

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3

by Paul Washer

The main purpose of the teaching on the Second Coming is to encourage believers to live a life of faith and obedience, and to be ready for the return of Christ.

Duration: 53:29

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:1

Topics: "Teaching"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being prepared for the day of the Lord's coming. He references 2 Peter 3:10 and Revelation 16:15 to highlight the suddenness and urgency of this event. The preacher encourages believers to discipline themselves by regularly listening to the Word of God in order to be alert and watchful. He also emphasizes the need for believers to be witnesses to the world, fulfilling the Great Commission. The sermon aims to encourage believers to live in the light, away from spiritual darkness, and to be characterized by faith, love, and hope.

Transcript

Let's please open up our Bibles again to First Thessalonians, chapter five. I'll read verses one through three. Now, as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need for anything to be written to you.

For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying peace and safety, then destruction will come upon them suddenly, like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. Let's pray.

Our God and Father, our great Lord and Savior, tonight we ask you that you would illuminate our hearts and our minds, that you would give us spiritual eyes to see, that you would grant us grace, that these words, Lord, would be proclaimed correctly. That it would be the word and the spirit that changes Lord lives. I pray for those who are here tonight, Lord, that do not know you.

Whose hearts have not been regenerated, who do not see, do not feel. Lord, take out their heart of stone and put in its place a heart of flesh that will long for you and run to Christ. Allow there to be tonight, Lord, a sense of seriousness.

What is being proclaimed that a great divide is coming, a great separation of humanity, Lord, let us see this text properly, but more that the Holy Spirit might work in our hearts to drive a keenness in us. A

sensibility, a living and light of Calvary and of the second coming, Lord, help us. In Jesus name, amen.

Now, this text that's here before us is a very important text for anyone that is studying what we call the doctrine of eschatology or the doctrine of last things. But again, I want to point out something to you that throughout the scriptures, when we're dealing with the last days, it always has a practical emphasis, a practical purpose. The text before us tonight is not designed to teach us the times and epochs of Christ's coming.

It's not to give us the intricate details of what's going to happen prior to his coming. This text has a very important purpose. I have here to encourage and build up believers that you would no longer live in what Paul refers to as spiritual darkness.

That you would come out of a spiritual dullness, a spiritual blindness, and that you would begin to live more and more like children of light. Now, there are some words here that I want to use over and over again to remind you. These words are awake.

Be alert, be sober, be self-controlled, be full of faith and love. Now, let me say that again. Be alert.

Be awake, be sober, be self-controlled, be full of hope and love. These are the kind of things that the second coming is supposed to instill in you. It's to have an effect, not upon just your speculation, but it is to have an effect upon the way you practically live in this world.

Now, there's another purpose also for this text, and the purpose is for the unbeliever. That unbeliever may be a pagan, that unbeliever may be a self-proclaimed atheist, that unbeliever may be a church member, that unbeliever may be sitting here tonight. And what this text is telling you is that all your self-confidence.

All your independence and whatever security you might have, it's built upon vanity. It's foolish, because at any moment Christ could come and your destiny forever will be determined. Do you hear me? Forever.

That is why we don't use this pulpit to entertain people. This is why we don't come in on Sundays or Wednesdays with just with the goal of, I don't know, trite fellowship, a warming of the heart, or teaching you a few principles so that you can live your best life now. That's not the purpose of this church or this pulpit.

But it's to put before you constantly the idea of eternity. That Christ is coming, and if you mock and tell me, well, he may not come for a thousand years. Everyone in this room will see him in less than 50, 60, 70, because whether he comes here or you go there, it really doesn't matter.

There is a seriousness to the Christian life. We're not all about fun or self-realization. We're about eternity.

An unchanging destiny, and that's what Paul is talking about here. Now, let's look at verses one and two. Let's read them again.

Now, as to the times and epics, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. Now, look at the first word.

Now, this word is designed to sort of divide the text. Too often we look at just the chapter, you know, chapter three or chapter four, chapter five, and we see that as dividing the text. And sometimes it does, but sometimes it doesn't.

Paul's not starting in now on a new topic. He's going to link these two things together in what way? If you look at chapter four, verse 13 through 18, Paul is emphasizing the certainty of Christ's coming. He will come and that is certain.

