

The Last Days and the Lord's Coming : 7. Don't Get Drunk With Worldiness

by Zac Poonen

The most important thing to focus on when it comes to the last days is being ready for Christ's coming, and we can stay spiritually alert by being on guard against the enemy, being aware of our surroundings, and praying constantly.

Duration: 58:46

Scripture: Genesis 6:13, Matthew 4:4, Mark 13:33, Luke 21:34, 1 Corinthians 7:29, 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 2 Timothy 2:22

Topics: "Second Coming"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing that time is short and devoting oneself fully to the Lord. He explains that this does not mean avoiding marriage or work, but rather not becoming consumed by worldly pursuits. The speaker compares being drunk with the world to being intoxicated, where one loses sight of reality and becomes unaware of what is happening around them. He then references Luke 21, where Jesus speaks about the days when people will faint from fear and the coming of the Son of Man. The speaker encourages believers to keep their heads lifted up, remaining alert and focused on their redemption.

Transcript

We have been taking a study last month on the things related to the last days and the coming of Christ. And I want to emphasize that more important than knowing the details of what's going to happen, when it's going to happen, the important thing is to be ready. Because Jesus always emphasized readiness, even if you don't know the details of what's going to happen and when it's going to happen, if you're ready, it'll be okay.

But I found through many years of being a Christian that many people who concentrate on studying the details of many, many things that are going to happen in the last days, they're not ready. They'll have a lot of information in their head, but they won't be ready when Christ comes back. And in every place where Jesus spoke about his second coming, he did not emphasize details.

In fact, a lot of things are vague. Vague that different people through the years have put different interpretations to. You know, there's so much argument among Christians whether the church will go through the tribulation or not.

The important thing is to be ready. Supposing the church does go through the tribulation, are you ready? Supposing the Lord comes before the tribulation, are you ready? The important thing is to be ready. If you have your doctrine right and you're not ready, it's going to be pretty pathetic in the last days for you.

So though I have certain convictions myself, I personally believe the church will go through the tribulation. We'll see the Antichrist before Christ returns. It's very clear to me in scripture without a shadow of doubt.

And I see my calling is to prepare people for those days of persecution. One of the mistakes that many Christian missionaries made in China in the early part of the 20th century was that they told the Christians there that Christ will come before the tribulation. And so everybody was waiting for that.

And instead of Christ coming, the communists came and took over the country. And they've been ruling there for 60 years now, not just seven years of tribulation. And some of those Chinese Christian leaders said the reason why many Christians renounced Christ and forsook him at that time was because they were not prepared.

They were told, oh, Jesus will come. Be ready for that. Instead of that, they got tortured in communist prisons and they've denied the faith.

So it's important for us to be ready. Much more important than the details of his second coming. Then we can ask, why has God given various vague sort of details which people interpret in various ways? Do you know that through the years, people have said that Christ would come in 1841, 1844, 1994, different, different times.

He never came. There are people who waited up on mountains in white clothes and then went away. There were preachers who told people to sell everything because Christ is coming in a few years and swiped their money and sent them back home penniless.

All types of things have gone on in the name of Christ, particularly in the last 100 and 150 years. But you'll never go wrong if you listen to what the Lord said, to be ready for his coming. And it doesn't matter when it is.

So that's what I want to emphasize. I want to turn to a passage in Luke chapter 21, where Jesus said, he's talking about the days when men will faint from fear. Verse 21, chapter 21, verse 26.

Men will faint from fear and the expectation of things that are coming upon the world. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to take place, straighten up.

I believe Christians should take this seriously. Straighten up and lift up your heads because your redemption draws near. I take it like this, that a true disciple of Jesus has got his head lifted up at all times.

He's never hanging down in defeat and in depression and gloom and occupied with earthly things. Have you seen the animals in the world? Every animal that I ever see, I see them with their head to the ground, whether it's a cow or a dog or a pig. If you haven't noticed that, just look around next time.

Do you want to be like the animals? Always looking down at earthly things and what can I get for myself? That's what the animals look for. Always looking down to see. Now there's a way, I mean, our look can also be like that.

And that's what reduces us to the level of animals. For animals, food, sex, and sleep. That's the main thing.

Food, sex, sleep. And when food, sex, and sleep become the most important things for you, I'm sorry to say this, but you've reduced yourself to the level of an animal. You never see a cow looking up and praising God or a pig or a dog or even a lion.

That's reserved for us. But unfortunately, you see even a lot of human beings, their heads are not lifted up. Their heads are down.

