

Bible Study

Just What do you mean

**“Watch ye therefore”?
(Luke 21:36)**

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**Version 1.1
2008**

CONTENTS

Introductory Remarks.....	3
What Herbert W Armstrong Taught	7
Bible Helps	10
Bible Versions	15
Conclusions	18
Appendix 1: Parallel Scriptures	19
Appendix 2: Paul's Teachings Paralleling Christ's.....	23
Appendix 3: Watchfulness	24
Appendix 4: An example of watching from the old WCG.....	28
References	32
Index	33

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” (II Tim 4:3-5)

Introductory Remarks

Are the scriptures clear about Christians watching world events? Is it a Christian duty to do so?

Church of God folk may recall that the Tkaches made a change early during their administration to reinterpret and water-down the meaning of Luke 21:36 and thereby Christian duty on this issue.

In my experience over the years, those that claim that Christians who *watch* world events and study the prophecies of the Bible have 'prediction addiction' comprise a noisy, but neo-Protestant minority within the Church of God. They always ignore preaching about the prophetic Word or if they do preach on it, it is so watered-down to be unrecognizable from Protestant teaching.

One wonders WHY they wish to water down 1/3 of His Word.

Some are now teaching – again – that the term *watch* as used in Luke 21:36 does not apply to watching world events, but to *watch* ourselves. Others are a bit more compromising, and will tell you that it refers to both, with emphasis on watching ourselves.

But is that really the case? And if so, does this mean that Herbert W Armstrong was wrong in his interpretation? If he was, then the emphasis and direction of Church magazines and programmes must change (if not already) to be on other topics, not on the future Kingdom of God and the specific events leading up to the return of Christ.

One error (or truth) begets another. Get one wrong, an entire chain of thinking and understanding begins to warp.

So let us take a look at what the Bible says and how it interprets itself. Don't let anyone lead you astray. For as we shall see, *watch*, is used in different contexts and does NOT always mean to watch oneself, but also to be outward looking, away from the self. This leads to the way of GIVE and not GET.

As such, let us watch those teaching neo-Protestantism, in accordance with Paul's charge:

"For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned unto fables.

But **watch** thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (II Tim 4:3-5)

Finally, as we turn to into further detailed study, consider the primary scripture that we are discussing:

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. *Watch* ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21:36)

Ponder on what Luke has written in both its immediate context; Biblical context and the prophetic context. Then turn to the following scriptures which align with the above:

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. **But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.** Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. **Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.**" (I Thess 5:1-6)

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. **Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.** For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to *watch*. *Watch* ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, *Watch*." (Mark 13:32-37)

The historical background to this is found well explained by Edersheim in *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services* writes about the sudden coming of the captain of the guard:

"The Night-watches

"But already the night-watches had been set in the Temple. **By day and night it was the duty of the Levites to keep guard at the gates, to prevent, so far as possible, the unclean from entering.** To them the duties of the Temple police were also entrusted, under the command of an official known to us in the New Testament as the 'captain of the Temple' (Acts 4:1, etc.), but in Jewish writings chiefly as 'the man of the Temple Mount.' The office must have been of considerable responsibility, considering the multitude on feast-days, their keen national susceptibilities, and the close proximity of the hated Romans in Fort Antonia. At night guards were placed in twenty-four stations about the gates and courts. Of these twenty-one were occupied by Levites alone; the other innermost three jointly by priests and Levites. *

"* The watch at some of the gates seems at one time to have been hereditary in certain families. For this, see Herzfeld, vol. i. p. 419; ii. p. 57.

"Each guard consisted of ten men; so that in all two hundred and forty Levites and thirty priests were on duty every night. The Temple guards were relieved by day, but not during the night, which the Romans divided into four, but the Jews, properly, into three watches, the fourth being really the morning watch. *

"* Compare Matthew 14:25. See, however, the discussion in Jer. Ber. i. 1. Hence, when the Lord saith, 'Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching,' He expressly refers to the second and third watches as those of deepest sleep (Luke 12:38).