But then when we get to chapter five, verses one through 11, he's talking about and emphasizing the uncertainty of the time of his coming. We know he is coming. We do not know when the coming is just as certain as the time of his coming is uncertain.

Now, why is this? We'll go on to see in this text why this is. But let me just remind you, the purpose of the teaching of the Second Coming is not so that you will have all sorts of information to fuel your speculation. The purpose of the teaching on the Second Coming is for you to know you must be alert, you must be awake, you must be ready.

And if you are unconverted, do not delay in running to Christ because you have no excuse. You have no excuse. Now, Paul says that the Thessalonians had no need for him to write to them about the times and the epics of the Lord's coming.

Now, that is not because, as some people think, he had already written to them and they all now completely understood everything about Christ's coming, the times and the epics, and therefore there was no need whatsoever to write. When people believe that way about this text, they say, oh, if I only knew what the Thessalonians knew. But that's not what he's saying.

He has no need to write to them about the times and the epics of the Second Coming because nobody knows. Nobody knows. And Paul refuses, even as an apostle, to fuel their speculation.

Now, think about this. Paul, the apostle, possibly the greatest Christian who ever lived. More information about God comes out of the pen of Paul, the apostle, than any other human that's probably ever walked this planet.

And yet Paul did not know. And so there was no reason for him to write. Now, I want us to look at this phrase here.

It's very, very important. The phrase times and epics in the New Testament and in Greek literature, they're sometimes used synonymously and they're oftentimes used interchangeably. But if we look at it closely, there may be a nuance that will help us understand what Paul is actually saying.

Now, the word time is the word Kronos and the word epics is Kairos. And what is the difference? Well, Kronos usually refers to a length of time. Let me give you an example.

One year is a length of time. Ten years is a length of time. A hundred years is a length of time and a thousand years is a length of time.

So when he talks about times, what Paul is probably referring to is you don't know how long it will be before he comes. But then he uses the word epics are Kairos. What does that refer to? Kairos usually refers to not the length of time, but a certain period of time in history or in the future.

Let me give you an example, and this will help you understand what I'm trying to say between the ascension of our Lord somewhere around 30 AD and the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. There was about 40 years of time that represents a period and that period of time had certain characteristics. Now,

let's look at another example from about 400 AD until about 1400 AD.

We have the height of the power of Roman Catholicism. That's a period in history and it had certain characteristics. Then we could even go and say, well, the period of the Reformation.

When we look at that period in time, it had certain characteristics and we could say the period of the Renaissance or the period of the Puritans, or we could even say the postmodern period. And what Paul is saying when you put the two things together is you don't know. No one knows how long it will be before he comes, nor is there any period that we can discern to say, ah, now he's coming.

You see that? I know I'm just dashing all your hopes of discovering what the date of his coming is going to be, but it's my purpose to dash your hopes. That's not the emphasis of the teaching on the second coming. Now, I want you to know that Jesus says the same thing that Paul says here.

I want you to just listen. If you want, you can turn. But it's in Acts 1 7. Now, listen to what Jesus says.

Well, first of all, let me read verse one of five in First Thessalonians. Now, as to the times and epics, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. Now, listen to Jesus in Acts 1 7. It is not for you to know the times are epics, which the father has fixed by his own authority.

Do you think God is trying to tell us something? It is not for you or me or Paul to know the times or epics. Isn't it amazing how many books, if we followed this, how many books would be removed from the bookshelves of Christian bookstores? About times and epics. Now, I want us to put both of these sayings side by side, the saying in Acts 1 from Jesus and the saying in First Thessalonians five from Paul, and I want us to see that there are some very important things we can learn when we put them side by side.

Both say that it is not for us to know the times and epics. And both texts do something, they try to point us away from speculation and direct us to the task at hand in Acts chapter one, he says, it's not for you to know the times or seasons, but what, but you will receive power in order to do what to be witnesses to whom, to the whole world. And so there he's saying, look, it's not for you to be standing there gazing up at the sky, wondering about times and epics.

Your task is this in the power of the Holy Spirit, you are to be the witness, my witness, he says, on this planet fulfilling the Great Commission. Now, when we look at Paul, Paul is doing the same thing. He's trying to pull us away from speculation in order to do what? Well, to do this, he points us to a life of being awake.

A life of being alert, a life of waiting on our master, a life of doing his will, a life of simple faith, simple obedience, simple hope. And love. It's not amazing.