One of the first questions that the Lord asked Cain, you know, outside the Garden of Eden, the first question God ever asked a man was, why is your face fallen? You know, that's one of the first questions, perhaps the first question that the Lord asked a man outside the Garden of Eden. Why is your face looking down? He had something wrong in his heart towards somebody else. That was the reason why his face was down.

There could be many reasons. But Jesus said, we must walk with our heads lifted up because he is our glory and the lifter of our head. If your head is not lifted up because of some earthly reason, ask the Lord to lift up your head.

It's not only those who have no problems. I think the Lord is pleased the Lord to take me through many trials in my life. Otherwise, I wouldn't have any ministry today.

But he's taught me to lift up my head and not sink under those trials, but walk on top of the water. Because that's his power that can keep us. We can't do it without it.

And then he said in verse 34 of Luke 21, be on guard, be on your guard. He said that often in relation to the last days, the thief comes to steal and to kill and destroy, he said. And Jesus said that his coming would be so sudden.

He's not a thief. He never said that. He said the devil's a thief, but his coming would be as sudden as a thief in the night.

So we've got to be on our guard. And that's why the Bible says that we, God's people, are not going to find Christ coming like that of a thief. I want to show you that before coming back here in 1 Thessalonians in chapter five, because many Christians say, hey, he's coming is like a thief in the night for me.

I say, no, sir, it's not like that. You haven't read the scriptures. 1 Thessalonians 5, it says in verse 2, 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 2, you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

And while everybody around is saying, peace and safety, destruction will come. Like the living Bible says, a thief is not going to call ahead and make an appointment before he comes to your house. It's when everybody's walking around complacently, congratulating each other, saying, hey, we got it made and that's the time we can take it easy now.

Suddenly everything will fall apart. You know, we're living in a world and that's coming into the cities in India too, where people have become rich and they say, hey, we've got it made now finally. And now we can take it easy.

Suddenly everything's going to fall apart. Now be ready for that. The Lord said that a lot of people who put their trust in currency and money and bank accounts and stock market and real estate and in their secure jobs.

I want to tell you, everything's going to fall apart. I'm not trying to scare you. I'm just trying to get you to be ready for that day.

But keep your head lifted up and trusting in the Lord and things will not fall apart in your life, no matter what happens around you. But when people say, hey, we've surely got it made, we can take it easy now. Suddenly everything will fall apart and it's going to come as suddenly and inescapably as birth fangs to a pregnant woman.

She knows she's going to deliver, but the actual moment of delivery comes suddenly and it's birth fangs. But he says, but you brethren, verse four, are not in darkness. That that day should overtake you like a thief.

Did you hear that? So the coming of the Lord like a thief in the night is for the unbelievers. He's going to surprise them. But here's a believer whom the thief does not surprise because he's alert.

He doesn't mean he never sleeps, but spiritually he never sleeps. That's the meaning. Physically we have to sleep, but spiritually we've got to be alert.

We read that the wise virgins were physically asleep, but the lamps were burning. How do you like that? They were asleep, but the lights were on. So we, we get tired.

We naturally on this earth, we fall asleep, but our lights can still be burning. That means they were ready when the bridegroom came. So that's the point when it says in Luke 21, verse 34, be on guard.

Now, how do I ensure that I can, even when I'm physically tired and physically asleep, my light's going to be burning. My head's lifted up. Even if I'm physically tired and asleep, be on guard so that your hearts will not be weighted down with drunkenness.

Now I can understand physical drunkenness. I hope none of us ever get drunk, but there is another drunkenness that Jesus speaks about of the heart. Now, how do you know when a man is drunk? Well, for externally, of course you can make out because he can't walk steady.

He's this way and that way and the other way. He can't walk a straight line. And spiritually also, it's something like that.

You know you're drunk with the world when you can't walk straight with the Lord. There's a bit of crookedness in your life. You can't walk straight.

You can't have your eyes fixed on the things above. Sometimes here and sometimes there. Then you know you're drunk.

And in the same way, a drunken man, another characteristic of a drunken man is he really doesn't know what's happening around him. You can steal his money and he won't even know it because he's living in, he's so drunk that he's in another world. The real world is not real to him, especially people who are on drugs.

You know, if it were written today, it would be something like this. Don't get drugged in your heart. The person's on drugs and he's on what they call a high.

It's actually a low by the way. He's living in another world. The real world is not real to him.

