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INTRODUCTION

“Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak,”
Matt. 26:41

IT IS FROM the Scripture above that this book draws its origin. The Lord experienced the most intense moment of His trial and testing as He endured agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-46). Aware of what lay ahead, He took two disciples, Peter and John, to watch and pray with Him. This was no ordinary situation, as the fate of humanity was at stake, and Christ chose to submit to the Will of the Father to atone for our sins. In this place, He prayed with passion and intensity, imploring the Father to consider if there was an alternative to the holy separation that He would incur should He take upon Himself our sins and bear our punishment. However, there was no other way but to endure the cross, and our Lord was fully aware of this challenging reality, making the sensitivity required to accompany Him in His suffering of the utmost importance; consequently, Peter and John were essential members of His support system.

Christ states, “Watch and pray that you may not enter into

1 temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
2 He knew the level of Satanic attack that was heading their
3 way and urged them to awaken in preparation for the chal-
4 lenges ahead. His admonition to Peter and John is echoed
5 from the Garden of Gethsemane to His disciples across all
6 eras. Our Savior wants us to be alert and attentive to His
7 instructions because they are significant to our focus for the
8 Kingdom of God. Consider how the disciples slept at a criti-
9 cal juncture in the mission, when they ought to have been
10 watchful with Christ and with one another. Although the bur-
11 den of the cross was His alone, Peter and John would also
12 face their own moments of testing and trial. Still, as our King
13 faced such a painful decision, He showed concern for His
14 disciples’ well-being, even to the point of imploring them to
15 watch and pray. Certainly, no one faults Peter and John for
16 feeling tired or weary, as this is the body’s natural response
17 to fatigue and exhaustion. Nonetheless, they were to com-
18 prehend the season of the trial as it approached, something
19 Christ taught them in private and intimate settings. It was not
20 unknown or foreign to the disciples that Christ was on Earth
21 as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world; how-
22 ever, they would soon learn of their purpose in God’s plan.

23 Throughout the history of the Bible, God’s followers were
24 consistently reminded of the malevolence and hazards pres-
25 ent around them. God often dispatched messengers to warn
26 them to seek refuge and rest in Him. The psalmist affirms,
27 “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in
28 the shadow of the Almighty” (Ps. 91:1). It was the providence
29 of God that sought to cover and protect His people from
30 the hidden dangers that lurked around them. In response,
31 they sometimes heeded these warnings and at other times

disregarded them. In instances where they neglected or re- 1
jected the admonitions, the repercussions were dire; none- 2
theless, God's mercy was evident as He provided a means of 3
escape. While this was not His preferred method, He chose 4
to extend compassion. However, the predominant challenge 5
faced by His people, particularly the Israelites, was their in- 6
volvement with pagan cultures that directly confronted God's 7
nature and holiness. Their moral proximity to such cultures 8
blinded them to their spiritual condition, fostering apathy 9
and lethargy with regard to God's commandments. 10

Today, He warns us of the same cautions about the secu- 11
lar world and its temptations. Like those in Scripture, some- 12
times we follow God's promptings, while at other times we 13
ignore or neglect His counsel. One of the biggest obstacles 14
for believers in following God's Word is forming alliances 15
and blending with a morally corrupt culture, which brings 16
a false sense of comfort and makes us easy targets for the 17
enemy's attacks. Can you hear Satan telling the church, "Get 18
comfortable, put your feet up, and enjoy yourselves," while 19
he continues to morally destroy countries like the United 20
States and others worldwide. The effects of Satan's strategies 21
are visible in all kinds of disorder and lawlessness, despite 22
these nations rejecting God's command to repent and be con- 23
verted. The Earth is filled with sin, and its rebellious actions 24
are constantly before the Almighty. He continually calls out, 25
extending His hand of salvation by grace through faith to ev- 26
ery person outside of eternal life. Yet, many choose spiritual 27
death instead of life. Jesus told Nicodemus (a Jewish Ruler), 28
"...this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, 29
and people loved the darkness rather than the light because 30
their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things 31

1 hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works
2 should be exposed" (John 3:19-20).

3 The issue of moral blindness originates from *arrogance*
4 and *complacency*. It is widely acknowledged that Satan
5 works persistently to foster this mindset among those who are
6 not born again (unbelievers). Regarding believers, his strat-
7 egy involves persuading us—much as he did with the couple
8 in the Garden—that such associations are permissible and
9 entail no consequences. Satan promotes the erroneous belief
10 that engaging with secular entities is harmless. Through de-
11 ceit and distortion, he appeals with statements such as, "God
12 never meant for you to distance yourselves from others in the
13 world, did He?" Such a question reflects the serpent's interro-
14 gation of the woman, "...did God actually say, You shall not
15 eat of any tree in the garden" (Gen. 3:1). The ultimate aim is
16 to manipulate believers through the improper and mislead-
17 ing use of information.

18 Yet God has consistently commanded His followers to
19 refrain from worldly conduct and sinful lifestyles. It is no
20 secret what God's stance is on holiness and sanctification;
21 however, many churches have adopted a lenient standard,
22 often influenced by sermons that emphasize ease and posi-
23 tive thinking as remedies for personal moral struggles. God
24 explicitly warns that worldly living leads to spiritual coldness
25 and alienation from Him. Moreover, such lifestyles render
26 His people emotionally vulnerable, making them susceptible
27 to various spirits of demonic influence and oppression. The
28 issue with diluted messages—characterized by bland words
29 and flattering speeches—is that they foster false hope, thereby
30 undermining believers' resolve to stand firm and endure dur-
31 ing emotionally testing times. Regrettably, many Christians