

Constant Vigilance



“To be or not to be, that is the question.”

“Not all who wander are lost.”

“I’ll be back.”

“To infinity and beyond.”

“You can’t handle the truth.”

There are so many iconic catchphrases in our history of stories, from films and books and everywhere else. Part of the reason we love them so is because of how they speak to us. We relate with the character, we struggle as they struggle, and we want to overcome our struggles just as they have.

These phrases also speak to us because they work. They affect our lives. Some of them even take on a life of their own. They speak to us even though we have no idea where they come from. (Did you know the second one in the list is from Lord of the Rings? Few people do...)

One such catchphrase: Constant Vigilance. Without knowing any of the background, without knowing the story or the character, these words tell a story of their own. We know exactly what they mean. We even have ideas of what they cost. They can inspire us or scare us (or both). They are a way of life.

They are the way of the life we have been called to in Christ. Our relationship with Jesus is one of constant vigilance. He is to be a part of our every breath, our every thought, everything we do and say should be tied to Him.

But how?

How do we live a life of constant vigilance for our soul? Let’s find out together.

CONSTANT VIGILANCE



**MAD-EYE MOODY
HE'S SUCH A LOOKER**

³⁴⁻³⁵“Watch out! Don’t let my sudden coming catch you unawares; don’t let me find you living in careless ease, carousing and drinking, and occupied with the problems of this life, like all the rest of the world.
³⁶Keep a constant watch. And pray that if possible you may arrive in my presence without having to experience these horrors.” Luke 21:34-36 (TLB)

¹⁻²I look to you, heaven-dwelling God,
look up to you for help.
Like servants, alert to their master’s commands,
like a maiden attending her lady,
We’re watching and waiting, holding our breath,
awaiting your word of mercy.

Psalm 123:1-2 (MSG)

WATCHING

WAITING

³Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death?
⁴For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. Romans 6:3-4 (NLT)

**AFTER TONIGHT, WHAT'S
ONE THING YOU KNOW
FOR SURE ABOUT JESUS?**

EPILOGUE

What areas of your life are you more vigilant in?

How so?

Why?

What sucks away your vigilance? What trips you up?

How so?

What do you think you can do to get rid of or repair those areas?

Write down a list below. If you were to “wait” for God, what are some things you can be doing to wait properly and prepare for whatever it is God has for you?

Read Proverbs 8:32-36.

Did you notice how often it mentions being happy and joyful? How would living for God and watching and waiting for Him cause there to be joy in your life?

Read Luke 12:35-48.

I love how Jesus doesn't answer Peter's question and just keeps going.

But what do you get from these parables? What does it mean to live a life that is waiting for the Master?

Something to try this week: For one day think about Jesus as often as possible. Imagine Him with you. Every decision, every moment, every breath, try thinking about Jesus and Him with you. It's harder than it seems...

How did it go?

VIGILANT IN OUR TIME WITH GOD

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU
SPEND DOOM SCROLLING?
ARE YOU BRAVE ENOUGH
TO CHECK YOUR SETTINGS
AND FIND OUT?

BIBLE

THE SH'MA

⁴Listen, Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!
⁵You must love the Lord your God with your whole
mind, your whole being, and all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NET)

⁶These words I am commanding you today must be
kept in mind, ⁷and you must teach them to your
children and speak of them as you sit in your house, as
you walk along the road, as you lie down, and as you
get up. ⁸You should tie them as a reminder on your
forearm and fasten them as symbols on your forehead.

⁹Inscribe them on the doorframes of your houses and
gates.
Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (NET)

**BIBLE VERSES EVERYWHERE
SOUNDS FUN
HOBBY LOBBY WOULD HAVE MADE
A KILLING IN ANCIENT ISRAEL**

⁸Always remember what is written in the Book
of the Teachings. Study it day and night to be
sure to obey everything that is written there. If
you do this, you will be wise and successful in
everything.
Joshua 1:8 (NCV)

PRAYER

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS PRAYED
3 TIMES PER DAY

FIFTH CENTURY MONKS
PRAYED 7 TIMES PER DAY

MODERN PRIESTS AND MONKS
PRAY 4 TIMES PER DAY

²Be persistent in prayer, and keep alert as you pray, giving thanks to God.

Colossians 4:2 (GNB)

GETTING TOGETHER

⁴²They continually devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to times of prayer. Acts 2:42 (ISV)

**WOULD YOU COME TO
FIRE & WATER EVERY
NIGHT OF THE WEEK?**

²But they delight in doing everything God wants them to, and day and night are always meditating on his laws and thinking about ways to follow him more closely.

³They are like trees along a riverbank bearing luscious fruit each season without fail. Their leaves shall never wither, and all they do shall prosper. Psalm 1:2-3 (TLB)

**AFTER TONIGHT, WHAT'S
ONE THING YOU KNOW
FOR SURE ABOUT JESUS?**

EPILOGUE

If you knew you had the time to read your Bible, would you?

