

or at midnight or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you I say to everyone, Watch. This does not mean, of course, there is anything wrong in sleeping. It does mean we should be alert constantly. That we should not be sleeping at times when we should be effectively serving the Lord. I believe the note of effectively serving the Lord is very important in these passages. The command to watch is not a command to be looking for the signs of the times trying to figure out how soon the Lord will come. After all we have no way to know. He says it will be in such an hour as we do not expect him that the Lord will come. But in Mat. 24:45 he says, Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom the master has put in charge of the servants in the household to give them their food at the proper time. It would be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so. If God has called you to be His servant, to present His Word to His people, will He find you faithfully studying the Word and giving out the truth to His people or will He you consider the work of the ministry as only a profession in which you do things at certain times but you are not constantly on the watch for opportunities to feed God's people with the knowledge of His Word.

It is interesting that in this chapter in Mark we find 3 verses that stress this idea: Verse 32, "No one knows about that day or hour not even the angels in heaven nor the Son, but only the Father." Verse 33 35, "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back; whether in the evening or at midnight, when the rooster crows or at dawn." And verse 36, "If he comes suddenly do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you I say to everyone, Watch."

Now there are people who say these many commands to be watching (because we do not know when the Son of Man is coming) are commands that apply only to the last generation before the Lord comes. [How does one know whether or not he is living in that last generation?] It is of course true that the disciples immediately after the ascension knew that He would not come immediately at that time. Despite the stress that was laid in these statements about being ready and watching they know that the Word of God was supposed to be preached in many parts of the world. They knew that they had a mission to perform. They knew that it was mostly likely that John 21 was correctly interpreted as a prediction of how Peter would die. They were told