

Be Alert for the Lords Return

by Zac Poonen

We must be alert and prepared for Christ's return, which will come in a time of great violence and war, and we must be careful not to get drunk with the worries of this life.

Duration: 57:47

Scripture: Zechariah 14:2

Topics: "Second Coming", "Spiritual Readiness"

Description

This sermon delves into the relevance of the Bible in current times, focusing on the prophetic nature of Zechariah 14 and other passages regarding the second coming of Christ. It emphasizes the need for preparedness amidst global turmoil, warning against deception and the importance of loving the truth to avoid being misled. The speaker urges believers to maintain a clear conscience, be detached from worldly possessions, and be spiritually alert for the imminent return of Christ.

Transcript

I want to turn to Zechariah chapter 14. Zechariah chapter 14. There are a number of passages that refer to the second coming of Christ in the Old Testament and when we think, when we read the newspapers and see what is happening in the world around us, we see how relevant the Bible is to our time and how prophetic these words are and how we are to be prepared in this day and age.

It says in verse 2 that, I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle and the city will be captured and so on and then the Lord will go forth. Verse 3, and fight against those nations when he fights on the day of battle and in that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. You know it was from the Mount of Olives that Jesus ascended up into heaven and when he was ascending up to heaven, two men stood there and told his disciples, why do you stand looking up there? In the same way that you saw him go up, he will come back.

It's exactly going to be the same place from which his feet lifted off and went up to heaven. To the same spot he's going to return. That's what it says here, in that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives and the Mount of Olives will be split into two.

The time immediately before the coming of Christ is going to be a time of a lot of violence and war. When Jesus said there are going to be wars, I personally can't pray for peace when he said there will be wars. When I see the wars, I think there'll be more wars.

He said the days of the last days will be like the days of Noah, a time when it was full of sexual evil and violence. I'm not going to pray that the world will become pure because I know it's not going to be pure. I only pray that church will become pure in the midst of a world which is going to become corrupt.

I don't know whether you're aware but among born-again Christians there are some people who feel that the calling of the church is to make the world better and they feel that the church has failed in doing that for so many years but that they're going to do it now. Now personally I don't believe that because the Bible says that as we approach the end of time evil men will become worse and worse. See 2nd Timothy chapter 3 and verse 13.

The world is going to go from bad to worse. If it's bad now, it'll be worse in the days to come. Worse morally, there's not going to be less terrorism but more.

2nd Timothy 3 and verse 13. Evil men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. Now this is chapter 3, the first verse.

You must see a context. It's particularly speaking about the last days. In the last days difficult times will come or as I think the Living Bible says it's going to be difficult to be a Christian.

It's going to be difficult to be a Christian because on one side Christians are going to be persecuted and on the other side you have a whole lot of people who compromise the standards of Christianity so it's going to be very difficult to stand up against this type of compromise. Most people would like to seek to be popular and in this last days it says evil men and deceivers will proceed from bad to worse. So we can't expect things to become better in India or in Bangalore or the world around us.

We're not going to expect great multitudes to be saved and I'll tell you why because Jesus said the way to life is narrow and few there be that find it. I believe the words of Jesus Christ that there are very few who find the way to life. I mean even among those who've been believers for so many years it's very difficult to find believers who can say I have a very satisfying relationship with Jesus Christ and he delivers me from sin and anger and bitterness and lust and a lot of money and the very very few around the world who can honestly testify to that which proves that most even so-called believers are not very serious about living a wholehearted life and so I've seen that everywhere and so I believe what Jesus said is true there are very few who will find that way to life and the purpose of our preaching here is to make sure that those who want to be in that few will be challenged in this church to be among that few who will be ready for the coming of Christ.

There are two places on earth particularly mentioned in relation to the last days. One is Jerusalem we saw that in the book of Zechariah and just turn back there for a moment in Zechariah 14 it says about that war the final day just before the coming of Christ it's a statement here which is very difficult to understand.