"The Rounds of the Captain

"During the night the 'captain of the Temple' made his rounds. On his approach the guards had to rise and salute him in a particular manner. **Any guard found asleep when on duty was beaten, or his garments were set on fire – a punishment, as we know, actually awarded.** Hence the admonition to us who, as it were, are here on Temple guard, 'Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments' (Rev 16:15). But, indeed, there could have been little inclination to sleep within the Temple, even had the deep emotion natural in the circumstances allowed it. True, the chief of the course and 'the heads of families' reclined on couches along that part of the Beth-Moked in which it was lawful to sit down, * and the older priests might lie on the floor, having wrapped their priestly garments beside them, while the younger men kept watch.

"* The part built out on the Chel; for it was not lawful for any but the king to sit down anywhere within the enclosure of the 'Priests' Court.'

"But then the preparations for the service of the morning required each to be early astir. The priest whose duty it was to superintend the arrangements might any moment knock at the door and demand entrance. **He came suddenly and unexpectedly, no one knew when.** The Rabbis use almost the very words in which Scripture describes the unexpected coming of the Master (Mark 13:35), when they say, '**sometimes he came at the cock-crowing, sometimes a little earlier, sometimes a little later. He came and knocked, and they opened to him. Then said he unto them, all ye who have washed, come and cast lots**' (Mishnah, Tamid. i. 1, 2). For the customary bath required to have been taken before the superintending priest came round, since it was a principle that none might go into the court to serve, although he were clean, unless he had bathed. A subterranean passage, lit on both sides, led to the well-appointed bath-rooms where the priests immersed themselves. After that they needed not (except under one circumstance) all that day to wash again, save their hands and feet, which they had to do each time, however often, they came for service into the Temple. It was, no doubt, to this that our Lord referred in His reply to Peter: 'He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit' (John 13:10)" [emphasis mine]

The following scriptures from the aforementioned assist us with a deeper understanding:

"And in the fourth **watch** of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea." (Matt 14:25)

"And if he shall come in the second **watch**, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants." (Luke 12:38)

"**Watch** ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:" (Matt 13:35)

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that **watcheth**, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Rev 16:15)

So, from the above, what is it that we are supposed to *watch*? Could the neo-Protestants please explain?

Clearly it is those events leading up to the bridegroom's coming. In today's terms we would say we are to watch world events in the light of Bible prophecy.

[NB: this is a Bible study, not a research paper or detailed project]

What Herbert W Armstrong Taught

For over 50 years of his ministry, Herbert Armstrong taught that to watch in Luke 21:36 referred to watching world events. For instance, in *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last*, he wrote:

"You NEED NOT FEAR OR WORRY over the things coming on the earth in the meantime. In this same prophecy of Jesus as reported by Luke, regarding the world disturbances now ahead--regarding the Great Tribulation and the Day OF THE Lord--Jesus ended His Olivet prophecy with these assuring words: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke21:36).

May God help you to be one of those studying the prophecies, watching world events as they fulfill them, and praying always that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before Christ at His coming!"

Unfortunately, many have given up studying prophecy and have become lazy. Prophecy takes a lot more effort and thinking than studying most other topics. Using a little bit of grey matter becomes too taxing for the neo-Protestants.

In the article "Why America is Cursed", *Good News*, November 1957, Herbert Armstrong wrote:

"Christ died to deliver you from the curse of the law! He paid the penalty of your sins in your stead. Now you can receive the BLESSINGS of the law if you continue in obedience!

"WATCH ye therefore" -- yes, WATCH world events fulfill prophecy -- "and PRAY ALWAYS, that ye may be accounted worthy to ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36). So warned AND PROMISED, Jesus Christ!" (emphasis mine)

Similarly in the November/December 1986 *Plain Truth* article, "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," by David Hulme (emphasis mine):

"When we put this [6th] chapter in Revelation alongside Matthew 24 and let the Bible interpret its own symbols, we can see that these

horsemen represent the signs that Jesus said were to be the "beginning of sorrows"—the time leading up to his Second Coming.

You need to face it, and then you need to know how to escape. Jesus did say it was possible to qualify to escape what is coming.

In Luke 21:36 we read this: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

Here's a warning to stay alert, to watch world events and to start making right choices. We have a booklet, *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last*, that will help you get started. This age of man's course is almost run out and you need to escape these awful times ahead. Christ promised a time of protection for those who will heed a way to escape. You need to find out how.

The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last will help you grasp the meaning of these prophecies that at first seem so hard to understand." (emphasis mine)

The site <http://net.bible.org/verse.php> concurs with this interpretation:

"The call to *be alert at all times* is a call to remain faithful in looking for the Lord's return."