And when a Christian lives in a way where the real world, the real world by the way is in heaven, is not real to him. But another world which is unreal, this earthly world is real to him, you know, he's drunk. I've made that rule for myself that when the things of this earth, please listen carefully, are more real to me than the things of heaven, I'm drunk.

And I never want to be drunk. Are you drunk? You say, well, only once in a while. Well, most drunken people are not drunk every day.

They're drunk only once in a while. Are you drunk spiritually? But he's speaking about your heart's weighted down with drunkenness. The heart.

You can't walk steady anymore. This unreal world which you say as a Christian, now the worldly person doesn't say this world is going to pass away. He doesn't say that.

He just, he says, this world is not going to pass away. I'm going to save plenty for my children, grandchildren, and I'm going to live for this world. And I don't believe that there's another world.

Even the religious people, they just ease their conscience by going to a temple or a church or a mosque just in case, just in case. So keep God happy by giving him a tip every now and then on Sunday or Friday or Tuesday or whatever day you go to your religious place. But that's not the main thing.

They tip God like you tip a waiter in a restaurant to keep him happy. Next time you come there, he'll serve you properly. To most people, their religion is like that.

It's tipping God, keep him happy. I tell you, most Christians are like that too. They're reading the Bible or going to church or whatever they do is like giving a tip to God.

Just keep him happy because one day after you die, he's got to help you. That's not Christianity. Far from it.

And if any of you think that you're doing that, it makes you a Christian. You're living in a world of delusion. You're deluding yourself.

Jesus only spoke about wholehearted radical disciples for whom God is everything. In fact, the first commandment, you know, when God created man, the very first commandment is love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. That's the first commandment.

And Jesus said, if you don't keep that, what's the use you're keeping all these other things? The problem with the Pharisees was they didn't keep that one. And they didn't even keep the second one, which is love your neighbor as yourself. They forgot about those two.

And they got occupied with circumcision, Sabbath, keeping the feasts. Is there enough oil in the sacrifice? You got to make sure you've got to put a little salt there. Is the lamb without blemish? You get taken up with all these things and forget loving God with all your heart and loving your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus said, hey folks, you've missed the bus completely. And you know, that's exactly what he would say to a lot of us Christians. You don't love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, which is the first commandment.

A lot of other things in the world, which are more important to you. And you certainly don't leave alone your neighbor. You don't even love your brothers and sisters in the church like you love yourself.

You seek your own. You're jealous, boasting about yourself and your family over others and criticizing the others behind your back. You don't keep all these things, but you keep all these petty little things.

From the old Testament, it was circumcision and the offerings. Here it is going to church and reading the Bible and saying a few prayers and this, that, and the other. I think the Lord will say to us the same thing he said to the Pharisees.

So be careful. I can't change any of your lives, but I can warn you. That's what the Lord told Ezekiel.

And that's a word the Lord has often spoken to me. Son of man, I've appointed you as a watchman to my people. You shall hear the word from me and give them warning like blowing a trumpet.

If you see the enemy coming and you don't blow the trumpet, I will require the souls of my people at your hand. It's a serious thing to be a watchman. I take it very seriously.

But if you have blown the trumpet, he says, and they don't listen to it and the enemy comes and captures them, they'll be captured, but you will escape. You will not be responsible. I mean, those are words from Ezekiel.

So here's a warning. Luke 21, 34, be on guard so that your hearts are not weighted down. That's what will prevent us from going up because we've got too much weight down, pulling us down.

With dissipation and drunkenness and the cares of this life, don't let, in the Message Bible, it says, don't let the sharp edge of your expectation get dulled by parties, drinking, and shopping. Are these the important things in your life? Parties, drinking, shopping. Shopping for what? As if you don't have enough things already.

Or to keep up with the latest, you're drunk. You're really drunk. Keeping up with those other folks next door or somebody else in your office or something else, then that day is going to take you by complete surprise.

It'll spring on you suddenly like a trap. Do you think a rat knows it's going into a trap? Do you think an animal knows it's going into a trap? No, it's suddenly caught or it's going to come on everyone everywhere at the same time. So whatever you do, don't go to sleep spiritually.

Keep on the alert at all times. Pray constantly. How do you do that? How can you be on the alert at all times? It doesn't mean we can't do our eight-hour job and the many responsibilities we have for our family.

It's a spiritual alertness that's always there at the back of our mind while we're doing many other things. You know, in a computer, there are certain programs always running in the background while the computer is working on other things. It's amazing.

It's checking up for viruses and checking up while you're surfing the internet or something like that. There's sort of a background work going on all the time. It's something like that.