Zechariah 14 it says in that war there will be such a terrible situation among the people that it says in the middle of verse 12 Zechariah 14 12 people while they are standing on their feet their flesh will rot and their eyes will rot in their sockets when they're standing on their feet now we know when people die their flesh rots their eyes rot in their sockets and their tongue rots in their mouth but this is when they're alive when they're standing in that final war these soldiers were standing there there are people their eyes are going to rot in their sockets and the flesh is going to melt while they're standing in my understanding that seems to describe a nuclear war that's the type of thing that happens when an atom bomb is dropped somewhere where people standing in their flesh

begins to melt and their eyes rot in their sockets it's amazing there's there's never been in the history of humanity any bomb or anything that could ever produce that result it's amazing how accurate scripture is so I personally believe that we're going to end with a nuclear war according to that verse turn to Luke chapter 21 I'm just trying to show you how relevant the Bible is to the time in which we live Jerusalem is going to be surrounded with armies and that's going to be one place where there's going to be a lot of battle he says here in Luke 21 20 when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies then you know that desolation is at hand and he goes on to say verse 24 Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the non-jewish nations until the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled and we know

that Jerusalem was ruled by the Gentiles for many years since only recently that it came back into the hands of Israel the other place that's mentioned in the book of Revelation in relation to war in the last days is Revelation chapter 9 you read about the judgments of the trumpets and if you read 1 Thessalonians 4 it says that the last trumpet Christ will come maybe you should see that first if you're not sure of it 1 Thessalonians 4 let's look at that before we go to Revelation 9 in 1 Thessalonians 4 it says in verse 16 the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first and 1 Corinthians 15 you turn to 1 Corinthians 15 also it speaks there about that trumpet in 1 Corinthians 15 and

verse 52 in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed there are going to be a number of trumpets at the last trumpet the Lord will come that's what we read in 1 Thessalonians 4 to the trumpet will sound so now we go to Revelation chapter 9 where we read about seven trumpets so obviously the seventh trumpet that the Lord will come but before the seventh trumpet you read about the sixth trumpet being blown is all picture language but it has some significance it says here the sixth trumpet verse 14 Revelation 9 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet release the four angels or demons actually evil angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates how many of you know where the river

Euphrates is in which country Iraq so there are two places mentioned in relation to the last days one is Jerusalem and the other is Iraq and it says here there are some demons bound up there in the river Euphrates are going to be released on the sixth trumpet sounds and they have been prepared for a certain day and month and year and then the number of armies around there is going to be 200 million going to be a fantastic number of people fighting together against each other and then in chapter 16 you read about it again where you read about the seven vials of judgment and when the sixth angel Revelation 16 and verse 12 poured out the bowl upon the great river the Euphrates its water was dried up so that the way may be prepared for the kings of the east that means people from the east of

Iraq which is Iran is going to come for and fight so there's so much of of warning there in scripture about some of the battles in the last days what one other passage let me show you where some names of countries are mentioned Ezekiel in chapter 38 it speaks about a time when the Lord has gathered Ezekiel 38 and verse 8 after many days in the latter years it speaks about people these Israelites refers to the Israelites in verse 8 whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel see that's what happened from 1948 onwards the people of Israel gathered from many many nations it was scattered for 2,000 years as a punishment because they crucified Christ 40 years after Jesus was crucified God sent the Roman armies to destroy the nation of Israel and they were

scattered to all the nations of the earth now most people when they get scattered to the nations of the earth get absorbed into those nations we know a lot of Indians have gone to the United States or England

or Australia I mean in three or four generations they become part of that country in a hundred years 150 years I mean they may look like Indians still but their attachment is no longer to India they've settled down in that country the same thing has happened to say Africans who go to other countries or Chinese people who go to the United States they settle down there and become part of that country but not the Jewish people it was scattered all over the world but 2,000 years and then they came back they said come back to the homeland that was God gathered them from many nations to

the mountains of Israel and against that nation at that time number of armies are going to come against them and one of them is Persia verse 5 Persia will come with all its troops so it says here that Iran Persia by the way is the old name for Iran is going to fight against Israel okay so all these verses seem to indicate certain things happening around the Middle East particularly around Iran and Jerusalem that the center of wars and activities and though there'll be wars all over the world the center of it is going to be around that around that place so when we read these things in the newspapers what should we be doing let's turn to Luke's gospel in chapter 21 in Luke 21 it even speaks about the tsunami in verse 25 it says here in verse 25 in the last part that this is referring to the

