



Luke 21:36

(36) Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

New King James Version

In our day, "watch" has lost much of its original power. Is there anything more passive than watching television? We live in a spectator nation. We watch movies, news, the markets, and sporting events. Watching has become an activity that puts us on the sidelines and not on the field of battle, an idea foreign to the original meaning of the word. At the time of the King James translators, "watch" emphasized the carefulness, attention, and vigilance in the way a soldier kept alert for any sign of enemy movement.

A concept that has more meaning to us today can be found in the word "overcome." This word implies that we watch ourselves to spot our problems, do battle with them, and conquer them. "Overcome" better communicates the battle we have joined ([Romans 12:21](#); [I John 5:4-5](#); [Revelation 21:7](#)).

If we watch ourselves spiritually, we are not just watching our human nature, but doing battle with it. We are not just watching [the world](#) and its influences as they bombard us, but fighting against them. We are not just watching Satan's devices as they toy with us, but defending ourselves against them. In other words, "watch" as originally intended covers the entire process of overcoming that is our calling. We are to be identifying the problems, engaging them, and putting them to flight ([Revelation 3:2](#); [16:15](#); [I Corinthians 16:13](#); [I Thessalonians 5:6-8](#)).

Therefore, "overcome," more clearly than "watch," communicates to someone living today what [Luke 21:36](#) says we should be doing as we near the end of the age. The premier end-time book, Revelation, repeatedly emphasizes that overcoming is "job one" for us ([Revelation 2:7](#), 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 12:11; 21:7).

[Luke 21:36](#) suggests that those who alertly overcome and pray always are those that

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Luke 21:36 (<http://www.theberean.org>) may be counted worthy to escape and stand before Christ in God's Kingdom. In verse 36, Christ ties together all He has said throughout the chapter. If we do not neglect the spiritual (verses 34-35), and instead watch and pray always, we can "escape all these things" (verses 7-33) and enter God's Kingdom.

Luke 21 is a chapter about the end time, and in verse 36, we have spiritual instruction directly from Jesus to anyone living during that time. He is telling us how to escape the final effects of the turmoil that is ahead and to enter God's Kingdom. This, therefore, becomes an extremely powerful verse in helping us to understand *exactly* what we should be concentrating on at this time. It is a roadmap to safety and salvation.

What if someone told us where to find two tickets, which if purchased by us, would grant us escape from the end-time tumult and entrance into God's Kingdom? What price would we pay? Two such "tickets" exist, and we have the wherewithal to purchase them. Luke 21:36 shows us the two tickets. One is the "watch/overcome" ticket and the other is the "pray always" ticket. If we choose to be lackadaisical about overcoming or prayer, are missing either ticket, or have only a partial ticket, we will likely be required to "buy" those same two tickets at a very dear price in the Tribulation.

The Bible states quite a few "formulas" for producing certain things. We need to understand that none of these formulas stands on its own. They fit into a whole that includes other factors supplied from other instruction found elsewhere in Scripture. However, there are formulas, and then, there are *formulas*. Those that Jesus gives tend to be "trunk of the tree" formulas. They *must be* our base, and then we can stack other instruction on them.

These "trunk of the tree" formulas not only form a foundation that supports everything else, but they also give direction and boundaries for what and how we can add to them. Once a builder lays a foundation for a small, three-bedroom house, it automatically limits what he can and cannot construct on it. Consequently, we cannot build a beautiful spiritual temple on the wrong foundation. Luke 21:36 is an integral part of the right foundation for those of us living at the end.

As we have seen, in Luke 21:36, Christ reveals that the roles of watching—orpaying careful attention to overcoming—andpraying always are vital to our Christian lives at this time.

— Pat Higgins

To learn more, see:

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Praying Always (Part One)

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