Our mind is sharper than any computer. And it's really like a computer in one sense, but a million times better than the best earthly one. And there are certain things that can go on in the background all the time while we're doing our other things, exactly like a computer.

You know, checking for earthly viruses that are coming in. Some people are so careful to make sure there's no virus in their computer and their head's full of them. How foolish.

You take care of something that's going to last for a little while and you don't take care of viruses that can destroy your entire future. So when it says be on the alert at all times, let's keep these background checks going all the time. Alert.

Always alert. I'm doing earthly things. I'm taking care of my family.

I'm doing my earthly job. I have many, many things to do, but all the time alert. And prayer means a dependence upon God all the time saying, Lord, I don't have the strength to overcome all these things.

I don't have the strength to escape deception in these days because it's so subtle. Jesus said deception will be so subtle that even perhaps the elect could be deceived. It's going to be so powerful.

I mean, imagine what Jesus said in Matthew 7, 22, 23 about people doing miracles in Jesus' name and people casting out demons in Jesus' name and people prophesying in Jesus' name. Many and his saying to them in the last days, get away from me. I never knew you.

Not once upon a time I knew you and you backslid. I never knew you fellas because you never gave up sin in your life. You read that in Matthew 7, 22 and 23.

He said in the last day when he stand before the Lord, he's going to say that to many people. I don't want him to say that to me. I've gone around different countries prophesying in Jesus' name, preaching God's word.

I don't go around doing miracles. There are a few demons cast out here and there in Jesus' name, but certainly I've been preaching in Jesus' name, casting out demons in Jesus' name. I don't want him to say, get away from me, you who lived in sin.

Sin, your attitude to sin is going to be the most important thing that's going to matter when you stand before the Lord. Let me tell you that. Let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from sin.

That's the mark on God's seal. Like the president has a seal. God's people have a seal.

Let me show you what's written on that seal in 2 Timothy 2. You know, big offices and there's an official seal. There are seals that mark that only certain officials have. It says in 2 Timothy 2 about this seal.

In verse 19, it speaks about a firm foundation of God. That's very important to build this house. And God certifies a firm foundation with a seal.

I want a foundation in my life, which is God's seal upon it. The certificate of approval. And the seal it says here is, there are two sides to the seal.

You know, this is a heavenly seal, so it's got two sides to it. One is the upper side and the other is the lower side of the seal. So you've got to see what's written on top.

You've got to see what's written underneath. Okay, here's what's written on the Godward side. The side which God looks at.

The Lord knows those who are his. He's not fooled. As he looks at all of us this morning, I'll tell you something.

The Lord knows those who are his. I don't know. Sometimes I'm fooled by some people who come to CFC regularly and I think they are his, but I could be mistaken.

In the final day, I discover, hey, that guy never belonged to the Lord at all. He was just a first-class hypocrite who fooled me for many years and sat here. Okay, what can I do? I warned them.

But the Lord knows those are his. That's absolutely certain. But that's on the upper side of the seal.

I can't see it. I mean, if I could see the upper side of the seal, I could easily say who are the Lord's right now. But I can't see it.

I'm a human being. I'm down here. The upper side of the seal, the Lord sees the Lord knows those are his.

But I can see the bottom side of the seal and that's how I know. The bottom side of the seal, it says, everyone who names the name of the Lord. When a person says, I'm a Christian, that's the name of the Lord.

Every Christian is to stay away from sin. That's how I know. So when I see a person hating sin and staying away from it, that's how I know.

I don't know the Godward side. And if a person is not staying away from sin, he's not seeking to lead other people away from sin, all he's interested in is doing miracles and healing and casting out demons and preaching. Well, I'd say he may be saved, but he may not be also.

I don't know. I can be certain only when this thing is in the seal. Along with this seal, there could be 101 other things, but this is primary.

So Luke 21 and verse, it's going to come like a trap. Be alert at all times, praying so that you can have strength to escape these things that are about to take place and to stand before the Son of Man. What are the things that God wants us to escape? Now, here is where every Christian is tested.

When he reads this verse, he can say, ah, see, I told you we're going to escape the tribulation because that's the most important thing in his life to escape suffering. You know, it depends on what you're looking for. I'll tell you what I'm looking for.

I want to escape sin. And I read that verse completely differently. Escape, escape what? I want to escape sin.

I'm not even interested in escaping hell. I want to escape sin. If I escape sin, I'll automatically escape hell.