Usually when you pick up a book on the second coming, you're wondering, wow, this has got so much information, I wonder if it's all going to come true. I remember a book back in the 70s that most people thought was going to come true, but it didn't. But when we look at the New Testament and we study the second coming in the New Testament, we're not left there after the study going, wow, I wonder when he's going to come exactly.

We don't do that. What do we do? We go, let's get to the task at hand. Our Lord may come any day.

Let's evangelize the world. Let's tell everybody about Jesus. And among the brethren, let us encourage one another to be awake, to be alert, to be doing the will of God.

You see that? And that's what I want for you tonight. To hold in your heart the great certainty that he is coming, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, he is coming, but don't be standing there looking up in the sky. Obey him.

Obey him. Now, let's go on, let's look at the phrase again, you have no need of anything to be written to you. Now, why do I want to bring that up again? Because it's found in another place in First Thessalonians.

If you look in chapter four, verse nine, look what it says now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another. Now, let's compare that to five one. Now, as to the times and epochs, brethren, you have no need for anything to be written to you.

Now, what's going on? Well, here we see something very important. In chapter four, he's saying with regard to love, I don't need to write anything because God has already taught you how to love. One of the greatest manifestations of a heart that has been regenerated is the love of God, the love of God, God word and the love of God to God's people.

He said, I don't have to write anything because you have been taught of God. And then he comes down in chapter five and he says, with regard to the intricate details of the second coming, I have no need to write to you because God hasn't taught anybody this. It's simply not there.

Although we can learn a lot of things about the second coming, they will always be with regard to the building up of our hope and never be with the precision of the moment of his coming. Now, there are several truths here that I want to point out that I think are very, very, very important. First of all.

A solid comprehension. Of the certainty of the second coming is absolutely necessary if we are to be strong Christians, how did you hear me? To be strong in the Lord, to walk in a way that's pleasing to him, to be holy, to reject the world, to follow Christ. It is a necessity that we have a strong certainty in our heart about the second coming and therefore the teaching on the second coming is extremely important.

That's the first thing I want to say. However, an intricate knowledge. Of the times and epochs of Christ's coming is not necessary for us to live the Christian life in a manner that is pleasing to God.

As a matter of fact, it can be detrimental, it can be harmful. Let me read to you something that I've written here. An overpreoccupation with such things.

As the time and the exact way of the second coming. Will give rise to mere speculation. Rather than furthering the administration of God, that is by faith.

Now, I've taken that from First Timothy, where Timothy is talking about people who just get together and talk about myths and talk about all kinds of things that the only thing they do is result in speculation. But they do nothing to further the administration of God, which is in that context means it does nothing to further the redemptive work of God in the world, which comes not by knowing all kinds of intricate things, but by believing God, by believing what he has revealed in the scriptures. Secondly, when you compare what he says about love in chapter four and then you compare that to what he says in chapter five about

the second coming, we realize this.

The knowledge, the deep knowledge and comprehensive, enduring practice of loving one another is far more important in the Christian life than you having intricate knowledge of the second coming. Do you see that? I know people I've known, I've seen different people throughout the 30 years of my Christian life that have literally dedicated themselves to understanding the book of Revelation. And usually it has to do with maps and charts and figures and numbers and all sorts of things, and I think to myself, if they're wrong.

They've dedicated their entire life to teaching things wrong, they've shut themselves up in closets to study one book and do nothing else. They care little about evangelism, little about encouraging the brethren. They just want to figure out this puzzle on the day of judgment.

Much of what they've done will burn. It will burn. Now, that's not to say we shouldn't study eschatology or that we shouldn't study the book of Revelation, of course we should.

But know this, it's not what you know, brethren, it's what you do. And the sum of what you do. Must equate with loving God and loving your brothers and sisters in Christ, in practical, real expressions to understand, grow in the love of God, in your deep knowledge of God's love and in the deep knowledge of the way it is to be expressed.

Thirdly, and I want to read this because I want to make sure I get every point here. Our opinions regarding what we need are often very contrary to God's right knowledge of what we need. Let me say that again, because this applies to everything.

Our opinions regarding what we need are often contrary to God's right knowledge of what we need. We say to ourself, if I only knew just a little bit more about these secret things of God, then I would be more suited to live the Christian life with boldness and strength. And God says, absolutely not.

