

"Staying awake and watchful" is often linked to certain other concepts. So is its opposite. Examples:

Being alert/watchful is linked to being alive, awake, clothed; and in the light, day. Also: sober (self-controlled) and receiving salvation.

Being not alert/watchful is linked to being dead, asleep, naked; and in the darkness, night. Also: drunk and suffering wrath.

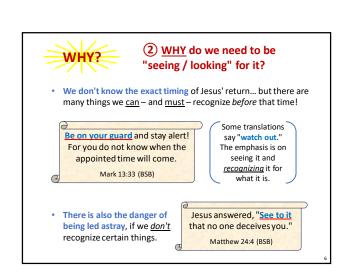
As we look through the New Testament, we discover ...

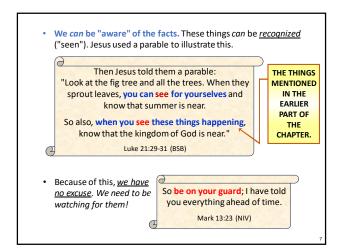
This end-time focus applies to both Jews and Gentiles.

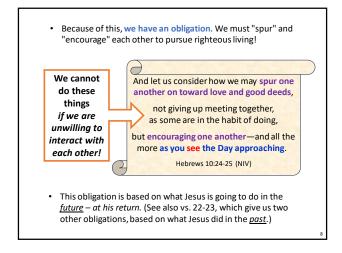
NO group of Christians is said to be "exempt" from this focus.

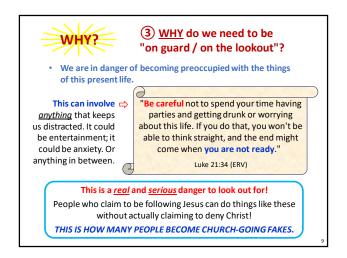
Scripture mentions NO time period when this focus is not needed.

IN OTHER WORDS: Scripture gives us NO opportunity to excuse ourselves from this obligation!