A lot of people who want to escape hell may not be interested in escaping sin while on this earth. What are you praying for? Pray constantly that you may have strength. Strength for what? I mean, if Jesus is going to come and rapture me before the tribulation, I don't need any strength.

I'll tell you that. I'm not going to lift myself up. He's going to lift me up without any problem.

What do I need? Strength to escape. Strength to escape some years of tribulation. I don't need that if he's going to come before me.

I want to have strength to escape denying the Lord in the time of tribulation. I want to have strength to escape sin because temptation is pretty powerful. I'll tell you that.

I want to have strength to escape the forces of this world that seek to swallow me up. That seek to make me drunk. Because that's the context.

The context is not you're going to suffer. What is the context? The context is your heart is going to be weighted down with drunkenness, with the cares of this world, the worries of this life. Pray that you'll have strength to escape these things.

That's what I want to have. Strength to escape. A lot of people read scripture.

I tell you one of the bad habits of Christians is to have favorite verses or sometimes half a verse. They don't even read the paragraph. I mean, imagine if you got a letter from your dad or friend and you got half a sentence completely out of context.

If journalists and news reporters take statements that people make out of context, I tell you Christians do that a million times more. They take verses of the Bible completely out of context. What things are we to escape? We're going to escape these things.

This verse 34, this dissipation, this drunkenness, being occupied with the worries of this life. That's what I want to escape. So that I can stand before the Lord.

So that he doesn't come. So that his coming is not going to catch me like a thief. Because I belong to the day.

What do you read in 1 Thessalonians 5? You fellas belong to the day. You don't belong to the night. So why should he come like a thief for you? The thief comes in the night.

Do you belong to the night? I say no sir. I don't belong to the night. I belong to the day.

Thieves don't come during the day usually. So that's what it means to stand before the Son of Man. I want to say something about our relation to the world which is going to be very important because that's the context here.

Make sure that this world doesn't sort of get into your heart in a nutshell. That's what he's saying. Pray that you'll have strength to keep the world outside.

What do you mean by the world? I don't mean the people of the world. God so loved the people of the world. And I've got to love them.

I've got to love the fellow who hates me. I've got to love the boss who's harassing me day and night. I've got to love him.

I mean if you want you can leave the job and choose another job. But in Christianity you're not permitted to hate anybody. Nobody.

Not even the one who raped your daughter or murdered her or anything. You're just not permitted. That's it.

You're not permitted to keep an unforgiving spirit to anyone no matter what they did to you. I know it's tough. That's why we need to pray.

That's why we need to pray for strength to escape these wrong attitudes that we can have towards people. Don't just say it's tough brother. I know it's tough.

Like somebody told me about some particular thing and he said brother it's difficult. I said it's not difficult. I said it's impossible.

Talking about the Sermon on the Mount you know people say brother it's difficult to live up to that standard. I said no it's impossible. Not difficult.

It's impossible. As long as you think it's difficult you're going to try. When you realize it's impossible you're not going to try.

You're going to say Lord help me. You better help me. That's the difference.

Some of you folks are trying and trying and constantly failing. Why not recognize it's impossible and come to the Lord for the power of his Holy Spirit so that you have strength. Then you'll be able to keep those commandments.

Then you'll be able to live according to God's standards. To have strength to escape these things that are seem to come into my heart. I don't want to get drunk.

Jesus said the last days are going to be like the days of Noah and God's people are going to be like Noah. I said that before in an earlier study. But look at this in Hebrews chapter 11 what it says about Noah.

Hebrews 11 and verse 7. Hebrews 11 verse 7 it says by faith and I tell you this. If you want to live the way God wants you to live in the last days you got to live by faith. It's not this third-rate faith for getting a better house and a better car that you hear being preached by television preachers.

No. It's another type of faith that Noah had. Don't be deceived by these people and there are multitudes of preachers these days and all these folks in western countries.

Most of the preachers on television in India are you know you see them they're all Americans and they that they've it's amazing how they have infiltrated the minds of Christian preachers in India. It's all these dumb preachers in our country who just sit there and swallow everything as if God only speaks through all those people on television. We need to hear God ourselves and not be swayed and influenced by people who have a lot of money.

I'll tell you something people have a lot of money don't necessarily know God and people who fly in who own their private jet planes are not the ones who know God. I'd rather listen to people like Paul and Peter who were humbly dependent on God never asked anybody for any money. But the point is this the faith that we need is the faith of Jesus Christ.

