

## CHRISTMAS PRESENCE: "JESUS WATCH"

**THESIS:** Be On Guard (Watch)

**TEXT:** Mark 13:21-37

**OPEN:** What does a sermon about the Second Coming of Jesus have to do with Christmas? In **Mark 13:21-37** let's discover how to watch for the Second Coming of Jesus and the glory from God.

### 1. BE ON GUARD AGAINST THE RUSE OF FALSE MESSIAHS AND PROPHETS ALL THE TIME.

A. **Mark 13:21-23** "At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect—if that were possible. So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time."

1. **Guard** (Greek: *blepo*) means to pay attention, take heed, or watch out for.

a. *Watch out for false messiahs and prophets because they counterfeit the person of Jesus.*

1. **Luke 21:8** "Jesus replied, 'Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in My name, claiming, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them."

a. **Illustration:** Founder of the Jehovah Witness religion Charles Taze Russell predicted the return of Jesus in 1874. When that did not happen, Russell said Jesus came invisibly.

b. The glorious return of Jesus will be visible to everyone.

1. **Luke 17:24** "For the Son of Man in His day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other."

2. **Revelation 1:7a** "Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him..."

b. *Watch out for false messiahs and prophets because they counterfeit the power of Jesus.*

1. **2 Thessalonians 2:9-10** "The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved."

2. **Revelation 13:11-14** "(Another beast) exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth."

a. Invitation: Wednesday Bible study of *Revelation 13* begins Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> (6:30 pm). Among the topics: The mark of the beast (666), the mark of God, and the 144,000 of Heaven.

### 2. BE ON GUARD FOR THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST AT ANY TIME.

A. **Mark 13:32-33, 37** "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come...What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

1. **Watch** (Greek: *gregoreo*) means to be alert, careful, observant, or vigilant.

a. *Watch for the return of Jesus Christ because we don't know the time He is coming back.*

1. **Matthew 24:37-39** "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man."

b. *Watch for the return of Jesus Christ because we do know one day He is coming back.*

1. **1 Thes 5:1-6, 8-10** “Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in night. While people are saying, ‘Peace and safety,’ destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief...Let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up...”

a. **Illustration:** (*Benjamin Spalink: “I used to think I don’t have to go to church”*)

**CONCLUSION:** What does a sermon about the Second Coming of Jesus have to do with Christmas?

**Hebrews 10:5-6, 12-14, 19-25** “When Christ came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You prepared for Me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings You were not pleased. Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about Me in the scroll—I have come to do Your will, O God...When this priest (Jesus) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time He waits for His enemies to be made His footstool, because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy...Since we have a Great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith...Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

**Video:** “Christmas Epic” by Seek First Media (<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/30815/christmas-epic>)

What does a sermon about the Second Coming of Jesus have to do with Christmas?

**Matthew 1:20b-21** “An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.’”

**CLOSE:** Be on guard against false messiahs and prophets through the Christmas presence of the Jesus watch.