategy.**" Pretty cool huh?

But, we might ask, how do we acquire such lofty wisdom? Or how do we begin to set our hearts to lay hold of it?

The good news is that God has made his wisdom extremely accessible. For scripture tells us that God's wisdom is given, whenever we ask for it!

About this, James the brother of Jesus exhorted: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all *liberally* without reproach, and it will be given him" (Ja 1:5; emphasis mine; NKJV). Here we see that God gives us his wisdom whenever we ask for it. How comforting to know that God has made his wisdom so attainable! He is altogether willing to apprise us of the truth!

For this reason, Paul and Solomon penned the following words:

- ❖ "...I keep on asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you *a Spirit of wisdom and revelation...*" (Eph 1:17; emphasis mine; esv).
- ❖ "...if you cry out...and lift your voice for understanding...then *you will...find the knowledge of God...*" (Prov 2:3-6; emphasis mine; nkjv).

In both of these passages, notice the choice of words which the Holy Spirit has given us to heed. In both passages, we are to "keep on" asking and "cry out" for wisdom. Far from merely "whispering for wisdom," we must shout for it. We must do this as though, like our daily bread, our very lives were dependent on it. Wow!

Such a heart posture requires tremendous energy and patience. Indeed, growing in godly wisdom can take a lifetime to develop. Therefore, God calls us not only to have passion, but also endurance. So then how do we lay hold of the resolve it takes to burn with such fervor? Or how do we endure the long wait that inevitably lies ahead of us?

Friend, such persistence in prayer, takes a heart that firmly believes that failure to watching is expressly forbidden by Jesus and that therefore, the call to watch is issued

to every single Christian—*without exception*. There is much more that I could write here about this truth. For the moment however, let's remind ourselves of an, important kingdom principle. We can easily spell it out in the following, user-friendly statement. I'm sure you've heard it before. It goes something like this:

**“God will never ask you to do anything that he has not already given you the grace and power to carry out.”**

Now let me ask you dear friend, do you believe this? Aren't you glad for the grace of God? The Lord is neither stingy, nor sour, nor tight fisted. He consistently provides us with exactly what we need. Not only so, but he further promises a great reward to all who will obey him. For as scripture shows, God's reward to those who watch is eternal. It will endure forever through endless ages and beyond. Let's conclude...

## **THE GLORY OF WATCHING**

IN DANIEL CHAPTER eleven, we read these words:

“And those who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever” (Dan 12:3; ESV).

Now, fellow traveler, are encouraged by these words? God wants you to shine like the stars forever and ever! For the Holy Spirit is passionate about seeing you blaze. As the Psalmist indeed reminds us, it's part of his eternal plan. For, “the path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining brighter and brighter to the full light of day” (Proverbs 4:21; NIV).

The light that God will bestow on those who watch will remain forever. It will continue to last for all of eternity. For as we read in the words of Psalm 34: “Those who look to [the Lord] are *radiant*, their faces are *never* covered with shame” (vs. 5; NIV; emphasis mine). Isn’t it encouraging to know that such gifts are ours as we seek to follow the Lord whole heartedly? How marvelous to know that as we pursue God, he empowers us with greater ability to remain faithful unto him.

Would you take a moment to pray with me as we begin our journey together?

*Dear Jesus, I thank you for bringing me safely to this day. I thank you that you are intimately acquainted with all my ways. You have watched carefully over my life. You have caused your angels to guard and protect me. I now pray that you would give me the grace to hear this message. Use it to accomplish all that you desire. May it cause me to burn with greater passion for your appearing. May it teach me the importance of watching for your return. All the honor is yours, king Jesus. It’s in your name I pray this prayer. Amen.*

With that, fellow saint, let’s now eagerly begin our journey together by getting you signed up (if you haven’t already) for my End Times Introductory Master-Class! Let’s answer the call of Jesus to watch for his return! Your journey begins when you...

....click...

...[here](#).