If you had the time to pray, would you?

If you had the time to get together more, Bible Studies, etc., would you?

Why or why not?

Is the issue that we don't have enough time? If not, what is it?

If you were in a serious relationship with someone, how would you spend your time with them? Why that?

Does this translate to how serious we are about knowing Jesus and being His? Why or why not?

Take a moment and look around your bedroom and/or bathroom.

If you could put Scripture somewhere that you would see it and think about it, where would you put it? Why?

Why don't you try putting some there now?

Read Matthew 6:19-21.

How do we store up treasures in our lives?

If someone were to open the treasure box of your life, what would they find?

So then how do we store up “treasures in heaven”?

Read Matthew 6:5-15.

What can you learn about prayer from this?

How do you pray? What do you need to pray about? Who do you need to pray for?

Read Hebrews 10:23-25.

What encouragement do you get from being with other followers of Jesus?

What encouragement do you give from being with other followers of Jesus?

VIGILANT IN FIGHTING TEMPTATION

TRY READING "THINK LIKE A SPY"
IT'S FASCINATING

¹⁴We have a great high priest, who has gone into heaven, and he is Jesus the Son of God. That is why we must hold on to what we have said about him. ¹⁵Jesus understands every weakness of ours, because he was tempted in every way that we are. But he did not sin! ¹⁶So whenever we are in need, we should come bravely before the throne of our merciful God. There we will be treated with undeserved kindness, and we will find help. Hebrews 4:14-16 (CEV)

⁸Be on your guard and stay awake. Your enemy, the devil, is like a roaring lion, sneaking around to find someone to attack. ⁹But you must resist the devil and stay strong in your faith. You know that all over the world the Lord's followers are suffering just as you are. ¹⁰But God shows undeserved kindness to everyone. That's why he had Christ Jesus choose you to share in his eternal glory. You will suffer for a while, but God will make you complete, steady, strong, and firm. ¹¹God will be in control forever! Amen.

I Peter 5:8-11 (CEV)

**WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE VIEWED
GIVING INTO TEMPTATION LIKE GIVING
INTO BEING MAULED BY A LION?**

ADMIT NOTHING

¹Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ²where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry.

³Then the devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread.”

⁴But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone.’” Luke 4:1-4 (NLT)

DENY EVERYTHING

⁵Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶“I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them,” the devil said, “because they are mine to give to anyone I please. ⁷I will give it all to you if you will worship me.”

⁸Jesus replied, “The Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’” Luke 4:5-8 (NLT)

COUNTER ACCUSE

EVERY VERSE JESUS QUOTES IS
FROM DEUTERONOMY.
I BET THERE’S A REASON WHY...

⁹Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! ¹⁰For the Scriptures say,

‘He will order his angels to protect and guard you.

¹¹And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’”

¹²Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the Lord your God.’” Luke 4:9-12 (NLT)

¹¹Dear brothers, you are only visitors here. Since your real home is in heaven, I beg you to keep away from the evil pleasures of this world; they are not for you, for they fight against your very souls. I Peter 2:11 (TLB)

⁷Don’t participate in the things these people do. ⁸For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! Ephesians 5:7-8 (NLT)

**AFTER TONIGHT, WHAT’S
ONE THING YOU KNOW
FOR SURE ABOUT JESUS?**

EPILOGUE

What would you say are your top areas that you are tempted in? Why those?

Do you see temptation as something that happens to you for real?

What if you were to really say out loud the steps given tonight? Do you think that would help? Why or why not?

Does the idea that Jesus was tempted in the same ways you are give you comfort? Why or why not? How could it make you feel better about your temptations?

Read James 1:12-18.

Do we sometimes put the blame for our temptation on God?

What does this tell us about how badly our enemy really wants to derail the lives God has for us? How often is that enemy ourselves and our selfishness?

Read Psalm 119:9-16.

Remember how Jesus quoted Scripture to the devil each time He was tempted?

How does this prayerful poem encourage us to know God's Word?

Read I Corinthians 10:12-13.

If there is always a way out of temptation why do we as followers of Christ still make so many mistakes? How can we hold on to this truth and live the lives Christ intended for us?

VIGILANT IN WELCOMING

WHAT SAFETY NETS ARE YOU RELYING ON?
WHAT HAPPENS IF THEY FAIL?

INVITING

¹⁴But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? ¹⁵And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!”

Romans 10:14-15 (NLT)

WELCOMING

³²The group of believers were united in their hearts and spirit. All those in the group acted as though their private property belonged to everyone in the group. In fact, they shared everything.

Acts 4:32 (NCV)

LIVING IT

¹⁷O God, you have helped me from my earliest childhood—and I have constantly testified to others of the wonderful things you do. Psalm 71:17 (TLB)

**TRY LOOKING UP THE
MAGNET EFFECT.
IT'S FASCINATING
HOW TRUE IT IS.**

⁵The Spirit of God whets our appetite by giving us a taste of what's ahead. He puts a little of heaven in our hearts so that we'll never settle for less.