last days again there will be a roaring of the sea and the waves not just the ordinary roaring of sea and waves but to such an extent that people are going to faint from fear when they hear of these things happening and then soon after all that happens the Son of Man will come in a cloud then it says in verse 28 here's what it says we should do when these things begin to take place straighten up and lift up your heads because your redemption is drawing near so that should be our attitude if you believe all these scriptures as I do I want to straighten up lift up my head I don't want to hang my head down in shame and with guilt and unconfessed sin and in depression and gloom like a lot of Christians are no it says you've got to lift your head up and because Jesus is going to come your

redemption the total redemption of the world is going to come very soon but Jesus said that the new heavens and new earth that are going to be born it's like a baby being born and in Matthew 24 I don't have time to show it to you he said these are the beginning of birth pains you know when a baby is born a mother goes through a lot of pain and then the baby is born so it looked what Jesus is referring to there was that just before his coming when the new birth is going to take place for this earth it's going to go through a period of intense pain and Christians must be ready for that time and he also went on to say in verse 34 be on guard that your hearts are not weighted down at that time with dissipation and drunkenness now this is not speaking about physical drunkenness it's not saying

I fill my stomach with alcohol it's talking about the heart getting drunk how does the heart get drunk we can take a picture from a man getting drunk why do people get drunk why do they go for drink mainly it is to forget their sorrows they have problems in life and they want to forget about it all they say well if I have a good drink or a few drinks I can just forget about all that in other words for a little while while the effect of that drink is upon him he lives in a world of unreality imagining that all his problems are solved nothing is solved but he can forget about all that now Jesus said don't let something like that happen to your heart where you forget about the real world of eternity the real world of heaven and get drunk it says here with the worries of this life the cares

of this life now we have to take care of so many things for our children we need to provide for them we got to go to work we got to earn our living and you're living in a rented house sometimes you got to move from that house to another house life on earth is not at all easy it's not it's not just for believers look at all the poor unbelievers in Bangalore who life's not easy for them life's not easy for all these laborers who work in

such tremendous poverty and go back to the slums where their husbands get drunk and life is not easy and life's not easy for a believer sometimes we believers think that we are the ones who are having the greatest difficulty I remember once one couple came to me many years ago and told me what a lot of problems they had I said just go down to those slums and

take a walk there for half an hour and come back and tell me what problems you have they had no more problems we are we think and the devil wants to make us think that we all we are suffering so much and the more he makes you think like that the more he makes you feel sorry for yourself which is a evil sinful thing and you want other people to feel sorry for you now we're supposed to lift up our head and say I'm okay God's on the throne it's like when Jesus was beaten and whipped and the blood was flowing down his body and he was carrying the cross and all the women were weeping for him he said don't weep for me I'm okay God is a Jerusalem he said in Luke 23 don't weep for me I'm okay my body is beaten some blood is flowing and all but I'm okay I'm in the center of God's will what does it

matter if I'm suffering a little they weep for yourself he said weep for your children I wish we had more believers like that in our day who can say to people around me around them don't weep for me I'm okay I'm perfectly okay I may be going through some trials and difficulties but I'm the center of God's will I'm sorry to say it very few believers are like that a lot of believers are full of old lips getting people to feel sorry for them for this problem that problem they never seem to get out of it you see them twenty years later they're still the same old wretched frame of mind about this problem that problem and that's exactly what the devil wants you to be occupied with the worries of this life get drunk with it and get so drunk with it that you can't rejoice in the Lord so

frequently in bad moods and etc etc and just sit and we can listen to a lot of messages and may not change us the Lord said be careful keep on the alert if you really believe that Christ is coming soon and that all that you see around you is going to pass away think of Noah when he knew that God had told him I've got I've given this earth only a hundred and twenty years now 120 years was a short time in those days because people lived up to 900 years so 120 years was about one-eighth of their lifetime which means like say 10 years today something like that so it sounds a long time when we say 120 years now but let me repeat they live up to 960 years and we live up to 80 years today it's only 10 years it's like supposing the Lord were to say I've given this earth 10 more years then I'm

going to come how are you going to live those 10 years how did Noah live in those 10 years 120 years he lived only for one thing there are a lot of things maybe in the world which are attractive I don't have time for it I don't have time for a lot of stuff that goes on I want to warn you my dear brothers and sisters you young people and all of you be careful that your heart is not weighted down and your spiritual sharpness and alertness goes because you spend your time watching television and movies and could be you can say well it's not dirty it's clean okay but think of the sharpness that goes from your life time that you could have spent I'm not saying we don't need relaxation and entertainment and all that but I believe we live in a day when it has become too much it's become far too

