

R 3

His stress on the fact--you're to be ready whenever He comes. We find Him saying in verse 36, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away, but of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father also, and that leads right on the exhortation in verse 42, after the record of the days of Noah, when everything is going in normal fashion. Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Verse 44--

Therefore be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Then 25:13, watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. He seems to be stressing vigilant Christian life, active service to the Lord, because we do not know when He is coming. Well, now it wouldn't seem to me to make much sense to say, "Be active and vigilant now and serve the Lord because you don't know, after something happens, when He is coming. You say to President Truman, "You be active now and you do good service to the nation now because you don't know how soon after the American withdrawal from Japan Russia may make war." Well, you say, "There's no sign of American withdrawal. That may take many, many years. That's a motive to get busy as soon as you see it but not yet." If it is something that is hundreds of years off, why does the Lord so frequently repeat this as a motive? (Student) Student: That American withdrawal might be very soon and the Russians might make war.

Dr. MacRae: Well, at least we have these, about a dozen passages, in which the stress is laid--you, Peter; you, apostles; you Christians, be vigilant; be active, because you don't know what day or hour the Lord will come. Now is that somewhere modified by saying, "These commands to be vigilant because you don't know when the Lord will come become operative after a certain sign and not before," or is it that there is to be a sign which is so soon before that, so immediately before it that actually you can't tell till right up to the time, say it was a minute or five minutes or even a day before, your command would have to apply all through the previous period. That is the thing we are interested in finding out. Now we noticed that in Matthew 24 certain definite commands are given to anyone who