

May 1, 2014

Be On Guard

Luke 21:34 (NASB), ***“Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap.”***

A recently released survey from the Wall Street Journal and NBC News finds that the majority of Americans surveyed want to pull back from the world stage even as the United States deals with the crisis in Ukraine and Russia. The article in the Wall Street Journal says that “over half of those surveyed want the U.S. to be less active on the global stage.”

As I read this article I remembered the old Bill Murray movie “What About Bob?” in which “Bob” was encouraged by his therapist to “take a vacation from your problems.” Sometimes life can seem a bit overwhelming and right now in our national life, things seem to be a bit overwhelming and it just seems that it might be easier to just opt out of these problems. Understand I’m not suggesting that Americans are wrong in thinking this. I’m just using this as an illustration of the human tendency to ignore problems and then entertain or consume our thoughts with that which is trivial in nature.

Most people also like to ignore the truth that their lives can end at any moment or that the Lord Jesus Christ could return at any moment. We like to choose not to think about his in the hopes that maybe it will just go away. Because of these twin realities we are to ***“Be on guard.”*** This warning is given numerous times in Scripture. In Matthew 24:42 Jesus said, ***“Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.”*** In Luke 12:40 it says, ***“You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.”***

Here in Luke 21:34 Jesus warns us of two things that we need to be on guard against so as to be prepared for His return. The first is to be on guard against the over indulgence of our appetites. In verse 21 Jesus says that we are to guard against our hearts being ***“weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness.”***

The word ***“dissipation”*** is translated to mean to be “intemperate in one’s drinking habits.” Intemperate means that one is unable to exhibit self control. The idea that is being conveyed *here* is of someone who is unable to control themselves when it comes to the drinking of alcoholic beverages. Jesus here ties ***“dissipation”*** together with ***“drunkenness”*** because the one always leads to the other. As Christ followers we are to be under control in all areas of our lives and are not to get caught up in a lifestyle of excess.

Today far too many so called Christians have bought into the lie that it’s okay to revel in this lifestyle. They have taken the concept of the liberty which we all have in Christ and have taken it to excess. As Christ followers we are to be temperate, self controlled and disciplined. We are not to overly pleasure in the things of this world because we are forgiven. We are to honor Christ with all that we do and hanging out in a bar and overindulging in the party lifestyle does not bring honor to the name of Christ.

The second thing which Jesus warns that we are to guard against is the pursuit of the good things of this life. He says that we are not to be **“weighted down”** by **“the worries of life”** either. The word **“life”** as it is used here is translated from a Greek word which means **“daily life, ordinary.”** What Jesus is talking about here is the over pursuit of success and money in this life. This is the snare of many of us in today’s culture and it often, in fact *almost* always comes at the price of ignoring our relationship with Christ.

In Mark 4:19 Jesus, as he was telling the parable of the seeds said, **“but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires of other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”** Unfortunately far too many of us put the cares and concerns of making money and advancement in our careers ahead of being faithful Christ followers. Often times we will only participate in fellowship, study, prayer, and church attendance *if* we have nothing else to do.

The problem with these two areas of warning is that if we overindulge in both or either of them we are not prepared then for **“that day”** as Jesus says here. None of us knows what tomorrow holds or what an hour from now holds. Instead of consuming our lives with that which is not eternal and will not last, we are to invest in the things that concern eternal life.

I want to encourage each of you to live a life that invests in that which glorifies and honors God. If you are concerned that you are living a life that is invested in what is right in front of you and are concerned about your salvation let me encourage you to repent of your sins and believe in Jesus Christ as both your Lord and Savior.

If you have any questions about what that means please contact me here at Calvary Baptist Church at 970-824-5222. You also may email me at pastotra@centurylink.net or contact me on Facebook or on Twitter at @Adamspastor.