



**Bible Study – March 27, 2024**

## **A Study About Sharing Your Faith**

### **Lesson 13: Be On Guard and Be Alert | Mark 13:32-37 (NIV)**

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#### **Introduction**

This week was Holy Week, representing the last seven days of Jesus Christ's earthly life as the "Son of Man." He sat with four named disciples on the Mount of Olives, answering their questions. He foretold of the temple being destroyed and the signs of His second coming. He told them warnings about deception and encouragement to stay watchful about the church's missionary outreach, the believers' persecution, and the social/political unrest concerning the advancement of the kingdom of GOD. Throughout His conversation with these disciples, He told them to "be watchful." (*See VV 5, 9, 23, and 33*) This was His way of encouraging the church to be steadfast in faith and obedience to the will of GOD through this "age of grace." This study will examine Jesus' persistence in ensuring His church remains alert and on guard until He returns.

#### **Only the Father Knows the Hour**

**Mark 13:32**

*"But about that day or hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."*

The Son of Man is how Jesus Christ described His earthly life. What does it mean? The Apostle Paul gave meaning to the Lord's humanity in the following verses: *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! [Philippians 2:6-8 NIV]* While Jesus was GOD, He became Man while living on earth. He relinquished all His divine authority and rights to become human and exist among humanity. He became wholly humble and submissive to the authority and will of the heavenly Father.

As a result, Jesus accepted human limitations, including His limited knowledge of heavenly things. What do I mean by this? When He said that no one knows the day or hour—not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son but only the Father—this was an expression of His human limitation that He accepted as the Son of Man. As disciples today, we must remember that Jesus reasoned, inquired, felt, feared, read, rested, learned, ate, drank, and walked as we do.

**Q. Find a different bible verse that shows one of Jesus' human qualities.**

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#### **Be On Guard**

##### **Mark 13:33**

*Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.*

Since the church does not know when GOD'S appointed time for Jesus Christ's return will occur, it must be watchful and stay awake. The mission to go and spread the gospel requires watching everywhere one goes. Also, there are enemies of the gospel who resist it and want to harm its ministers. However, the most significant reason to watch and stay awake is for the return of Jesus Christ as the King of Kings. Consider the Lord's words in the following verses: *"But in those days, following that distress," 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'* *"At that time, people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.* [Mark 13:24-26 NIV] Jesus will be seen in His divine presence, displaying His great power and glory.

**Q. What are some other bible verses about the second coming of Jesus Christ?**

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#### **A Parable: The Absent House Owner**

##### **Mark 13:34-37**

*It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. "Therefore, keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back--whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"*

Jesus tells a parable that exhibits His ascension and return. He is the Man that is going away. The house usually means a family is present, and Christ's family is His church. The servants in this story represent His apostles assigned to perform the work (of the ministry). There is no mention by the Lord as to when the Man will return. However, this work by the apostles was to continue faithfully in His absence until He returned. The instruction to the doorkeeper to stay watchful while doing his duties. Watching was His expectation of all the apostles. So, they were all responsible for being watchful while doing their work.



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Jesus encouraged them to keep watch, which was His command to be diligent and relied upon while waiting for His return at an unknown hour. He gave them a general timetable of expectation, which could be evening (6:00 PM), midnight (12:00 AM), rooster crow (3:00 AM), or dawn (6:00 AM). Again, the hour is unknown, so they could not fix their hopes for those times. He reminded them that He could come suddenly and did not want to find them sleeping, inattentive, neglecting, or unprepared for His coming. Lastly, He restates the importance of watching, not them alone, but for everybody to watch, including the church today.

Why? There was the expectation of calamities, especially as the Roman emperors persecuted the Christians. There was the eminent judgment of death awaiting all who did not repent. When Jesus Christ indeed comes, He will be looking for those with renewed hearts, those who have been pardoned, those who have repented of their sins, and those who believed in Him. They will be living in holiness and righteousness. Otherwise, the cold hand of death will be upon all who reject Him. It will be a judgment more incredible than the days of Noah ([Read Genesis 6:5-8](#)). I say to us again, go and proclaim the gospel truth everywhere you can. Jesus will come again!

### **What Next?**

- Making Disciples
- Master-Life Discipleship Course
- Using the course materials

### **Endnotes**

1. Drs. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament* (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor Publishing, 1983) 171-173.
2. Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture is taken from *The Holy Bible, New International Version®*, NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.