**By DE & CQ**

**Topic 15:** Vigilance and not lethargic; keeping your guard up, making progress; being prayerful; asking Lord to protect

**(5 short prophecy messages from Jesus to children, on the subject.)**

1. (Jesus says:) If you were walking on icy ground on a winter day, you wouldn’t run, right? You’d take extra care so you could make it safely to where you needed to go, without having an accident. Even though most of the time you aren’t walking on ice, still, there are ways to slip and fall each day. —Like accidentally saying something you didn’t mean to say, or forgetting to pray because you were too busy. Be careful each day and use your time wisely. Guard your thoughts and the words you say. Be prayerful, so you can have a safe and happy day.

2. So many things can go wrong if you’re not careful! But it works the other way, too. If you keep your guard up and stay close to Me, so many good things can come your way. It’s up to you, though. I give you that choice. I don’t force you. But if you’re wise, you’ll make the right choice. You’ll choose to be prayerful and on guard. Your spirit helpers are trying to help you, and they cheer for you every time you make a good choice. Each time you make a good choice, that’s progress. And each step of progress gets you closer to your Heavenly goal: Being like Me!

3. Please learn to be prayerful and cautious. Remember, the devil goes about as a roaring lion. He is out to hurt you and wipe you out in any way he can. It’s a spiritual warfare and that warfare does not stop. It goes on day in and day out. You’ve got to be on your toes! So get this lesson down! You’ve got to be very prayerful and very cautious. Being prayerful is not enough. You’ve got to be prayerful and careful! Always be seeking Me and staying close to Me. I’m telling you these things for your good and because I love you.

4. Maybe you think you’re in a messed up situation. You messed up, others messed and now everything is messed up! But you know what? I don’t see it that way because I have a plan. There is a reason I allowed all of this to happen. It’s because it’s another step in your growth. Every day, I’m teaching you and helping you learn more, and depend on Me more so that you can grow up into a real strong disciple. So don’t worry because I am right there with you. You can talk to Me anytime, and if you listen, I’ll talk back to you. I’ll give you the faith you need for this time.

5. As long as you continue to follow Me and stay close to Me and My Word, everything else will fall into place. You won’t have to worry about whether you’re growing or whether or not you’re on track. Just put Me first, spending time with Me, following My voice and reading My Word, I will bless you in everything else. I will bless your spiritual growth and help you mature.

**(5 Short true story, object lessons or reflections on the subject.)**

1. **Nehemiah the Builder**

Nehemiah worked in King Artaxerxes’ palace in Babylon. One day, the king noticed that Nehemiah looked sad and he asked him about it. Nehemiah told the king that he was sad because Jerusalem had been destroyed.

 “Please let me go home and rebuild the wall,” Nehemiah asked. The king gave Nehemiah permission to go.

Sanballot, the governor of Samaria, heard what Nehemiah was going to do and got hopping mad. If Jerusalem was prosperous again, he would lose control of the trade route. So he got angry and threatened Nehemiah.

Nehemiah also got a lot of negativity from the Jews who weren’t working on the wall. They kept saying that Sanballat would attack Nehemiah. The workers were discouraged, too. They were tired and Sanballat’s threats and the gloomy predictions of the other Jews scared them. Nehemiah told the people to lift up their voices in prayer and focus on the Lord. He told them to keep a weapon in one hand and a tool in the other. That way, they stayed vigilant.

The people worked hard, and the wall was finished in only 52 days. Everyone celebrated and worshipped God. Nehemiah was so thankful God had used him.

1. **The On-Guard Little Owl**

There was once a little owl who loved to play with his friends. Something told him, though, that he should also spend time with the older owls so he could learn wisdom from them.

“That’s boring!” his friends said. “Come and play with us!” But the young owl was determined. He knew that someday he would need the wisdom of the older owls. One night, he went to meet the older owls as they were on night watch. Everybody else was having fun at home.

After his night watch training lesson, the young owl was on his way home. Suddenly, he sensed something was wrong. He put the vigilance lessons he’d learned to use, and soon he spotted a cat prowling near his family’s tree.

He quickly hooted out a loud alarm call, and all the owls flew right over. Together, they chased the cat away.

“Good work,” said the oldest owl. “You put your lessons on vigilance to good use and kept your family safe.” The little owl glowed with happiness. Taking time to learn his lessons had paid off.

1. **The Girls Who Missed Out**

Jesus once told a story about ten young girls who were invited to a wedding. The wedding party was going to be held at night although no one knew exactly what time the bridegroom would come. All the girls brought lamps but five girls forgot to bring oil for their lamps. They asked the other girls if they could borrow some but they told them, “Sorry, we only have enough oil for our lamps. Go find someone who sells oil.”

The five girls hurried to find an oil seller. Just then, the bridegroom arrived. The girls who had oil in their lamps went inside with the wedding party. When the other girls came, the door was locked and they couldn’t get in.

Jesus told this story about the Kingdom of Heaven because He wants His followers to know that He is coming back so we need to stay on guard. We need to be watchful and ready for His return so that we don’t end up getting locked out of the wedding party like the five foolish girls. Jesus also told this story so that His followers know there are serious consequences for being spiritually lazy.