⁶⁻⁸That's why we live with such good cheer. You won't see us drooping our heads or dragging our feet! Cramped conditions here don't get us down. They only remind us of the spacious living conditions ahead. It's what we trust in but don't yet see that keeps us going. Do you suppose a few ruts in the road or rocks in the path are going to stop us? When the time comes, we'll be plenty ready to exchange exile for homecoming.

⁹⁻¹⁰But neither exile nor homecoming is the main thing. Cheerfully pleasing God is the main thing, and that's what we aim to do, regardless of our conditions. Sooner or later we'll all have to face God, regardless of our conditions. We will appear before Christ and take what's coming to us as a result of our actions, either good or bad.

¹¹⁻¹⁴That keeps us vigilant, you can be sure. It's no light thing to know that we'll all one day stand in that place of Judgment. That's why we work urgently with everyone we meet to get them ready to face God. God alone knows how well we do this, but I hope you realize how much and deeply we care. We're not saying this to make ourselves look good to you. We just thought it would make you feel good, proud even, that we're on your side and not just nice to your face as so many people are. If I acted crazy, I did it for God; if I acted overly serious, I did it for you. Christ's love has moved me to such extremes. His love has the first and last word in everything we do.

I Corinthians 5:5-14 (MSG)

**AFTER TONIGHT, WHAT'S
ONE THING YOU KNOW
FOR SURE ABOUT JESUS?**

EPILOGUE

Where is the most welcoming place you have ever been? What is it that made that experience so welcoming?

Would you say that lines up with church? FIRE & WATER? Why or why not?

If you were to describe a church or youth ministry that is really, and I mean *really* inviting and welcoming, how would that work? What would they do?

Can you do those things at Fishers UMC or FIRE & WATER? Why or why not? What do you think would happen if you at least tried? Who can you try it with?

Read Acts 2:42-47.

Would you attend a church like that? Why or why not?

What do you think would make followers of Christ magnetic, people around them would see what God is doing in their lives and want to be a part of that?

Write down a story of when you truly experienced God, either His love, you felt His presence, whatever it may be. Write down the story of what happened. How can you live tomorrow like this story happened to you?

VIGILANT IN WORSHIP

“READ IT FOR YOURSELF”
GREAT IDEA...

THE LIST

¹³Try to get along with each other. ¹⁴My friends, we beg you to warn anyone who isn't living right. Encourage anyone who feels left out, help all who are weak, and be patient with everyone. ¹⁵Don't be hateful to people, just because they are hateful to you. Rather, be good to each other and to everyone else.

¹⁶Always be joyful ¹⁷and never stop praying. ¹⁸Whatever happens, keep thanking God because of Jesus Christ. This is what God wants you to do.

¹⁹Don't turn away God's Spirit ²⁰or ignore prophecies.

²¹Put everything to the test. Accept what is good ²²and don't have anything to do with evil.

I Thessalonians 5:13^b-22 (CEV)

How You Live

¹⁷And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. Colossians 3:17 (NLT)

**HOW ARE YOU LIKE
YOUR PARENTS...?**

¹Follow God's example in everything you do just as a much loved child imitates his father.
Ephesians 5:1 (TLB)

VIGILANT IN SACRIFICE

¹So then, my brothers and sisters, because of God's great mercy to us I appeal to you: offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer. ²Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect. Romans 12:1-2 (GNB)

²³Then he said to all, "Anyone who wants to follow me must put aside his own desires and conveniences and carry his cross with him every day and keep close to me! ²⁴Whoever loses his life for my sake will save it, but whoever insists on keeping his life will lose it; ²⁵and what profit is there in gaining the whole world when it means forfeiting one's self?

²⁶"When I, the Messiah, come in my glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels, I will be ashamed then of all who are ashamed of me and of my words now. ²⁷But this is the simple truth—some of you who are standing here right now will not die until you have seen the Kingdom of God." Luke 9:23-27 (TLB)

**AFTER TONIGHT, WHAT'S
ONE THING YOU KNOW
FOR SURE ABOUT JESUS?**

EPILOGUE

What have you sacrificed to live for Jesus? Make a list.

What has Jesus sacrificed for you? Make a list.

What would it take for us to start viewing sacrifice as a good thing rather than a negative? Why does sacrifice get such a bad reputation?

Read Ephesians 5:8-9.

What does it mean to live in darkness? What does it mean to live in the light?

What does that look like to live a life in the light?

How do you live life in such a way that when you are remembered or imitated people would be unable to fool anyone that they know you without mentioning Jesus?

What are the three biggest takeaways from what we've talked about?

How can you live those three takeaways out? Make them real.