Absolutely not. As a matter of fact. All these things, in a way, sometimes just become silly little crutches.

All these types and kinds of knowledge become silly little crutches that replace what we actually need. And you know what we actually need? Do you know what you really need and I really need and this church really needs? Do you want to know what we need? I'll tell you. A deeper knowledge and trust in the person and promises of God and a greater submission to the will of God that he has revealed.

That's what we need, brethren. And that is available to every one of us. Now, brothers, I want you to understand something.

It is a sign of maturity. It is a sign of Christian maturity when you can hone in on what's really important. So many people deal with the peripheral, so many people major on the minors, but it is a sign of maturity when you put aside speculation and you give yourself to simple faith and obedience with regard to the revealed will of God.

Give me that simple man. Give me that simple sister in Christ who simply desires to know what God has revealed and have it impact their life, shape and form their style of living. I want to just read a passage to you from Deuteronomy twenty nine.

Twenty nine. The secret things belong to the Lord, our God. But the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever that we may observe all the words of this law when when it is truth that has truly been

revealed to us.

It is so clear that you can know you're obeying it and you can know when you're disobeying it. And it is so clear that you can hand it down to your own children, that you can teach it to a scholar and he will tremble at the demands it makes on his life and you can teach it to a child and the child will say, yes, father, I understand. You see that.

Also, another passage from Psalms one thirty one, one through three, oh Lord, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes haughty, nor do I involve myself in great matters or in things too difficult for me. Surely I have composed and quieted my soul like a weaned child rest against his mother. My soul is like a weaned child within me.

Oh, Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. If it's in the Bible, even if it concerns eschatology, if it's in the Bible, I want you to study it. Properly.

But I always want you to know this, your hope does not rest in a great mystery, hard to discern your hope, rest in the God of Israel. In who he is and what he has commanded us. Now, I would like to ask this question.

Would it be detrimental in some way if we were given the date? I mean, if the Lord just somehow we discovered the date, would it be detrimental? I think it would. One of the reasons I think that is because the Lord hasn't given it and he gives all good things to his people. So if he's withdrawn this information, if he's not given it to us, I think there's a good reason for it.

Let me give you some of the things I think would be detrimental if we did have a date. First of all, one of them we've already mentioned already. Now, I want you to take this and listen to the severity of it.

If we were given a date. We would be looking to a date. Rather than to God.

And his promises isn't wouldn't that would be disgusting, wouldn't it? I mean, just disgusting. But we can do that in less severe manners, brothers. We can.

When we're not content just to rest in what we know about God's character and we've got to find some amazing answer to explain why we're going through what we're going through. That's not wise. There is information given in the scriptures that is very helpful to life, but ultimately it comes down to this trust in your God.

Not a date. Not something you figured out, but trust in the character of your God. Secondly, I believe it would create a kind of slothfulness, and I will use an example here from the university.

Very few students press themselves to study very hard when they believe that the exam is very far away. But even the possibility of a pop quiz will make a student much more diligent in his study. You see, we are to be living every day as though the Lord would come at the strike of midnight.

I love one time when they asked Wesley, if you knew the Lord was coming back tonight, what would you do? What would you do differently? You know what he said? Nothing. Nothing. I am in the will of God, I would get up in the morning, I would have my tea.

I would read, I would pray, I would go out and preach, as I always do, I would come back for lunch, I would rest a bit, I'd have my tea, I'd go out and preach. You see, the key is not to frantically order your life

because it's all known to God how you've lived your entire life. So you don't want to just make a mad rush toward the end.

You want to live every day for him. That requires renewing our mind in the word of God. Thirdly, I think it would create procrastination among unbelievers.

How many unbelievers would say to themselves, because yet their heart is not quite renewed, and they would say to themselves, I love the world, I'll tarry here in the world for a time, and as the date draws near, then I'll get serious about the things of God. Now, people do that all the time. Do you realize that they do? And as preachers, we can't allow it.

If you're a preacher here, you're going to be a preacher as a young man. Know this. Don't just lay the truth before people and then walk away from the pulpit.

It's not your job. You haven't preached. Lay the truth before them and then beg them to respond and respond immediately in obedience.

So if we knew the date, sinners would simply just say possibly, well, he's going to tarry and so I'll tarry in the world and I'll repent later. But what you don't understand, every one of you listening to my voice, you must realize this. The longer you postpone repentance, the harder it will be to find it.