The Bible says he is the author of our faith. Author means what? That means every single letter of a book was written by this man. That's the author and that means every single letter of faith in my heart is written

by Jesus not by some television preacher.

I want to ask all of you sitting here an honest question. Where did you get your faith from? Was it from some woman who's your favorite preacher on television? God have mercy on you. You won't be ready for the last days or some other fancy preacher with all his grand clothes who that faith has only urged you to become richer and wealthier and get better cars and better houses.

Why not get Jesus to be the author of your faith? Tell me what type of faith he will write into your heart. Show me one verse of scripture which aligns with the type of rubbish you hear on Christian television nowadays. Is Jesus the author of your faith? It better be if you want to be ready for the last days.

Every single word in my heart I want written by Jesus Christ and not by any man. Jesus is the author of our faith. Then it says in Hebrews 12 we'll be able to run the race and overcome.

Then we won't have these third-rate Christians who are hanging their heads down with depression and gloom and still losing their temper and still watching internet pornography and coming to church and pretending to be holy people. First-class hypocrites. Why? Because Jesus is not the author of their faith.

They're listening to all this rubbish from other people. They don't stay away from sin. They love the world so much that their faith is only interested in getting things for themselves.

Physical healing. I tell you I would rather have 10,000... Listen to me. I'd rather have 10,000 sicknesses in my body than one sin in my life.

I'm saying that before God. I would rather have 10,000 sicknesses in my body than one sinful thought in my mind than watch one dirty immoral picture for two seconds. I'd rather have 10,000 sicknesses in my body.

How many of you can say that? If you did say that I tell you you'd be serious about sin. You'd overcome sins long long ago. But you're crazy after physical healing and material prosperity.

You know God's kept me in remarkable health for almost all these 70 years and provided all my earthly needs. Those of you who've lived here in Bangalore have seen that. And I never sought any of that.

I never sought for healing and I never sought for money. I sought the kingdom of God first and His righteousness. And those of you have seen me the last 33 years here you know that.

That's the way to have health and enough for your earthly needs. Not by pursuing after it. And my brothers and sisters I'm not saying this to boast.

I'm saying you should be a testimony too. When you come to my age that you should be able to tell other people I spent my life seeking God's kingdom and His righteousness. God took care of all my physical health and my earthly needs.

Took care of my family. I didn't pursue after them. That's how Jesus lived.

Jesus wasn't a sick person going around and a person always begging other people for money saying hey my father let me down can you borrow lend me some money. No. He never had to go and borrow a cent from anybody.

This is absolute shame when a believer has to go and borrow money from people. Absolute shame. I'm surprised that people in the CFC don't take that seriously.

Are you following Christ? Or are you following all the people in the world? I tell you Jesus is not the author of the faith of many Christians. They haven't got their faith from the scriptures. They got their faith from worldly preachers who are after their money.

Now listen to this faith. Hebrews 11. Noah.

The last days are going to be like Noah's days and God's going to have people like Noah who are going to stand up for him in the last days. And that's why Noah is a good example for us. Hebrews 11 7. By faith Noah being warned by God about things not seen.

Okay. Have you been warned in these days about things that have not yet happened? We certainly have from scripture. What did he do? The first thing he did was he the first thing said about him is he had reverence.

He had a tremendous respect for the word of God. And by that I mean not the bible. He didn't have a bible.

He didn't have any preacher. He didn't have any fellowship. But he heard a word from God.

And we've got 31,175 verses in this bible. Do you know how many Noah had in his bible? One. We've got 31,000 more verses than he got.

What is this one verse? I'm going to destroy this world. You better make an ark and get saved and save your family first. Every member of your family and then try and save as many others as you can by preaching to them.

That was the word he got. That's all. And he got it once.

He didn't have a preacher reminding him of that every Sunday. He heard it once and he kept that word in his mind for 120 years and lived on that. Can you do that? That's faith.

I tell you when you hear something from God you won't be interested in what man has to say to you after that. Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from God's mouth. Are you listening to God? We've got a bible.

You can listen to God. Every day you can listen to him. He heard that and in reverence he says oh God is that true? Yeah absolutely true.

This world is going to pass away. I'm talking about Noah. All this sex and violence that's going on.

I'm talking about days of Noah again. He saw the pollution, the perversion, the sexual perversion that people were indulging in. The craziness after sex in his days.

The craziness of violence in his days. And he said Lord you're going to destroy it all. He said yes.

Is there a way of salvation? Yes. Work on it. Noah you've lived all your life to make money till now but now on from today live for the things that are going to remain when this world is going to be destroyed.

