

Matthew 24:42-44 Watching for the Lord's Return

Introduction: The subject is still the Lord's return. "Therefore" refers back to what has already been said: (1) Jesus is going to return; (2) He gave us signs whereby we could know when His coming is near; (3) We cannot know the exact time; (4) When He comes some will be prepared but the vast majority will not.

I. An admonition to watch, verse 42.

- A. The word "watch" means "to pay close attention, to look, to observe."
- B. Thus we are instructed to pay close attention, to look for the second coming of the Lord.
 - 1. We are to observe the signs which would indicate that His coming is near.
 - 2. We are to observe what goes on in the world to fulfill the signs.
- C. We are to live our lives in light of the fact that we know He is coming, but do not know exactly when.
- D. The implication is that He may come today.
 - 1. We are to watch to see if He does come today.
 - 2. There is no way to know in advance if today is the time.
 - 3. There is no way to know that it is not the time.
 - 4. It is not our business to know: it is our business to watch.
 - 5. It is our business to live our lives each day as if this is the day that Jesus may come.

II. An illustration to show the need for watchfulness, verses 43 – 44.

- A. If the man of the house knew at what watch the thief would come, he would not suffer his house to be "broken up."
 - 1. The expression "broken up" has to do with the mud walls of the house.
 - 2. A thief would break through the mud wall to gain entrance.
 - 3. The point is that if he knew when the thief would come he would be watching and would be ready for him.
- B. He would not even need to know the exact time.
 - 1. If he knew the watch in which the thief would come he would be ready.
 - 2. The nights were divided into four watches: (6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, 9:00 PM to 12:00 AM, 12:00 AM to 3:00 AM, 3:00 AM to 6:00 AM.)
- C. The same principle applies to the second coming.
 - 1. We should not need to know the exact time of His coming.
 - 2. All we should need to know is that He is coming and we should be watching for His coming.
 - 3. And yet we know more; we know the signs of His coming.
 - 4. There is no excuse whatsoever for any of us to be caught by surprise.
(We do not know the exact time but do know to be watching.)

III. Some questions.

- A. What if I were to warn you that a thief is planning to break into your house tonight?
 - 1. Would you pretend you did not hear? Would you refuse to believe me? Would you go on as if nothing had been said?
 - 2. Or would you be watching to prevent the thief from breaking in?
- B. What if I were to tell you that Jesus is coming back again soon?
 - 1. Would you pretend not to hear? Would you refuse to believe me? Would you ignore me as if I had said nothing?
 - 2. Or would you make preparation for His coming and start watching for His coming?

C. I have it on very good authority that He is coming; now what are you going to do?

D. There are three things that each of us should do:

1. Make sure we are saved.
2. Examine ourselves to see if we are living in a way which would please the Lord.
3. Make whatever changes are necessary in order to please Him.

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