



[Luke 21:36](#)

(36) Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

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In [Luke 21:36](#), our Savior provides us with the two "tickets" we need—*watching* (careful, vigilant attention to overcoming our nature) and *praying always*—to be accounted worthy to escape the troubles at the close of this age and to enter the [Kingdom of God](#). These two activities are pillars that support the foundation on which our Christian lives rest during these end times.

How important are these two pillars? Exactly what is Christ instructing us to do as we encounter the end of an age?

In [Luke 21:36](#), when Christ says, "Watch," He is calling for us to scrutinize our lives in order to change them. We are not just to note the problems we see but to overcome them. How important is it to overcome? If [God](#) mentioning something twice establishes it ([Genesis 41:32](#)), how significant is a subject when He mentions it *fifteen times*? Not fifteen times throughout the whole Bible but in just one book! And not in just any book, but a book of special significance to us, one about the end time—Revelation!

In this end-time message, Christ says seven times, "I know your works" ([Revelation 2:2](#), 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15). What are works? They are simply the results of our efforts in overcoming, both the failures and successes. [Jesus](#) is saying, "I know the level of your overcoming." Then, for each church—whether a, group, or attitude—He comments on that effort. Overcoming is highlighted another seven times ([Revelation 2:7](#), 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21), as Christ ends each of His critiques with a promise that begins, "To him who overcomes. . . ." As an exclamation point, Christ warns us seven times, a number signifying completeness, to heed what He says to *all* these churches ([Revelation 2:7](#), 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

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Finally, in [Revelation 21:7](#), Christ addresses overcoming a fifteenth time. He makes a promise to those who successfully overcome: "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son."

Revelation shows us that "Job One" for a Christian is overcoming, especially for someone living at the end time. This is the message in [Luke 21:36](#) also: We have to overcome to be with Him in God's Kingdom. [Salvation](#) itself hinges on our cooperation with Him in overcoming ([Matthew 25:30](#)).

The [Parable of the Ten Virgins](#) ([Matthew 25:1-13](#)) demonstrates the importance of overcoming. The difference between the wise and foolish virgins is their supplies of oil. While water represents the power of God's [Holy Spirit](#) to cleanse, oil represents its power to work, to do good. Thus, the difference between the virgins is their good works ("I know your works"), how much they overcame their selfish human natures by acting in [love](#) toward God and man.

Both groups had oil, but the foolish virgins did not have *enough* for the unexpectedly long delay ([Luke 21:34-35](#)). When the cry went out, their lamps were still burning but sputtering and about to go out. They were not prepared for the long haul. They had not continued to overcome. They were not enduring to the end. Their oil—their good works, their overcoming—proved insufficient for the task. In this one point, they failed, and what a foolish failure it was!

Emphasizing the importance of [Luke 21:36](#) and watching, Christ makes a specific promise to those living at the end who are watching, that is, successfully overcoming: "Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them" ([Luke 12:37](#)).

Conversely, considering the implications of [John 17:3](#), Jesus gives a chilling judgment to the virgins who fail to overcome: "I do not know you" ([Matthew 25:12](#)).

— Pat Higgins

To learn more, see:
[Praying Always \(Part Two\)](#)

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