

Being Strengthened to Stand Without Compromise (Lk. 21:34-36)

I. ASKING THE HOLY SPIRIT TO STRENGTHEN OUR INNER MAN

- A. A foundational principle is that God releases more strength in our inner man as we ask Him. The Spirit empowers in small measures. Often we cannot discern the specific times when He touches us. Our inner man is our most important aspect of life, yet it is the most neglected prayer focus.

¹⁶ *To be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man... (Eph. 3:16)*

- B. See MikeBickle.org for *Ten Prayers to Strengthen Our Inner Man: F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P* notes. I use the acronym F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P to identify ten prayers asking for power in the inner man.

II. JESUS' EXHORTATION TO THE END-TIME CHURCH: TAKE HEED AND PRAY

²⁵ *There will be...on the earth distress of nations...²⁶ men's hearts failing them from fear...³¹ When you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near...³⁴ Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.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. (Lk. 21:25-36)*

- A. Jesus prophesied of a snare (trap) that would challenge both unbelievers and believers (v. 35). The coming of this snare is an inevitable fact. Individual responses to it will vary greatly. We cannot escape being challenged by this snare. However, we can escape compromising before it.

1. A snare is hidden from sight: it is designed to lure its prey into a false sense of security.
2. A snare holds captive: once the prey is entrapped, it very difficult to escape.

- B. This snare has a unique application for the generation in which the Lord returns.

- C. This snare is presently increasing in intensity as we approach the coming of the Lord.

- D. This snare has diverse expressions which will challenge each person in a different way.

1. We must not yield to increasing lusts: immorality is increasing greatly in the earth.
2. We must not despair in difficulty: giving up in our zeal for Jesus to live for comfort.
3. We must not fear standing for righteousness: without yielding to the fear of man.
4. We must not be offended at God for what He does (judgments) or does not do.

III. WE MUST STAND WITHOUT COMPROMISE (V. 36)

- A. We seek to stand by escaping all the compromises of the snare. All will either stand or stumble.
- ³⁶ *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy [prepared] to escape all these things [sins of v. 34]...to stand [in victory] before the Son of Man. (Lk. 21:36)*
- ¹³ *Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Eph. 6:13)*
- ¹⁷ *For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand? (Rev. 6:17)*
- B. By standing, we walk in the fullness of what God ordained for us in this age and in the next without suffering any loss. By escaping compromise, we will also escape suffering loss.
- ¹⁵ *If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved... (1 Cor. 3:15)*
- C. We ask to be supernaturally strengthened or counted worthy (able) to stand without compromise. We are not asking to be counted worthy to receive forgiveness. We are forgiven as a free gift because of Jesus' worthiness (2 Cor. 5:17-21). Rather, we pray to have a worthy response to Jesus by sustaining a diligent pursuit to live wholehearted before Him (1 Thes. 3:13; 5:23).

IV. JESUS' TWOFOLD EXHORTATION: TAKE HEED AND WATCH AND PRAY

- A. Take heed to yourself. There is a connection to what we do with our body and what happens in our heart. To be weighted down is to be spiritually dull without feeling God's presence.
- ³⁴ *But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. (Lk. 21:34)*
1. Carousing (dissipation): indulgence in pleasure or intemperance by seeking to be stimulated
 2. Drunkenness: seeking to escape pressure or boredom without connecting with God
 3. Cares of this life: overly anxious about one's daily provisions and safety
- B. The Day may come on one unexpectedly (as a thief) resulting in them suffering unnecessary loss. There two important truths related to the metaphor of Jesus coming like a thief. First, that His coming results in one suffering unnecessary loss because they are not prepared. Second, His coming is unexpected. A thief works effectively when their victim is not expecting them. Jesus is not the thief. The "thief effect" occurs because of issues in one's life that lead them to be unresponsive to the Holy Spirit's leadership so they suffer unnecessary loss.
- ¹⁵ *Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. (Rev. 16:15)*
- ⁴ *But you...are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief... (1 Thes. 5:4)*
- C. Jesus' call to watch and pray is the most practical thing to do in light of the eschatological snare.
- ³⁶ *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape... (Lk. 21:36)*