What did he do? He didn't spend all his time preaching. Then he wouldn't have had time to build the ark. He wouldn't have time to take care of his family.

He prayed with his family. He had family prayer. He taught without a bible.

Imagine having family prayer without a bible. And what did he well he could only tell his people one verse. Imagine having a family prayer with only one verse every day for 120 years.

He'd say sons he's got three sons and they got married fortunately to god-fearing women. Make sure your children marry god-fearing people. And he would have family prayer with them and say fellas I've got the same verse I gave you for the last 100 years.

What's that? You know it by now. This world's going to be destroyed. Live for the things that will remain after this world's over.

Let's build the ark. And they would build the ark. They saw their dad was wholehearted.

And I tell you he was not supported by somebody else financially to do that work. Today a lot of christian work I mean a lot of christian work says we got to have money brother. We got to have somebody to support.

Who supported Noah? Not only who supported Noah's family. Who supported him in the building of the ark? Supposing he had asked god well that's fine lord to build a ship. It's going to be pretty expensive.

Who's going to pay for it? Now wouldn't you ask that question if god told you to build a ship? Or build a church meeting hall? Supposing god told you go and build a church meeting hall. What's your first question? What is the average question of the first of the preacher nowadays? Lord who's going to pay for it? I tell you. Isn't it wonderful that Noah never even asked that question? Because if he did ask that question he knew what the answer would be.

You yourself. Who else? There's no America here Noah. You yourself.

You're going to pay for it. He knew that. That's why he didn't ask that question.

He knew that he'd had to work. I mean those days people had a lot of fields and lands and not like us today struggling for a living. God's reasonable.

He's not going to ask you to build a ship. No worry. But he could ask Noah because he knew Noah was a rich man.

But even rich people now don't like to part with their money for god's work. I'll tell you that. Oh no.

You know why you've never seen me or heard me ask you to give money for God's work in the last 33 years of this church? Why is it we never take an offering in this church for 33 years? Why is it in all the churches we planted in India and more than 40 now and in other countries we never take an offering? We just keep a box at the back those who want to give because Jesus said you've got to give secretly. How can you give secretly when somebody stuck a bag in front of your face? How can you give voluntarily when somebody stuck a bag even if you don't feel like it? You've got to at least pretend to put your hand inside and drop something. We don't want any hypocrisy in God's house.

How can you give cheerfully? But what's the reason why we've never spoken about it? I'll tell you what the Lord's told me. The Lord's told me as long as you have one rupee left in your own bank account, don't ever ask anybody else for money for God's work. I tell you I still have more than one rupee left in my bank account.

That's why you never have heard me and you never will hear me asking you to give money for God's work. One day when my bank account comes to zero and I don't think that'll happen, then I will ask you. Imagine if all the preachers in the world followed that rule.

I think Jesus followed it. I can't imagine Jesus having money in his bank and telling fellows, hey give money for God's work. He'd use that first.

Our faith is not written by Jesus Christ. It's written by today's worldly preachers. Jesus is the author of my faith and I got it from scripture.

I didn't get it from reading Christian books or watching Christian television. I tell you the devil knows that today's Christians don't know the Bible. I thank God that I studied the Bible so that I could get my faith from Jesus.

I got a clear picture in my mind of how Jesus lived his earthly life and not only Jesus, these great men like Noah. It says here with reverence, he had a reverence for God and I want to encourage you my brothers and sisters, if you want to live wholeheartedly for God in the last days, learn reverence. Learn to respect God.

I recently sent a circular to all the elders of our churches saying, see if there's reverence in the songs that you sing in your churches. There's a lot of worldly songs that have come into the church. What do I mean by worldly? Written by people who don't have reverence themselves for God.

Written by people who are more interested in money. I mean, tell me this honestly. Would you rather listen to a preacher who you know is only preaching to get your money or for money and who will only preach a sermon if he thinks he can copyright that sermon and make some money out of it and royalty out of every sermon he preaches? Would you rather listen to a preacher like that or someone who says, hey, this is free, man.

You don't have to pay for anything. There's no copyright on it. You can go and preach it somewhere else.

Which of these two do you think would have a word from God? While you're thinking about that, I'll tell you something else. I know clearly which of those two men will have a word from God. Which of these two songwriters would you like? Someone who's devoted to God and wrote a song because of his devotion to God.

He doesn't put any copyright on it. He says, I don't want any royalty. This is for everybody to sing, man.