The harder your heart will become. You understand me, fear your lack of repentance. Fear it, because every day your heart grows harder.

Another thing, I think it would create countless false professions, brother. You know as well as I do. I mean, 9-11, most of you were alive at that time.

The supposed great revival that happened right after that event, which most of that great revival just turned right back to the world. When people have an even an idea that some catastrophe is coming, they seem to all get right with God, don't they? But when the catastrophe passes or it never occurs, what happens? They turn just as quickly back to the world. Men are not saved because of some catastrophe coming upon them.

They are saved because they hear the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit renews their heart and they repent and believe unto salvation. So know this, you don't need a catastrophe and a catastrophe won't help you. What you need tonight is to hear the gospel, to hear the word of God preached and respond in repentance and faith.

That's what you need. Now, let's go on. Paul says here in our text, for you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

Now, look at the emphasis he's given. First of all, he says you yourselves, that's emphasis. And he doesn't just say you have a hint.

He says, you know full well, you, you yourselves, you know full well that the coming of the Lord will be like a thief in the night. Now, Paul here is making it a bit more clear why he saw no need in writing to them about the times and the epochs of the Lord's coming. He's saying basically this, there's no need for me to write to you about the time in which the Lord will come because the very nature of the Lord's coming proves that no one can know because he comes like a thief in the night.

Totally and completely unexpected. Now, these Thessalonians knew this even before the letter was written. Now, from what source? We do not know.

Did Paul teach them this before or did someone else? Why do I say that? Why is it hard to determine? Because this teaching that the Lord will come like a thief in the night, it prevails through the teachings of our Lord and it prevails through the teachings of the other apostles. This is what was constantly being told the early believers. You will not know the hour.

You will not know the day. So be alert, listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 24, 42 to 44, therefore be on the alert for you do not know which day our Lord is coming, but be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason, you also must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think he will.

When is he coming? I'll tell you exactly when he's coming, when you don't think he's coming. And if someone writes a book saying they know when he's coming, I know they're wrong. But the emphasis, let's not forget it in the words of our Jesus, of our Lord over and over beyond the alerts.

It is a terrifying thing. You come home and you find you're and everything is gone. Everything, a thief came in the night or it's even more terrifying, you're laying awake in bed and you open your eyes and there is a man standing over you with a sword or a knife or a gun.

There is now nothing you can do, you see that he's saying, be on the alert, be ready. One of the reasons why we discipline ourselves on Sunday morning and we discipline ourselves on Wednesday, listening to the word of God is we're disciplining ourselves to be alert, to be watchful, to be listening. We know we need to grab something from the word that will help us to prepare for that day.

Don't be slothful in your seat or with your mind. There's much more at stake here than a grade in the university. Your soul's at stake.

Now. Just listen to what Peter says in second Peter 3:10, but the day of the Lord will come like a thief in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat and the earth and its works will be burned up. Everything gone.

Everything gone, that's really the course and theme of Ecclesiastes, a man is born, a man works, a man dies and everything is gone. Except that which was done in faith, in submission to the Lord's commands, John, in the book of Revelation 16:15, behold, Jesus said, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.

Now, I want to focus in on this for a moment. Blessed, first of all, he says, look, look at me. I am coming like a thief, and when he comes like a thief and you're not ready, know this, that with your first excuse, he will tell you, I told you I'm coming like a thief.

I told you that. Behold, I'm coming like a thief, blessed is the one who stays awake. You know, the proverb, the illustration about the you put a frog in boiling water and what happens, he jumps out, but you put a frog in body temperature water, he swims around in there and then you gradually turn up the flame and heat it up and his body adjusts to the heat until finally he is boiled.

That's what can happen to the Christian. It's what can happen to the sinner outside of Christ. You just are lulled asleep, lulled asleep.

Don't be lulled asleep, he says. Keep awake. And then he says, and keep your clothes.

What does that mean? Well, read on and you can see so that you will not walk about naked and men will not see your shame. What's the idea going on here? It's this idea when Christ comes back. If you are not in Christ, you will be found naked and in your own shame.