Old Testament scriptures

The concept of watching and the watchman is found throughout the former books of the Bible. Here are some of the relevant scriptures:

Ex 23:13; 34:12; De 4:9,23; 6:17; 11:16; 12:13; 27:9; Jos 22:5; 23:11; 1Ki 2:3,4; 8:25; 2Ch 19:7; Ne 4:9; Job 36:18-21; Ps 39:1; 102:7; 119:9; 141:3; Pr 4:23,25,26; 8:34; 16:17; 28:26; Na 2:1; Hab 2:1; Mal 2:15.

You may wish to look up each of these scriptures as part of a Bible study.

New Testament scriptures

As with almost all subjects, the Old and New Testaments compliment each other. For the newer books of the Bible follow the principles and doctrines of the Old Testament. This includes watching:

See Mt 6:1; 16:6; 18:10; 24:4; 25:13; 24:42-51; 26:40,41; Mr 4:24; 13:9-23,32-37; Lu 8:18; 11:35; 12:15,35-40; 21:8-36; Ac 20:28-31; Ro 11:21; 13:11; 1Co 7:29-31; 9:27; 10:12; 11:28; 16:13; Ga 6:1; Eph 5:15; 6:18; Php 3:2; 4:5; Col 4:2,17; 1Th 5:4,6,21; 1Ti 4:16; 2Ti 4:5; Heb 2:1; 3:12; 12:15; 1Pe 4:7

Key Scriptures

Matthew 24:42 "**Watch** therefore"

Matthew 25:5, 10 "While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept they that were **ready** went in and the door was shut."

Matthew 24:44 "Be ye also **ready**"

Mark 13:33-37 "**Watch** and pray"

Luke 12:40 "Be ye therefore **ready** also ..."

Luke 21:34 "take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be over charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you **unawares**"

Luke 21:36 "**Watch** ye therefore, and pray always"

1 Thessalonians 5:4, 6 "**watch** and be sober"

1 Peter 4:7 "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and **watch** unto prayer"

Rev 3: 2-3 "Be **watchful**, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not **watch**, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee"

Revelation 16:15 "Blessed is he that **watcheth** and keepeth his garments"

Bible Helps

The concepts of watching and being a watchman are closely interrelated. The following Bible helps explain.

Word Studies in the New Testament by Marvin Vincent on Mark 13:

“33. **Watch** (ajgrupnei~te). The word is derived from ajgreu>w, to *hunt*, and u[pnov, *sleep*. The picture is of one *in pursuit of sleep*, and therefore 256

wakeful, restless. Wyc.’s rendering of the whole passage is striking: *See! wake ye and pray ye!*

34. **A man taking a far journey** (a]nqrwpov ajpo>dhmov). The A.V. is incorrect, since the idea is not that of a man *about to go*, as Matthew 25:14; but of one *already gone*. So Wyc., *gone far in pilgrimage*; and Tynd., *which is gone into a strange country*. The two words form one notion — *a man abroad*. Rev., *sojourning in another country*.

35. **Watch** (grhgorei~te). A different word from that in verse 33. See also verse 34. The picture in this word is that of a sleeping man rousing himself. While the other word conveys the idea of simple *wakefulness*, this adds the idea of *alertness*. Compare Matthew 14:38; Luke 12:37; 1 Peter 5:8. The apostles are thus compared with the *doorkeepers*, verse 34; and the night season is in keeping with the figure. In the temple, during the night, the captain of the temple made his rounds, and the guards had to rise at his approach and salute him in a particular manner. Any guard found asleep on duty was beaten, or his garments were set on fire. Compare Revelation 16:15: “Blessed is he that *watcheth and keepeth his garments*.”

The preparations for the morning service required all to be early astir. The superintending priest might knock at the door at any moment. The Rabbis use almost the very words in which scripture describes the unexpected coming of the Master. “Sometimes he came at the cockcrowing, sometimes a little earlier, sometimes a little later. He came and knocked and they opened to him” (Edersheim, “The Temple”).