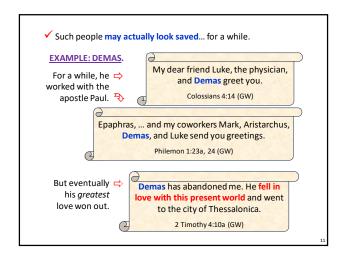


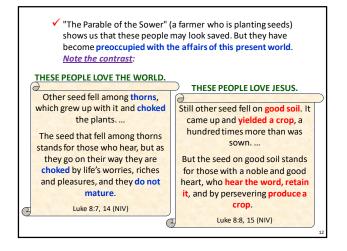


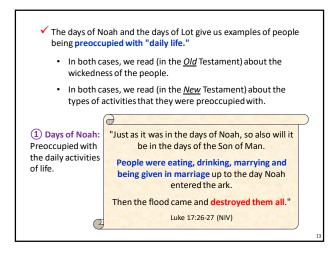




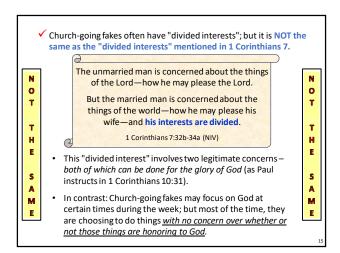


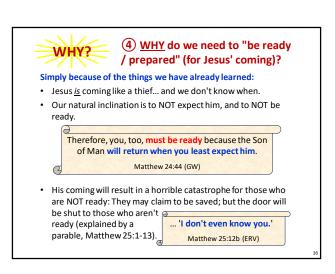


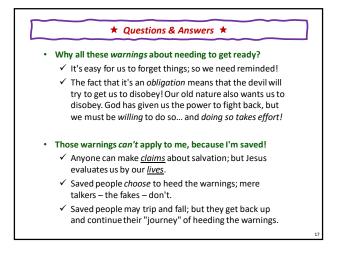


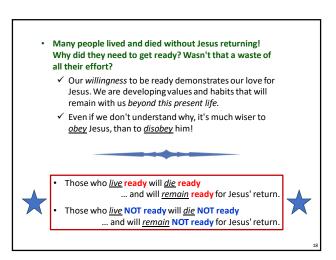


2 Days of Lot: "It was the same in the days of Lot. Preoccupied People were eating and drinking, buying and with the daily selling, planting and building. activities of life. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all." Luke 17:28-29 (NIV) 3 Application to Jesus' return: MANY will be preoccupied with the daily activities of life. But there is ONE big difference: "It will be just like this Today, we have many more on the day the Son of options for being distracted -Man is revealed." activities, entertainment, Luke 17:30 (NIV) hobbies, goals and careers... even "church activities."









- How can I know if I'm ready? (Answer #1)
 - ✓ If you are pursuing the life that Jesus requires of you, then you are ready.
 - ✓ A "ready" life will require sacrifice and value changes.

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. *

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

Matthew 13:44-46 (NIV)

* (Based on modern-day situations, some may disapprove of this person's actions. But evidence suggests that it was considered a perfectly legitimate response in Jesus' day.)

- How can I know if I'm ready? (Answer #2)
 - ✓ You <u>can't</u>, if you are unwilling to take time to find out.
 - ✓ How important is the Kingdom of God/heaven to you? How much do you value it?
 - ✓ If you just want a quick answer, so you can "get on with life" – then you're not really interested in it.



- What if I do these things, but accidently slack off in the last moment before I die? Does that mean I'm going to hell?
 - ✓ Jesus knows our weaknesses. At the judgment, the issue will be your life-pattern, not an inconsistent moment.
 - ✓ Has "following Jesus" has become the goal of your life? Are you trying to develop a habit of pursuing his will? Or is it an "add-on" that you do on occasion (such as once a week)?

SUGGESTIONS FOR GETTING READY

· Here are our suggestions from last time:

- ✓ Some of the verses we have looked at (and their contexts) tell us some of the things we must do.
- ✓ Luke 12 is also a good passage to read. It is a collection of issues related to living NOW, and preparing for ETERNITY. (It also mentions the "need to be ready" and the "coming as a thief" concept.)
- 2 Peter 3 (mentions the "Day of the Lord" and the "thief" concept); and Romans 12-13 (defines what "love" is; also the urgency of living a life of love, in light of Jesus' coming).
- Here are some more suggestions; but just about *any* New Testament passage about "how to live" will teach us something applicable to this issue!

MORE SUGGESTIONS FOR GETTING READY...

- ✓ Some of the verses we have looked at today (and their contexts) tell us things we must do.
- ✓ 1 Peter 4:7-10 gives us some specific things to do. And if we are suffering persecution for following Jesus, we can consider what 1 Peter 4:12-19 says. (The situation may be difficult at the present; but in the long run, it will be far worse for those who don't know God.)
- ✓ You may also want to consider passages that describe the "signs of the times." What do <u>you</u> see happening in the world around you? Such evils have always been present, in varying degrees; but they will probably intensify as the end approaches. 1 Timothy 4:1-2 and 2 Timothy 3:1-5 are two examples. 2 Peter 3:3-9 also warns us that people will *mock* the idea of Jesus' coming, because it hasn't happened yet. (Verses 8-9 explain why he hasn't returned yet.)

YOUR MISSION: "CHOOSE!"

We $\underline{\mathit{can't}}$ choose the CONSEQUENCES of our actions.

We can only choose the ACTIONS that lead to those consequences.

Anyone can say they want the <u>consequences</u> of "being ready."

But most will be "too busy" to do the <u>actions</u> that <u>allow</u> those consequences to exist.

Consider this: If you knew for certain that Jesus was going to return tomorrow, would that change the way you live today?

If so, then that should influence the way you live <u>now,</u> even if he <u>doesn't</u> return tomorrow!

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