

Christian Worship Hymn 472—Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray

*Rise, my soul, to watch and pray; From your sleep awaken!
Be not by the evil day Unawares o'ertaken.
For the foe, Well we know, Is a harvest reaping While the saints are sleeping.*

*Watch! Let not the wicked world With its lies defeat you
Lest with bold deceptions hurled It betray and cheat you.
Watch and see Lest there be Faithless friends to charm you Who but seek to harm you.*

*Watch against yourself, my soul, Lest with grace you trifle;
Let not self your thoughts control Nor God's mercy stifle.
Pride and sin Lurk within, All your hopes to shatter; Heed not when they flatter.*

*But while watching also pray To the Lord unceasing.
God protections you day by day, Strength and faith increasing,
So that still Mind and will Shall unite to serve him And forever love him.*

This week's hymn is certainly fitting for the theme of the lessons. The author, Johann B. Freystein uses Jesus' words of encouragement to Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane as the overarching theme for his hymn. Watch and Pray! This is a very timely reminder for all Christians who daily face the attack of the evil triumvirate: the Devil, the World, and our own Sinful Nature.

Verse one is an earnest encouragement to be on our guard. There is a tendency to become comfortable in this world that we are living in. The world can lull us to sleep. We become desensitized to all the sin that we see around us. Don't let this happen to you! Don't let the sinful world sneak up on you! Be vigilant! Be awake! For the Devil, the old evil foe, loves to prey on the unsuspecting. We know very well that he will try to gather as many as possible to his harvest of destruction when people are unaware.

Verse two moves on to the second major danger, the sinful world itself. The world loves to lie to us. It is not subtle in its ploys to deceive us. Sin is rampant. Sin is bold. It tries to make sin seem normal and acceptable. It tries to make sin out to be our friend. But be on your guard! Sin is not your friend. The world is not your friend. Anyone who loves the world does not have the love of the Father in him! This so called friend will only seek to harm you in the end!

Verse three brings us the last danger, our own sinful selves. The danger that our sinful nature presents before us is a self-sufficient attitude. I can do it myself; I can save myself; I don't need God's grace. That self-sufficient attitude doesn't allow for us to be sinful. If we can do it ourselves, then our sin is not a problem. Therefore, I don't need God's mercy. Pride and smugness lurk deep within us. And if we heed their flattering cries, they will lead to destruction. Pride goes before the fall!

Watch, dear Christian, against these evil three. But don't forget to pray! Ask the Lord to help you in your fight! Pray continually! No problem is too trivial for God! God promises to help each and every day. He helps us through his Word and Sacraments. So stay connected! Your faith will increase. You will be stronger to fight off temptation. You will be able to love and serve your God because he has loved you first! Jesus gives us the power and Jesus gives us the warning. Watch and Pray!