37. **Watch**. The closing and summary word is the stronger word of verse 35: *Be awake and on guard*.” [emphasis mine]

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia:

"WATCHMAN

woch'-man (tsopheh, shomer, metsappeh, notser):

Used to designate a sentinel on the city walls (2Samuel 18:25; 2Kings 9:18; Psalms 127:1; Isaiah 62:6) or on the hilltops (Jeremiah 31:6). Song of Solomon 3:3; 5:7 introduces another class, "the watchmen that go about the city," and thus, it would seem, points to some system of municipal police. The distinction in meaning between the various words is clear, tsopheh having the idea of "outlooker" and notser that of "careful watcher" (being applied even to besiegers from outside: Jeremiah 4:16, "watchers"), **while shomer also embraces the idea of "defending" or "guarding."** In Isaiah 21:6 metsappeh is to be taken generally in the sense of "watch." In Sirach 37:14 skopos, means simply "looker."

W. M. Christie" [emphasis mine]

Easton's Bible Dictionary (1897):

"Watches - the periods into which the time between sunset and sunrise was divided. They are so called because watchmen relieved each other at each of these periods. **There are frequent references in Scripture to the duties of watchmen who were appointed to give notice of the approach of an enemy** (2 Sam. 18:24-27; 2 Kings 9:17-20; Isa. 21:5-9). They were sometimes placed for this purpose on watch-towers (2 Kings 17:9; 18:8). Ministers or teachers are also spoken of under this title (Jer. 6:17; Ezek. 33:2-9; Heb. 13:17).

The watches of the night were originally three in number, (1) "the beginning of the watches" (Lam. 2:19); (2) "the middle watch" (Judg. 7:19); and (3) "the morning watch" (Ex. 14:24; 1 Sam. 11:11), which extended from two o'clock to sunrise. But in the New Testament we read of four watches, a division probably introduced by the Romans (Matt. 14:25; Mark 6:48; Luke 12:38). (See DAY.)" [emphasis mine]

Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words:

"A-1, phulake, [Noun, 5438] is used (a) with the meaning "a watch," actively, "a guarding," Luke 2:8, lit., "(keeping, phulasso) watches;" (b) of "the time during which guard was kept by night, a watch of the night," Matt. 14:25; 24:43; Mark 6:48; Luke 12:38. See CAGE, HOLD, IMPRISONMENT, PRISON.

Note: Among the Jews the night was divided into three "watches" (see, e.g., Exod. 14:24; Judg. 7:19), and this continued on through Roman times. The Romans divided the night into four "watches;" this was recognized among the Jews (see Mark 13:35)." [emphasis mine]

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature:

"Be ... on the watch" (NIV) translates the Greek verb *agrupneo*, literally, "to keep oneself awake, be awake." Figuratively, **"to be vigilant in awareness of threatening peril,** 'be alert, be on the alert, keep watch over something, be on guard.' " [emphasis mine]

Treasury of Scripture Knowledge:

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Watch. 12:37-40 Mt 24:42 25:13 26:41 Mr 13:33,37 1Co 16:13 2Ti 4:5 1Pe 4:7 5:8

pray. 18:1 Job 27:10 Ac 10:2 Eph 6:18,19 Col 4:2 1Th 5:17

accounted. 20:35 2Th 1:5,6

stand. Ps 1:5 Mal 3:2 Eph 6:13,14 1Jo 2:28 Jude 1:24"

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary:

"36. Watch ... pray, &c.—the two great duties which in prospect of trial are constantly enjoined. These warnings, suggested by the need of preparedness for the tremendous calamities approaching, and the total wreck of the existing state of things, are the general improvement of the whole discourse, carrying the mind forward to Judgment and Vengeance of another kind and on a grander and more awful scale—not ecclesiastical or political but personal, not temporal but eternal—when all safety and blessedness will be found to lie in being able to "STAND BEFORE THE Son of Man" in the glory of His personal appearing."

According to Richard Alan Jordan (<http://www.richardajordan.com/>), Luke 21:36 refers to:

a)grupneiíte de\ e)n pantii kair%½ deo/menoi iàna katisxu/shte e)kfugeíIn tau=ta pa/nta ta\

me//lonta gi;nesqai kaiì staqh=nai e)mprosqen tou= ui,ou= tou= a)nqrw̄ pou.

Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

a) *grupneíte* – 4x in NT – *to make an effort to learn of what might be a potential future threat* –

Mark 13:33 Take heed, watch; for you do not know when the time will come.

Luke 21:36 But watch at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of man."