much and I remember the days when we never had television and we pray a lot more I wonder if a certain drunkenness has come upon some of you think of it Jesus said be alert be alert there was no man who worked under such pressure as Jesus did remember he came in the flesh he's like us and he's told us to follow him he worked under such tremendous pressure did he what sort of entertainment did he find relaxation in the time of pressure don't let the devil fool you that you need a lot of entertainment because you're under such pressure and all that there's fullness of joy in the presence of God at his right hand

there are pleasures forevermore be careful that you don't get weighted down with the cares and worries of this world do what is necessary yes but don't let your mind get taken up

with everything that is on this world because the Bible says the world is passing away in all its lessons all its passions and he who does the will of God will abide forever so I want to encourage all of you say Lord how in the years that I left I want to do your will I don't know what it is I want to do your will and if you want to do his will seek fellowship with people who are also interested in doing his will don't waste your time fooling around with people who are not serious about doing as well be alert at all times read further in verse 36 Luke 21 36 keep on the alert you know that word in the King James Version it says watch watch means keep alert keep awake spiritually awake that means I'm always spiritually awake to what's happening around me spiritually I may be physically

asleep and I need that but spiritually I'm awake when I see things happening around me when I see things happening in the world I'm awake yeah that that indicates this this indicates that I'm awake alert and praying this is this is what he said often watch and pray he kept the two together keep on the alert and pray I see it like this keep on the alert means if you read the newspaper or you hear the news somewhere be on the alert and say what does that indicate and pray keep on the alert when you see these things happening and pray so that you may have the strength to escape these things that are about to take place and to stand before the Son of Man so in other words if I don't keep on the alert when I see these things happening around me and I don't pray I will not have the strength

you can listen to all the messages you want but you will not have the strength to be able to face the times to come and I'll tell you something we have to prepare now we used to have a saying in the military the more you sweat in peace the less you bleed in war the more you sweat in peace the less you bleed in war meaning that in time when times are peaceful if we really work hard then we'll be victorious when the war comes now I believe that has an application for us believers that our temptation is when everything is peaceful to relax that's the time we should be preparing and it's because people don't prepare that suddenly a temptation comes a war comes and they fall Jesus was tempted exactly like us why is it when the Roman soldiers came he he said here I am take me whereas Peter took

out a sword and chopped off somebody's ear you know why both had the same flesh but Jesus prayed and Peter slept that was the reason Jesus knew that in his flesh he needed to pray if he wanted to be strong he prayed and he told his disciple watch and pray the flesh is weak the spirit is willing the flesh is weak watch and pray otherwise you'll fall in temptation and those guys said oh no we're okay it's just like today a lot of Christians they read that word watch and pray so that you can have the strength to escape all these things and they I mean the little little temptations think of the little temptations that come in your home and you get upset and irritated what does it indicate it indicates that you have not watched and prayed you've not been alert and that's why you fall and of

course we can take it lightly and say oh well I'm sorry I slipped up we nobody's perfect and we can't get total victory in this life and we have none of us have yet become like Jesus we got all these excuses for our defeated life what does it mean to be an overcomer what does it mean to be more than a conqueror what does it mean to lift up our heads and stand what does it mean when it says when we in our fight against the devil it says in Ephesians 6 these words put on the armor of God be strong in the Lord Ephesians 6 10 the strength of his might and for our struggle is not against flesh and blood against rulers and then it says in verse 13 take up the full armor of God Ephesians 6 13 so that you may be able to resist in the evil day and having done everything finally to stand firm that

means having overcome everything finally I'm standing upright I'm not knocked down I'm upright that's how God wants us to be when that evil day comes if you want to stand firm now is the time to be alert to give up a whole lot of if you're a serious Christian to give up a whole lot of unnecessary things which we have as baggage in our life which makes it difficult for us to run this race and imagine a man coming to run in a marathon race with a suitcase and suit and tie and all those type of stuff where where's he going I mean he's not serious he's going for a picnic he's not going for a marathon race man comes a marathon race is going to get rid of all a lot of unnecessary things I've got to run you need to decide whether you've got a lot of baggage that's hindering you from being ready