The only thing covering you will be all those filthy rags of iniquity, every sin you ever committed. That's what you'll be dressed in. And what he is saying is before it's too late, tear those off of you, repent of your sins and do what be clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

And then if you are a believer, don't get carried away with all these silly teachings of going off into something to gain a new righteousness or another righteousness or some righteousness through works. No cling to the one fact that your only righteousness is Jesus Christ, the garment of Christ, that your only boast, your only hope is Jesus and no one else, nothing else. Everything else is just vanity, vanity.

Hendrickson writes, the thief takes the owner of the house by surprise, he does not send a warning letter to this effect tomorrow at such and such a time. I'll pay you a visit. Be sure to hide all your valuables.

No, he comes suddenly and unexpectedly. So also will be the coming of the day of the Lord. Hence, it is foolish to inquire about how long or to inquire when foolish don't give yourself to vain speculation.

Live for him, believe in him, hope in him, fall on him, cling to him, run to him. Now, it says here that the coming of Christ is referred to as the day of the Lord. It's a genitive of possession.

And what it means is that the day belongs to the Lord. It's his day. Yes, it is his day.

We know from the scriptures that every day is the day that the Lord has made. But this day, when he comes back, is going to be different. Everybody's going to recognize it's his day.

There will be no speculation whatsoever. The day of the Lord, what will happen? God in Christ will break in to human history. The skies will be rolled back like a scroll and there will stand the judge and creator of all men and the savior of some men.

He will be standing there. It is the day of his glory and vindication. It is the day of the church's glory and vindication.

It is the day of the individual believer's glory and vindication. And it is the day of shame. Destruction, eternal ruin for those outside of Christ.

Now, hear me, where are you? Where are you? This was asked by God to the first sinner. And it's still an appropriate question. Adam, where are you? Where are you now? Do not trust in anything but Christ.

All your piety is no better than the piety of the devil himself. Trust in Christ. Trust in Christ or this day will be a day not of glory.

But of shame heaped upon shame. Shame heaped upon shame. Now, verse three, while they're saying peace and safety, then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with

child and they will not escape.

The phrase like a thief in the night tells us that Christ will be coming unexpectedly. But the rest of this text tells us something else, that he will come also at a time when men seem to be most self-confident and secure. When men have reached a point where they no longer have any sense of God or a need of God.

They no longer have any sense of an obligation to God's law. They have no sense whatsoever with regard to the fear of the Lord or oncoming judgment. Now, don't think that this just happens, that this is just only going to happen sometime in the future.

I want you to know it can happen in the heart of every man, woman and child. It can. It can.

You have confidence that you're young. You have confidence that maybe your parents are Christian and therefore somehow you are, too. You have confidence that because you're in a church that seems to take seriously the word of God, that everything's all right with you, it is not OK with you.

As a matter of fact, it is more dangerous for you than anyone else. He will come at a time of self-confidence. Now, we're going to have to hurry through this, but this.

This. Independent spirit of man, this nonchalant attitude with regard to God, this not being concerned. Has been a spirit or an attitude that has infected every age of human history.

Listen to what Scripture says about the time of Noah. They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage with it. And I would add with a total disregard for God until the day that Noah entered the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all.

They pounded upon the door, but the door was closed. Jesus gave a parable that the Jews would pound upon the door, the unbelieving Jews would pound upon the door and say, we ate and drank with you. You were in the streets with us.

I do not know you. There's coming a day when the door closes. It will not be opened, not for the greatest cries for mercy, it will not be open.

The only thing that will answer you is the perfect, blinding, white holiness and justice of God. The time of Lot says they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building. And again, I add with a total disregard for God.

But on the day, on that day that Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. In both texts, there's the idea of destruction. Brothers and sisters in Christ, this is not something to play with.

We're not talking about if you miss out on Christ, you're going to miss out on happiness in this life. We're talking about eternal ruin. And look at today.

Men walk nonchalantly, some of you in the university see it every day, some of you at work every day, some of you in the mirror, you see it every day. A kind of unconcern for the things of God. This has infected the world and every period of history, but I kind of I'm inclined to believe that what Paul is talking about here is something a little bit more, something a bit more intense than before the coming of our Lord, that there will be more and more just a kind of worldwide unconcern.

For the things of God. And not only that, but a mockery of the things of God, and not only that, but a blasphemy of the things of God. Listen to what Peter says in second Peter three.

Know this, first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lust and saying, where is the promise of his coming? Forever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation. Mockery, we see it today growing all around us, don't we? I can recall a T-shirt that I saw. And since then, I've heard about it from other people.

