



Different Uses of Watchfulness in the Bible

Deuteronomy 4:14-20:

And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.

“Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth. And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day

Psalms 10:8 - “He sits in ambush in the villages; in hiding places he murders the innocent. His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless.”

Matthew 16:6 - “Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Matthew 25:23 - “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

Matthew 26:41 - “Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

1 Timothy 4:16 - “Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

Watchfulness is absolutely vital to the growth of our other spiritual disciplines.

Definition of Watchfulness

- A universal carefulness and diligence, exercising itself in and by all ways and means prescribed by God, over our hearts and ways, the baits and methods of Satan, the occasions and advantages of sin in the world, that we not be entangled
 - Universal means that this carefulness extends to all parts of our lives.
 - “The watchful believer never takes a day off.” – Brian Hedges



- “Carefulness” is just that—to be full of care.
- “Diligence” means we’re being persistent.
- “Exercising itself” is an active pursuit.
- “in and by all ways and means prescribed by God.” Watchfulness utilizes all the spiritual disciplines and means of grace at our disposal.
- “Over”
 - Hearts and ways
 - The baits and methods of Satan
 - The occasions and advantages of sin
- “In the world” aka the present evil age that we live in.
- “that we not be entangled.”
 - Hebrews 12:1-2:

One Addition

A universal carefulness and diligence, exercising itself in and by all ways and means prescribed by God, over our hearts and ways, the baits and methods of Satan, the occasions and advantages of sin in the world, that we not be entangled, *so that we might glory in God.*

- If we’re simply in the business of killing sin for the sake of killing sin, we will become fine Pharisees. Instead, however, we are watchful and sin-killing because we are convinced that there is more satisfaction in Christ Jesus than there is in anything else. That means we’re willing to fight and kill our sin for that reality.

The Four Ingredients to Watchfulness

Wakefulness

- Ephesians 5:11-14 Paul wrote,

“Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.””

- “As people who belong to the day, we must be mentally sober and morally alert, dressed in the Christian armor of faith, hope, and love. To be watchful is to be wakeful.” – Brian Hedges

Attentiveness

- Attentiveness involves noticing, considering, and being alert.
- First, we must be attentive to the Word of God.



- Hebrews 2:1 - “Therefore *we must pay much closer attention* to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.”
- Secondly, we must be attentive to ourselves.
 - Luke 17:3, “Pay attention to yourselves!”
 - 1 Corinthians 10:12, “Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.”
- Third, and most importantly, we must be attentive to Christ.
 - Hebrews 12:1-2, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”
 - “For every one look at your sin, take ten looks at Christ.” - Edward Welch Vigilance

Vigilance

- Vigilance adds the element of *danger*.
- First, the world.
 - James 4:4, “You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”
- Second, the flesh.
 - Galatians 5:16-17: “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.”
- Third and finally, the devil.
 - 1 Peter 5:8-9: “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.”
 - The devil’s activity is a real reality that is often overlooked by some Christians, and over emphasized by others.
 - “While we shouldn’t suspect demonic influences behind every flat tire or case of the flu, neither should we discount their real antagonism towards our spiritual well-being.” - Brian Hedges

Expectancy

Expectancy is more hopeful in tone and substance, based upon something far more solid and reassuring—the promises of God.

- Matthew 25:11-13 when he said, “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”



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- 1 Peter 4:7, “The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.”
 - “When framed in its eschatological context, watchfulness has a twofold function: to keep us in a constant state of readiness and to focus our sights on Christ. So while watchfulness requires moral vigilance, it does not consist in our sanctified naval gazing but in fixing our eyes on Jesus and seeing everything else in the glorious light of His past triumph and future coming. Far from being gloomy, watchful Christians are thus the most hopeful people of all. Their whole lives are vibrant with joyful expectancy for the Bridegroom’s return.” - Brian Hedges