Eph 6:18 Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

Heb 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you.

e) *kfugeín* – 8x in NT - *to flee from or out of* -

Luke 21:36 But watch at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of man."

Acts 16:27 When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

Acts 19:16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, mastered all of them, and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Romans 2:3 Do you suppose, O man, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, you will escape the judgment of God?

2Cor 11:33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands.

1Thess 5:3 When people say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape.

Heb 2:3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him,

Heb 12:25 See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven."

Strong's Concordance:

“69 ἀγρυπνέω *agrupneo* {ag-roop-neh'-o}

Meaning: 1) to be sleepless, keep awake, watch 2) to be circumspect, attentive, ready

Origin: ultimately from 1 (as negative particle) and 5258; TDNT - 2:338,195; v

Usage: AV - watch 4; 4

5720 Tense - Present (See 5774) Voice - Active (See 5784) Mood - Imperative (See 5794) Count – 592”

So then, why do we watch? Why do soldiers post guards? Why did the temple have watchmen? Why should we watch?

They did so out of a sense of responsibility and a duty of care toward others. So, if the threat arrives (armies, false brethren, false doctrines and concepts), swift action can be taken to fight off the evil or to flee to safety.

For that is our Christian duty!

Bible Versions

Viewing a number of Bible translations also assists us in sharpening our understanding of this concept:

American Standard Version:

But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Bible in Basic English:

But keep watch at all times with prayer, that you may be strong enough to come through all these things and take your place before the Son of man.

Douay-Rheims Bible:

Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of man.

Darby Bible Translation:

Watch therefore, praying at every season, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which are about to come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

English Revised Version:

But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Geneva Study Bible:

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to {i} stand before the Son of man.

(i) You will appear before him in a condition such that you will abide the presence and sentence of the Judge without fear.

GOD'S WORD Translation:

Be alert at all times. Pray so that you have the power to escape everything that is about to happen and to stand in front of the Son of Man."

King James Bible:

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

New American Standard Bible:

But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.

New International Version:

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.

New Living Translation:

Keep alert at all times. And pray that you might be strong enough to escape these coming horrors and stand before the Son of Man.

Noah's Webster's Bible Translation:

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

New Revised Standard Version:

Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.

New King James Version:

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.

People's New Testament:

Take heed to yourselves. The words here, but not the ideas, are peculiar to Luke. See notes on Mt 24:37-51.

The Message:

So, whatever you do, don't go to sleep at the switch. Pray constantly that you will have the strength and wits to make it through everything that's coming and end up on your feet before the Son of Man.

Tyndale New Testament:

Watch therefore continually and pray, that ye may scape all this that shall come. And that ye may stand before the son of man.

Weymouth New Testament:

But beware of slumbering; and every moment pray that you may be fully strengthened to escape from all these coming evils, and to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man.

World English Bible:

Therefore be watchful all the time, praying that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will happen, and to stand before the Son of Man.

Young's Literal Translation:

watch ye, then, in every season, praying that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are about to come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.

Conclusions

Now that we have virtually exhausted examining the scriptures on the subject of watching and the watchman, there can be no doubt that Herbert W Armstrong was perfectly correct in his interpretation of Luke 21:36 and similar scriptures.

For the scriptures interpret themselves and it is self-evident that Luke 21:36 refers to watching out for danger from the world. For those who live in the last days, we must watch world political, military and economic developments in the light of Bible prophecy. We should also watch trends in the Church, such as the infiltration by false ministers and brethren, false doctrines, evil philosophies of this world (eg liberalism, political correctness and globalism).

So, Luke 21:36 does not refer to watching ourselves – other scriptures take care of that. We MUST be careful not to compromise with Tkachism/Protestantism and water-down God's Word thereby leading astray the people of God.

Starting on the road to change the true meaning of Luke 21:36 from what we taught for decades, will lead directly to eschewing the Ezekiel Watchman message and the associated captivity doctrine (ie that the Anglo-Saxon-Keltic peoples are to be invaded and be taken as slaves into foreign lands).

Now that all what Herbert Armstrong predicted is beginning to occur in the world, many are pushing the Church of God away from its traditional understanding on prophecy.

As they have no right under God to do so; nor do they do it openly in the light rather than in the dark, it behoves us to WATCH what is going on within His Church per Revelation 2 & 3.

