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## Stay Awake!

*“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.” Luke 21:34*

Have you ever been surprised by something? I remember once when I was completely surprised and caught off guard. One of my nephews asked me if I wanted to go with him to the gym at the Jones Center and play some pickup basketball. I was all geared up for some hoops and wasn't paying much attention to the fact that we headed to another room in the complex. Surprise, Surprise!! It was a surprise 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party that my wife planned and worked to perfection. I was totally fooled that day. Wow! If it had been a truck coming at me that day I would have been run over.

Jesus warned his disciples about a coming Day of Judgment. In particular Jesus was warning about the coming destruction of Jerusalem that took place in 70 A.D. Many believe that Jesus also went on to speak of the Last Day of Judgment at the end of the world. Whether we believe he only had Jerusalem in mind or was speaking of the Last Days also, we cannot deny his warning to us about being so caught up in the world and its activities that we are caught by surprise and are not prepared.

The Amplified Version of Luke 21:34 reads, “But take heed to yourselves and be on your guard lest your hearts be overburdened and depressed---weighed down---with the giddiness and headache and nausea of self-indulgence, drunkenness, and worldly worries and cares pertaining to (the business of) this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap or a noose.” While most of us avoid drunkenness we may not be quite as careful when it comes to self-indulgence and worldly cares. In fact, sometimes the cares of this life so overwhelm us that we may believe we are entitled to a little self-indulgence.

Matthew Poole's Commentary on this passage states: “I take the Lu 21:34 to be a good exposition of the term watch, Lu 21:36. Avoid sin industriously, in a prospect of my coming to judgment: for sin is compared to sleep, Ro 13:11; Eph 5:14; and as he that watcheth doth not only wake, but setteth himself designedly to forbear sleep, in order to some end; so he who keepeth the spiritual watch must set himself designedly to avoid sin, upon a prospect of Christ's coming, and the uncertainty of it. Particularly he cautions his disciples against luxury and worldly mindedness. The first he expresses under the notions of gluttony and drunkenness, which are two eminent species of it. The latter, under the notion of the cares of this life; not necessary and provident cares, but superfluous and distracting cares. These things he presseth them to avoid, lest they should be surprised by Christ's coming, as he tells them the most of the world would be.”

The writer of Hebrews exhorts us, “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb. 10:24-25). Assembling with the saints is one way that we are urged to stay awake and be ready for the Day that is coming. We must continually battle our own desires to forsake the assembly in order to take care of our worldly pursuits. What does it take to keep you home from church? Stay awake and don't be caught unaware. That is one Day on which you really don't want to be surprised!