On the front of it, young man had this. Jesus is coming again. And on the back of his shirt, it said, we'll get him this time.

I think about that. Jesus is coming again. This time, we'll make sure he stays dead.

Now, the scholars Hogg and Vine hold that peace and safety denotes this, the sense of security from divine interposition that will possess the hearts of men up to the very moment at which God breaks the long silence and once again intervenes directly in human affairs. Hebert writes, having blunted their conscience against his repeated warnings of coming judgment and having deliberately rejected the love of the truth, they will readily accept the devil's lie and feel secure from divine intervention. That can happen now, that can happen in your own heart, that as you refuse to listen, refuse to listen, refuse to listen, your conscience becomes more blunt, more blunt, more silent until gasping for air, it finally dies.

That's why I tell you, set your heart to repent and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ. Men will be content, but the Bible says this destruction will come upon them and when it says destruction, brothers, listen to me. It's not talking about an immediate, powerful wave bringing a destruction that brings to end their existence.

No, if it was only that, it wouldn't be so bad. It's talking about a destruction that never ceases. It never stops.

It is eternal and utter ruin of the soul that would wish it could die, would do anything to die. But it can not die. Death flees from it.

And so it is bound in eternal ruin. Think about it. That's why we don't play in this pulpit.

That's why we're not so concerned about self-realization in this temporal period of yours. We're more concerned about when the trumpet blows or you die. How will your standing be with God? Because those outside of Christ, it says this, they will not escape.

Escape. Oh, dear brothers, you can not you can not you can not even begin to describe the love of Jesus Christ for sinners. And yet, brothers, you can not even begin to describe the fierce wrath that Christ will pour out on the day of his coming, because the moment and I say moment of mercy is gone.

And the only thing left is destruction in the original language when it says, and they will not escape, it's a double negative. That's very important in the Greek. We're not supposed to use it in the English, but it's used in the Greek.

It's a double negative way. Translates it this way. There will be no escape for them.

None. Williams, they will not escape. No, not at all.

And John, the revelator, Revelation 6, then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, fall on us and hide us from the presence of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb for the great day of their wrath has come. And who is able to stand? No one.

No one is able to stand. You will melt before the blinding white holiness of Christ like a wax figurine before a blast furnace. You will not stand.

But if you are in Christ. You will stand. And.

Why, because he hung. You will stand because he hung. On a tree 2000 years ago on a place that was called the skull, where he took all your filthy garments upon himself, where he took all your sin and your stain upon himself, the guilt of it, he bore and was crushed under the fierce wrath of God that should be yours on the second coming.

He swallowed it. He extinguished it. He put it out.

Exhausted it so that nothing is left for his people, so that when we hear the trumpet blow, our faces will be filled with light, joy, unspeakable and full of glory. But if you are not in Christ, if you are just in this church or you are just in some idea of Christian religion or if you are in moralism or good works, you will not stand. You will not stand on that day, I beg you, repent and believe the gospel.

And if you're a believer. If you're a believer. Just know this, the older that some of us become.

The more we see. How the little things, simple obedience. Is the most important.

Simple devotion, simple piety and clinging to Christ, clinging to Christ, and I close this by saying to some of you who are very introspective, if I were to tell you, repent, you would tell me, but my repentance is not good enough. With that, I agree. If I told you just believe, you'd say, well, I believe, but it's mixed with so much unbelief.

I understand. If I told you run to him, you'd say, I don't have the strength. If I said cling to him, you'd say my arms are too tired.

So this I tell you, collapse on him. It is enough. Collapse on him.

Collapse. Can you fall down? Can you do that? Can you fall down? That is what faith in Christ is truly. It's not so much in doing something as in stop doing everything.

Collapse. And you will find that you fall on him, run to Christ. If you can't.

Walk to Christ, if you can't crawl to Christ, if you can't cling, if you can't cling and just fall, he's big enough. He's big enough. But lay aside your foolishness.

That your salvation depends on you in some shape, form or fashion laid aside, fall on Christ, let's pray. Father, please use this sermon, this word for the salvation of souls and use this Lord for the benefit of your people, that they would be stirred by the Holy Spirit, stirred by the Holy Spirit, that there would be a work that would endure, not just a flash in the pan one evening or one day. But they would have a greater, greater view.

Of eternity. And the things that are at stake. In Jesus name, amen.

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