Finally, further information on the end time message to the House of Israel, which ties in with this Bible study, is available for free download from www.originofnations.org:

- *Is the Enslavement of the House of Israel Feasible in the 21st Century*
- *Just what do you mean 'Ezekiel's Message'?*
- *Pax Germanica & US of Europe OR a New World Order/Babylon Theory – which is the correct doctrine?*
- *German Plans to Invade Britain and America in World Wars 1 and 2*
- *Australia in Prophecy: Australia the Fair – Australia the Condemned*

Appendix 1

Parallel Scriptures

Luke 21	Mark 13	Matthew 24	Luke 17	Luke 12
29 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree , and all the trees;	28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:	32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:	26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.	35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;
30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.	29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.	33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.	27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.	36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.
31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.	30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.	34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.	28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot ; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;	37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.
32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.	31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.	35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.	29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.	38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.
33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.	32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.	36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.	30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is	39 And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would
34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged		37 But as the days of Noe		

with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the **goodman of the house** had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be

revealed.

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 Remember Lot's wife.

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be

come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant

broken up.

gathered together.

44 Therefore be ye also ready:
for in such an hour as ye think
not the Son of man cometh.

45 **Who then is a faithful and
wise servant, whom his lord
hath made ruler over his
household, to give them
meat in due season?**

46 **Blessed is that servant,
whom his lord when he
cometh shall find so doing.**

47 **Verily I say unto you,
That he shall make him ruler
over all his goods.**

48 **But and if that evil
servant shall say in his
heart, My lord delayeth his
coming;**

49 **And shall begin to smite
his fellowservants, and to
eat and drink with the
drunken;**

50 **The lord of that servant
shall come in a day when he
looketh not for him, and in
an hour that he is not aware
of,**

**will come in a day when he
looketh not for him, and at an
hour when he is not aware,
and will cut him in sunder,
and will appoint him his
portion with the unbelievers.**

47 **And that servant, which
knew his lord's will, and
prepared not himself, neither
did according to his will, shall
be beaten with many stripes.**

48 **But he that knew not, and
did commit things worthy of
stripes, shall be beaten with
few stripes. For unto
whomsoever much is given,
of him shall be much
required: and to whom men
have committed much, of him
they will ask the more.**

49 **I am come to send fire on the
earth; and what will I, if it be
already kindled?**

50 **But I have a baptism to be
baptized with; and how am I
straitened till it be
accomplished!**

51 **Suppose ye that I am come
to give peace on earth? I tell**

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

54 And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

Appendix 2

Paul's Teachings Paralleling Christ's

[NB: I found this table on the internet but have lost the URL for it]

Paul Referred to Jesus' Teaching	Jesus	Paul
Coming of the Lord from heaven	Matt 24:30 "... they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."	1 Thess. 4:16 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven..."
Angel(s)	Matt. 24:31 "...He shall send forth His angels..."	1 Thess. 4:16 "with the voice of the archangel..."
Trumpet blast	Matt. 24:31 "...with the sound of a trumpet..."	1 Thess. 4:16 "...with the trumpet of God"
Catching up of the living	Matt. 24:31 "...they shall gather together His elect..."	1 Thess. 4:17 "...shall be caught up together..."
Thief in the night	Matt. 24:43 "...if the goodman ...had know in what watch the thief would come..."	1 Thess. 5:1,2 "...so cometh as a thief in the night."
Warning against "sleeping"	Mark 13:36 "lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping."	1 Thess. 5:6 "...let us not sleep as do others"
Warning against "drunkenness"	Luke 21:34 "take heed ... lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness"	1 Thess. 5:6-8 "be sober...they that are drunken are drunken in the night. ...be sober"
"Watching" for Christ's coming	Mark 13:35-37 "Watch ye therefore ... What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."	1 Thess. 5:6 "let us watch..."

Appendix 3

Watchfulness

[NB: I found this table on the internet but have lost the URL for it]

- **Christ an example of.**

Matthew 26:38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

Matthew 26:40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

- **Commanded.**

Mark 13:37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Revelation 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

- **Exhortations to.**

1 Thessalonians 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

1 Peter 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

- **God especially requires in ministers.**

Ezekiel 3:17 Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

Isaiah 62:6 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,

Mark 13:34 *For the Son of man is* as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

- **Ministers exhorted to.**

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

2 Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

- **Faithful ministers exercise.**

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

- **Faithful ministers approved by.**

Matthew 24:45-46 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

- **SHOULD BE**

- With prayer.

Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

- With thanksgiving.

Colossians 4:2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

- With steadfastness in the faith.

1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

- With heedfulness.

Mark 13:33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

- With sobriety.

1 Thessalonians 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

1 Peter 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

- At all times.

Proverbs 8:34 Blessed *is* the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

- In all things.

2 Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

- Saints pray to be kept in a state of.

Psalms 141:3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

- **MOTIVES TO**

- **Expected direction from God.**

Habakkuk 2:1 I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

- **Uncertain time of the coming of Christ.**

Matthew 24:42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Matthew 25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Mark 13:35-36 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

- **Incessant assaults of the devil.**

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

- **Liability to temptation.**

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

- **Blessedness of.**

Luke 12:37 Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

Revelation 16:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

- **Unfaithful ministers devoid of.**

Isaiah 56:10 His watchmen *are* blind: they are all ignorant, they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

- **The wicked averse to.**

1 Thessalonians 5:7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

- **Danger of remissness in.**

Matthew 24:48-51 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

Matthew 25:8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

Matthew 25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

- **Illustrated.**

Luke 12:35-36 Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

- **Exemplified.**

David,

Psalms 102:7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.

Anna,

Luke 2:37 And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

Paul,

2 Corinthians 11:27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Appendix 4

An example of watching from the old WCG

**"God's Church Is Watching", Good News
August 1959, Vol. VIII, Number 8**

by A. J. Portune

THE GRAND smash climax of six thousand years of human experience is upon us! World news events are rapidly fitting together into the breath-taking and ominous picture that God foretold thousands of years ago!

We in God's Church have the opportunity of being right on the scene -- on the inside as it were -- as these world-shaking events take place.

Each week tens of thousands of news items appear in the newspapers and periodicals around the world. In this blazing array of headlines, by-lines and feature articles, which comprise the panorama of world news, can be read the inexorable fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bible.

Yet to most of the world these really BIG news stories, depicting the "mainline" events that herald this world's end, go unnoticed in the routine jumble and scramble of activities that fill our era. Without the knowledge of God's truth and the understanding of the prophecies of the Bible, there is no pattern nor rhyme nor reason in the news today. Each individual takes or leaves what he likes -- according to his OWN little world and the rest is so much paper and printers' ink.

News Gathering Department at Ambassador College

At God's Headquarters Church in Pasadena, California, the nerve center of God's work on earth, trained personnel of the News Gathering Department spend hour after hour every day sifting, sorting, comparing, cataloging and filing thousands of news reports from all over the world.

Nowhere on earth is there another such department! There are many, many news agencies and news gathering facilities around the earth, but there is not another one that really KNOWS WHAT TO LOOK FOR! Without God's Holy Spirit to guide them to an understanding of what lies ahead, they, too, would be blind to the significance of the very news stories they process.

The news gathering department of the Vatican at Rome is perhaps the largest and best equipped on the face of the earth. Yet with all their superior equipment, thousands of files and hundreds of employees, they are not able to REALLY discern the signs of the times.

What a thrill to realize we in God's Church have the opportunity of knowing what really is important in the news. What a blessing to be able to see these things happening and to KNOW what they mean.

An Important Commission

How many of us realize, however, how serious our responsibility is of "watching" and understanding the news as it develops!

God has opened the prophecies of the climactic times ahead to OUR understanding. He has shown us -- step by step -- with pin-point accuracy, the events that would lead up to the end of this age and the second coming of Jesus Christ. Notice what Jesus Christ said, after reviewing to the disciples what was ahead:

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye KNOW that summer is nigh: So likewise when ye shall see ALL THESE THINGS, know that IT [the end of the age] is near, even at the doors." Again: "WATCH YE therefore and pray always that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things." (Mart. 24:32-33 and Luke 21:36.)

For our OWN safety -- that we might be praying and staying close to God -- Jesus warned us to be watching and discerning the signs of the times.

Our Responsibility

Now do you begin to see the scope of our responsibility? With the understanding of the events set down by Ezekiel and amplified by Christ and the Prophets. WE must read in the day-by-day unfolding of the news the signs of the times. We must SHOUT it to Israel and the world. Jesus Christ said we would do this work! "And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world FOR A WITNESS [warning] and then shall the end come (Matt. 24:14).