for the coming of the Lord being ready to do all that God wants you to do before he comes to accomplish all that he wants you to accomplish I think of what is the Lord supposed wanting us to accomplish as a church before he comes Lord it must be done is there some people we are supposed to contact there's some ministry we're supposed to fulfill is there something we got to stand for Lord we want to do that whatever it is we want to be totally available we don't have bright ideas as to what we do but we just say Lord yeah we're available if you will take us weak people as we are and do your work through us I believe the Lord will prepare us to stand true in that in that day when he comes you know the Lord also said in Matthew 24 in relation to the coming of the Lord he said these his own

coming he said these words in relation to being alert be alert and pray then he said here also in Matthew 24 verse 42 be alert for you don't know on which day your 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 he would not have allowed his house to be broken into for this reason you be ready also for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you don't think he will you know Jesus spoke about his coming like being like a thief in the night and you know no thief tells you in advance I'm coming on such and such a day at such and such a time because if he did then of course it wouldn't be a surprise and so when he said and he's gonna come like a thief in the night he's gonna take a

lot of people by surprise but those who have studied the word and those who look around and see what is happening in the world around and who are alert and who study the scriptures they will know they will not know the exact day or the exact hour when Christ is coming that is so clear he said that in verse 42 you do not know the day your Lord is coming and the hour verse 44 the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you don't think he will so the day and the hour we don't know we don't know which date he's coming or what time he's coming morning noon night I don't know but I can know when he is near that I can know he said that in verse 33 when you see all these things happening recognize that he is near and he's right at the door when you see these things happening some of these things I

just spoke about it's you know he spoke about he in many times Jesus spoke about himself as a king who had gone on a long journey and then he was going to come back there were parables like that so here's the Lord having gone on a long journey for 2,000 years and he says at a particular time at a particular time in history you will know that he's almost near the door now that means he's gone he's come back is near the door now and any moment he may open the door so that's what he said when you see these things you recognize that he's near right at the door but you still don't know the day or the hour when he'll open the door and come through but we can know when he is near and in 1 Thessalonians 5 he says this 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 2 you know very well brethren that the day of the Lord

will come like a thief in the night Paul says the same thing that Jesus said like a thief in the night do you know whether a thief is going to come tonight I don't know he'll come like a thief in the night when

everybody around is saying peace and safety people are talking about peace and safety and there's a lot of talk about peace and safety going on in the world destruction will suddenly come like birth pains upon a woman with child it's more than one place in scripture where the last days the period of suffering just before the Lord's coming is compared to the last birth pains a woman goes through such intense pain and then the child is born that's the new earth and then but now listen to this this is the verse I want you to know if you're born again you brethren are not in darkness

that that day should overtake you like a thief you know that we're not supposed to be finding the Lord coming like a thief in the night that is for the unbeliever the Lord coming like a thief in the night is not for a believer so if you think the Lord's going to come like a thief in the night for you then you must be an unbeliever but he says you believers in Thessalonica you're not in darkness that that day should come to you like a thief in the night the thieves don't come during the daytime they come in the middle of the night and he says you're not in the night are you you're not walking in darkness then how can you be you're in the light so how can the Lord come as a thief for you in the night you are sons of light sons of day we're not of night we are not of darkness therefore let

us not sleep as others but let's be sober and those who sleep do their sleeping at night and those who get drunk get drunk at night but we are of the day so we are alert all the time what does it mean to say that the Lord's coming is not like a thief in the night for me that means I'm always ready for the coming of the Lord right now I can say that if Jesus were to come this moment I'm absolutely ready my sins are all confessed and forgiven I don't have a single sin that I have not confessed and cleansed in the blood of Christ I have no conflict with anybody in the world for which I'm responsible and other people may have a conflict with me like the Pharisees had a conflict with Jesus but I have not hurt anybody whom I have not apologized I don't have to ask forgiveness from my wife for

any word I have spoken to her which is not set right or any human being I don't owe anybody any money I'm ready right now if the Lord were to come that's what it what I mean when I say he's not going to come like a thief in the night for me he's not going to surprise me we must always be ready that's why I say as soon as you sin confess it I've often said this that I'm not worried and it doesn't disturb me that people fall into sin but it does disturb me as to what they do after they fall into sin I'd like to know what they do after they fall if they can take it lightly then they're not ready if you can speak a rude hurting word to somebody your wife or your husband or a brother or sister there's some people that nature is like that they can say a word it's just it sounds so sweet and all