1. **Paul’s Narrow Escape**

The apostle Paul was a fiery preacher, which often made the religious Jews angry. One time, Paul gave his testimony in Jerusalem. Everything went fine until he said that God had called him to preach to the Gentiles. That’s when things exploded. It got so bad, the Roman commander was afraid Paul might get killed. So he took Paul into protective custody. Meanwhile, 40 Jews took a vow that they would not eat until they had killed Paul.

They then hatched a plot. They persuaded the high priest to ask the Romans to return Paul to the Jewish council so they could ask him more questions. On the way to the council, the men planned to attack and kill Paul.

Fortunately, a teenager, Paul’s nephew, heard about the plot. Right away, he went to the garrison and told his uncle Paul. Paul then told the Roman commander. The commander ordered an armed guard to escort Paul to another city that night.

We don’t know the name of this boy, but he was alert and in-tune. He didn’t just brush off what he heard. No, he sprang into action. Because he was alert, Paul was saved.

1. **The Hole in the Dike**

In Holland, the ground is lower than the sea. People have built big strong dikes to keep the sea out. Everything depends on the dikes staying strong. Without them, houses, fields and even people would get washed away.

One day Hans and his brother went on an errand. As they walked, Hans noticed a small hole in the dike. It was a tiny hole but water was bubbling through.

“A hole!” Hans cried. Hans knew what that meant. Soon the water would make a huge gap in the dike. Hans stuck his forefinger in the hole. Then he told his brother, “Run and get help!”

Hans’ finger got numb with cold, then his hand, and then his arm. It was dark and he was exhausted. Hans started to get afraid. But then he set his teeth and prayed, “Jesus, help us!”

Just then, Hans heard a shout. It was the villagers! They set to work with their shovels and repaired the dike. Afterwards, everyone cheered for Hans. Hans saved his country because he was alert and courageously did something about the danger.

**(5 Prayers & praises on the subject.)**

1. Thank You, Jesus, that You have called me and chosen me to serve You. Please help me to look steadfastly to You and listen to Your whispers so that I can know the way You want me to go. Help me to stay close to You so that You can use me to be a blessing to others. Help me to heed Your whispers so that I can grow and progress spiritually.

2. Thank You for Your love. Thank You that You are molding me and making me into what You want me to be. I know this takes time. It also takes dedication and staying close to You. Please help me to always stay close to You, to be aware of You and Your Spirit. You promised that I would hear a voice behind me saying which way to turn and where to walk. Please help me to hear Your voice like that. Help me to keep my guard up and keep making progress in the spirit.

3. Ouch, Jesus! I just made a big mistake! It really hurts! But I know You still love me and I’m thankful for that! Help me to see this as a lesson. Thank You for the times You teach me lessons. Thank You that You’re so patiently teaching me and using these things to change me and help me be what You want me to be. Even though it hurts, I’m thankful. I’ve got You, Jesus, and You’re always with me. I know You still love me.

4. Jesus, You’re so wonderful! You’re like my Big Brother! I know if I stay close to You and depend on You, I can make it. I want to live in You like the branch and the vine. It’s a fight to stay on-guard and stay on the right road, Jesus, and not let the enemy get even a toehold in my life. Please fight for me when I am weak! I know if I cry out to You, You will help me and give me victory

5. Thank You that You are always with me, Jesus. Thank You that You trust me to make good decisions. That makes me really desperate because I know on my own, I can’t get it right. But You told me to ‘watch and pray’ and that’s what I want to do. I want to stay close to You, learn the lessons You have for me and learn from Your Spirit. Help me to be sensitive to Your Spirit so I can learn and grow.

 **(5 Quotation from others, or hymn portion, or poem portion on the subject—names of who wrote it, or “author unknown” if don’t know.)**

1. The strongest principle of growth is that of human choice. –George Eliot

2. Happy is he who makes daily progress and does not consider what he did yesterday but what advance he can make today. –St. Jerome

3. Courage means to keep making forward progress while you still feel afraid. Joyce Meyer

4. Growth in the Christian life depends on obedience in times of crisis. James Dobson

5. **On-Guard Poem by Denis Martindale**

It's no good sitting on the fence,
Complaining life's too hard!
For surely it would make more sense
If you remained on guard!?
Like meerkats do, the whole day long,
Regardless of the cost,
Defiant 'gainst the giant throng,
Refusing to be bossed!

You may not be a meerkat, friend...
With dugouts underground,
But there are tactics you can tend,
Spiritual defences all around...
The weapon of prayer,
And vigilance, too...
That’s bound to work!
So think like meerkats do!

**(10 Bible verses or portions on the subject)**

1. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. [1 Peter 5:8](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/1-Peter/5/8)

2.Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of lifeFor from it flow the springs of life [Proverbs 4:23](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Proverbs/4/23)

# 3. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. Luke 21:36

# 4. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 1 Corinthians 10:12

# 5. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. Acts 20:31

6. Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man Luke 2:52

7. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth 2 Timothy 2:15

# 8.  But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18

9. And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15

10. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. Revelations 21:17