The News Gathering and Reporting Department at Ambassador College is growing into one of the major departments in God's work. It has the most modern and efficient memory-o-matic system of recording and filing information. This filing system is constantly being revised and improved to fit the changing pattern of world events. Daily into these files goes the vital information gleaned from many sources. Many of the astounding -- eye opening -- articles you read in THE PLAIN TRUTH magazine and the startling facts you hear on THE WORLD TOMORROW program are drawn from these files.

Behind the bizarre headlines that splash across the newspapers and news magazines are often the obscure articles and news trends that are the REAL NEWS. Sometimes the real news stories about to SHAKE THIS WORLD -- stories that fit another piece into the plan of God -- are found in small type on the inside pages. The development of BOTULINUS -- a substance one-half pound of which could wipe out the entire population of the earth -- originally appeared as an obscure second or third page item.

How the News Department Functions

Keeping pace with the growing news developments is the regular staff of the News Gathering Department. Their job is to study and analyze the thousands of items that arrive weekly and to make them available in condensed analysis form. These vital reports present the developing panorama of news as seen through the eyes of prophecy.

Assisting the regular staff are a group of volunteer news readers. These "watchers" are selected from the alert student body at Ambassador College. Each is assigned two to three of the leading magazines or periodicals that are received regularly at Ambassador College Library. Carefully scanning and perusing these publications, they extract the important news items and channel them to the News Department.

Other confidential news reporting services and news letters from Washington, D.C., and other sources are subscribed to by the department to keep abreast of developments and trends.

Supplementing this also, come reports from the Ministers of God's Churches from their areas of the nation and the world. Ever on the watch, these trained and responsible men are continually sending valuable information for the files. Many valuable reports have been received from overseas from the headquarters for the work in England, where they are much closer to what is developing in Europe.

Your Part

By far the greatest volume of information, however, comes from members and co-workers in God's Church. Each day -- through the mail -- come literally thousands of news clippings on every conceivable subject and aspect of the news.

This valuable cross-section of the news represents many hundreds of "watchers" who are having a part in this vital "end-time" work. These unseen workers are able to cover the many newspapers and publications that the news department has no access to. These thousands of clippings add depth and scope to the department that would not be possible otherwise.

Here is where YOU can have an ACTIVE part in God's work.

Perhaps many of you have wondered which news clippings are of value -- what kind of information is important enough to send in. Our understanding of the prophecies of the Bible gives us the answer. Your diligent study of the Bible and your careful and alert attention to THE WORLD TOMORROW program and the articles in THE PLAIN TRUTH magazine will tell you what is important. These news articles which show the working out of God's plan here below -- the fulfilling of prophecy -- are the important ones. You may have to search for them; they won't always be on the front page.

You, as scattered members, can be particularly helpful by

contributing information that shows trends in YOUR LOCAL AREA -- information we don't get from our local big-city newspapers and national news magazines. It may seem a small thing, but put together with other reports from other areas, it may be a BIG story.

In sending your clippings, in order to increase their value and authority, PLEASE always include the NAME and DATE of the paper or magazine from which you take your clippings. This is very important! In using these news items, we must quote the source. Send your clippings to the regular address: Herbert W. Armstrong, Box 111, Pasadena, California. It would help if you would put "News Department" on the outside of the envelope.

The News Gathering Department would like to thank those of you who have been already faithfully helping us by sending your clippings. Without your help we could not be nearly as effective as we have been.

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Index

Bible, 32
Christ, 3, 7, 8, 23, 24, 25
Church of God, 3
David, 7, 26
Ezekiel, 18, 24
God, 7, 9, 13, 19, 23, 24, 25, 27
Good News, 7, 32
Herbert Armstrong, 7
Herbert W Armstrong, 3, 7
HWA, 7, 18
Israel, 24
Jesus, 6, 7, 8, 23
Kingdom of God, 3
Luke 21, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 23, 25
Ministers, 11, 24
Paul, 3, 23, 27
Plain Truth, 7, 32
Prophecy, 7
Revelation, 6, 7, 8, 10, 24, 26, 32
Son of Man, 4, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19
Tribulation, 7
Watch, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26
Watches, 11
Watching, 23
Watchman, 18, 32