



**Title:** Countdown

**Category:** Serving Self

**Tags:** 1 Peter 4:7, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Countdown, Matthew 24:36, Psalm 90:12, Serving Self

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, lift off! You've heard that countdown so often your mind finished it before I did. Our lives are full of countdowns—countdowns until the ball drops in Times Square, countdowns until the weekend or vacation, until the game is over or until the next one starts. That's the thing about these countdowns; the end of each starts the beginning of another—another rocket launch, another year, another week, another game.

But, there is a countdown that will not start again. A countdown that began at the beginning of time. How is it that as much as countdowns are a part of our everyday life this one is so far removed from our thoughts? There is none more real, more honest or more certain, and none more ignored. Maybe it's because the calendar counts up, not down. What if it did though? Counted down? What number would it have started at? What number would we be at now? What would it be like to turn to the last page—the December of time? Would we want to know when this clock is going to strike twelve?

God doesn't give us that option; no one knows but God what page we're on or what hour. "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Matthew 24:36).

One thing is for sure: there is a last page coming and, of all the countdowns in life, there is none more important.

Psalms says, "Teach us to number our days aright, so that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

So how do we "number our days aright?" Peter wrote, "The end of all things is near. Therefore, be clear minded and self-controlled so you can pray" (1 Peter 4:7).

Being clear minded is keeping in perspective what is important. Taking care of our here and now has some importance to be sure. God expects us to be good servants of what He has given us; but, keeping eternity in view puts everything in its proper place. It keeps us mindful to live holy lives and to teach our kids to do the same. It promotes the self-control we need to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). And, it encourages us to be men of prayer—calling on God as our strong partner in this life.

Men, God's calendar is counting down. Our lives are written on it somewhere. He says there will be signs that point to the end—His version of the two-minute warning. So be alert. Be self-controlled. Be ready.