that but there's a sting in it and they never seem to get out of that habit they know that speech never seems to become sweet it's always with a sting they seem to get it there is I've noticed that with certain human beings even believers they just like to hurt other people with a little sting either it's because they're jealous of those other people or they're unhappy with something and their unhappiness finally comes forth in a stinging word I'll tell you this you're going to get a surprise when Christ comes if you don't cleanse yourself from all that before he comes there's not much time left you better get rid of all that get rid of it because the Bible says if a man cannot control his tongue his Christianity is worth zero James 1 26 and you will shrink away from Christ with shame

when he comes turn to Luke chapter 17 where Jesus spoke about his coming also he said his coming is going to be so sudden like in the day that verse 29 went from Sodom suddenly the angel came and said to Lot and his wife and daughters get out of here pull them out of Sodom and that's how the church is going to be raptured but we're going to be ready for it and he says on that day when the Lord comes verse 31

Luke 17 verse 31 on that day when Christ comes don't let someone who's on the housetop whose goods are in the house go down to take them away in other words we should not have an attachment to anything down here in the in this house there must be nothing I'm attached to on earth if I'm on the housetop I'm ready to go from there because there's nothing downstairs in the house that I'm

attached to that's the meaning of that passage that if you're attached to something on this earth that'll hold you down and prevent you from being taken up when Christ comes I don't want to be attached to anything I can you can have a lot of things but don't get attached to any of them don't get stuck to them hold everything loosely everything that you have your it's when when these things possess your heart that you have a problem if you have your house and that house is outside of you that's fine but if your house gets inside your heart that's a problem if your money is in the bank that's okay but when your money gets into your heart then you're attached to it it's not a question of how much money you have it's a question of where it is is it in the bank or is it in your heart where a

man's treasure is there will his heart be also so he speaks here about not being attached to things and likewise it says in verse 31 let not the one who is in the field turn back today we would say an office those days people worked in a field and today you go to work in an office knowing if you're working in an office and the Lord suddenly comes do you have to say hang on Lord I didn't settle things with my wife before I left this morning you shouldn't have to say that you should have settled things with your wife before you left for the office or the field there's no need to turn back always ready for the coming of Christ we may slip up but we settle the matter before we move on it's to me sin is like getting a thorn in your foot if you get a thorn in your foot when do you take it off

you don't wait till the evening to remove all your thorns learn about you I remove it immediately I do the same with sin exactly the same sin is worse than a thorn nicely I want to remove it immediately I want to be ready whatever I do I want to settle it immediately I want to clear all my debts and I want to ask forgiveness from all those whom I have to ask forgiveness from I want to be absolutely clear I don't want to be attached to anything on this earth though I may have many things attached to nothing but ready holding everything loosely so that when Christ comes we are ready to go and then he said in verse 32 remember lots why she was pulled out of Sodom God loved her pulled her out but she was still lost only because of one reason her body was out of Sodom but her heart was in

Sodom she thought of all the saris she left behind she thought of a lovely garden that's burnt and she didn't have time to pick up all her ornaments and how sad instead of being thankful that she escaped the judgment so the Lord said remember lots why don't be like that so too if I don't want to find the Lord coming like a thief in the night is very simple keep your conscience absolutely clear at all times immediately do your best to settle everything with God and with man don't get attached to anything the Lord multiplies your goods don't get attached to it the Lord increases your salary that's fine praise the Lord but don't get attached to it don't get clinging to the things of earth otherwise our heart can be weighed down and we can get drunk with the things of this life now I want to

also show you another passage in relation to the second coming of Christ to second Thessalonians in chapter 2 where it speaks about the Antichrist coming up in the last days and before that it says here there's going to be in those days a tremendous activity of Satan and this activity of Satan second Thessalonians 2 verse 9 there's a phrase there called the activity of Satan but the devil is going to be very active and it's not just in persecution the devil is active in persecution I know but there's another way he leads people astray and destroys Christians that is by deception when he comes in persecution he comes

like a lion the Bible says devil is like a roaring lion waiting to devour people and when he comes with deception he's like a snake more subtle there's a difference between a

snake and a lion a lion terrifies you but a snake is very subtle and the devil comes with persecution but he comes with deception and one of the ways and then in the last days it's speaking about deception deception through false signs and wonders that means signs and wonders done in Jesus name apparently but which are not drawing people to Christ but maybe to a healer or to a preacher and it's not leading people to godliness or holiness the healing becomes an end in itself and there can be deception there because you know it's unfortunate when we think that everything supernatural is from God no everything supernatural is not from God everything done in Jesus name is not necessarily from God Jesus said that in Matthew 7 22 many will come to me in the last day and say Lord we did miracles

in your name and you'll say get away I never knew you you who work iniquity you who live in sin you who practice sin you who never let anybody to holiness you are only interested in your sinful life so that's the other thing mentioned here in verse 9 the activity of Satan with power and signs and lying false wonders and with all the deception of wickedness now who are the people are going to be deceived by this that's only one category of people that will be deceived those who don't receive the love of the truth so as to be saved dear brothers and sisters please listen to this word of exhortation love the truth about yourself in order to be saved saved from what I'll tell you honestly I'm a thousand times more interested in being saved from the wretched nature of Adam that I've got than

in being saved from hell most Christians only want to be saved from hell I'll tell you what I want to be saved from I want to be saved from all the wretched habits that the Adamic nature has given me all the selfishness and pride and every other type of evil there is I want to be saved from that if you don't love the truth about yourself to be saved in other words when the Holy Spirit tells you something about yourself in a particular situation I've been in situations where the Spirit of God has told me that was downright selfish of you to behave like that what do I do when the Spirit of God tells me that was downright selfish of you to behave like that or to talk like that to that person I can only weep Lord it's true I'm sorry I'm really sorry that I I want to I want to be free from to

be free from selfishness like climbing a mountain to be free from pride and spiritual pride is like climbing a mountain are you determined to get to the top of that mountain of humility and totally free from selfishness are you determined to climb that that means every time the Spirit of God shows you something nobody else may have known about it but you know and you love the truth about yourself and say I want to be saved not just from hell I want to be saved from every wretched thing the devil gave me through my Adamic nature if I don't if I'm not like that the Bible says the Lord I believe the Lord allows all these things to happen to see who all are interested in this nature one of the things I have seen is how the Lord allows wicked people to prosper it would be very easy for the

Lord to make wicked people suffer but when wicked people prosper and they live long healthy lives it makes some people feel well I suppose it's not too serious then being a little wicked and immediately the Lord has found out who is really interested in holiness and who is not the Lord allows many people who are outright compromisers apparently for their ministry to be successful they have contacts and in fact most of the Christian preachers I see on Christian television I tell you honestly I don't have any respect for any of them maybe you do I have to tell you honestly I don't because I don't see Christ in them I don't see the humility of Christ in them I don't see their attitude to money as the attitude of Jesus Christ and so that's what disturbs me and so I don't have any respect for

I don't see the humility and the meekness of Christ but a lot of people are taken up with that oh look at the millions that are listening okay okay go ahead but I will not be deceived I will not be deceived by numbers I mean if you are going to be taken up by numbers you could join Islam they've got 1 billion people too in the world and they go more regularly to their prayers than Christians do no I'm not impressed by numbers the Jehovah's Witnesses have got numbers the Mormons have got numbers the cults have got numbers no to those who don't love the truth God allows them to be deceived deceived into false cults deceived by all these so-called healers who apparently are doing something for the Lord you'll be deceived I'll tell you you'll be deceived but if you love the truth about

yourself you will not be deceived say Lord I want to be saved so that's the other thing the Lord speaks about in relation to the last days so I pray that the Lord will help us to be alert in these days particularly as we live in very exciting times and we read the newspapers and tsunamis and war in Jerusalem and war in Iraq and everything brings a eyes begin to sparkle hey things are beginning to happen we're coming closer to the coming of Jesus I mean it supposing you were a bride and you heard that you're the one you're getting mad going to get married to is it's come pretty close your marriage day is coming soon are you excited or you sit like many of us said yeah I think I'm getting married one of these days yeah Christ is coming there's gonna be a wedding I'm looking forward to it

let's pray our heads before God the Lord wants you to live a exciting life in these days Christian life is meant to be exciting Heavenly Father and help us we pray not just to be stirred temporarily by what we hear for a moment but to be permanently challenged as we look around in the world to be alert to be alert to know your words so that we can discern what is spiritual and what is soulish help us in these days of this tremendous deception to love the truth so that we will not be deceived to be saved from all the wretched things of the nature of Adam that you died to save us from help us we pray in Jesus name

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/rIP6VFFjiEI.mp4>

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