Anybody can publish and sing it for the glory of God. Or a person who writes three, four lines in a chorus. Three of those lines are repeated five times and says, I'm going to charge royalty on this.

Every book that ever publishes these four lines, they've got to pay me royalty. And every CD that ever uses these songs has got to pay me royalty. You think that guy is likely more to have a word from God in his songs? You've got to be off your head.

I'm not off my head. I know who's likely to be more inspired. That's why I like the old hymns written by people who never made money out of it.

People like Fanny Crosby and Charles Wesley wrote thousands of hymns and never made any money out of it. Today a fellow writes four lines of a chorus and he's making money out of it. What's that? And the other thing, a lot of these sentimental love songs to Jesus, hold me close, never let me go.

You don't know who they're singing it to. By these half converted cowboys who wrote love songs to their girlfriends in the old days and now writing it to Jesus. Just see whether there's a spirit of reverence in it.

See if there's a reverence that brings you close to God or just makes you sentimental, frothy type of emotion to Jesus that makes you think you love Jesus with teary eyed singing for three hours on Sunday morning and you go and watch internet pornography on Monday. Why? That's sentimental rubbish. If you really love Jesus, you'd keep his commandments.

He said that. He said in John 14, 15, if you love me, keep my commandments. That's reverence.

I want to sing songs that have reverence, that bring me close to God on Sunday and keep me close to God on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday. That's reverence. In reverence, you know what he did when Noah, in reverence, it says here, Hebrews 11, he prepared an ark.

He decided, hey, I'm going to, I'm going to live for building the church. That didn't mean he gave up his earthly living. Noah was a full-time worker for God, but he supported himself.

He still took care of his farm so that he had food for his family and for himself. He supported himself and he served the Lord. Are there going to be people like Noah in the last days? And first of all, I like this.

First of all, for the salvation of my family. That's what it says there. Read your Bible.

First of all, for the salvation of his family. I hope you're interested in the salvation of your family. If your children are not saved, if they're not born again, if they're not becoming disciples of Jesus, my dear brother, let me tell you the truth.

Fathers, especially, it's probably because you're not too serious about it. Take the blame. Don't say my son is like this.

My daughter is like this. Uh-huh. What about you? You're not serious about them.

What's using Noah saying, hey, telling his wife, hey, Shem is like this and Ham is like that and Japheth is like that. Fathers won't listen to me. You think Noah would tell his wife that rubbish? No, he was the head of his home.

He didn't let his three sons just wander off whichever way they liked. He didn't let his sons go and wander around, play the fool with other worldly friends in his days and lose their salvation. He wanted the circle to be unbroken.

I like that song, will the circle be unbroken, by and by, by and by. The picture is of a family circle where father and mother and children are all holding hands. Whether you have two or three or four children who are holding hands and standing in a circle and then we stand with the circle in heaven and there's a gap there and there's a gap there.

Hey, what happened to those two? What happened to our son and our daughter? They're in hell. Will the circle be unbroken in heaven? I want the circle to be unbroken. I decided that years ago.

My wife and I had four sons and we decided that if our four sons are not going to follow the Lord, what's the use of my preaching, going around preaching and telling other people to be saved? And if those four sons don't marry believers, what's the use of my going around preaching to other people? You know, Noah had three sons and he got them married to God-fearing women. He was the head of his home. He didn't just let his son marry anybody that they liked.

They were normal boys and they'd have liked somebody. But Noah would have put down his foot down and said, no, no sham. You're not going to marry her.

Sorry. Oh, I wish we had fathers like that these days who'd keep their sons and daughters under them in the important things. I'm not bothered about what dress they wear, provided it's modest and decent, but I'm more interested in things that relate to life.

Don't give up control of your home. A lot of children would like to take control of their home from their parents. Noah did not permit it.

That's why he saved his family. That's why Noah's circle was unbroken when they came out of the ark. When they came out of the ark, all eight were there.

And when I get into heaven, I want all my children and I want their wives and I want my grandchildren too there. That's important for me. It may not be important for you.

It is for me. I hope it is for you. Why does God put us, you know, it's impossible for us to have a burden for the whole world.

God can do that because he's got a large heart. We're small. God puts us in small families so that we can take care of our own families and bring them to Christ.

Every one of them, make them disciples. Don't just be satisfied that there is the hand in some meeting. Oh, my son is breaking bread.

Great. You know, a lot of people who break bread will go to hell. I have no doubt about it in my mind.

I'm not interested that your son or daughter is breaking bread. Are they disciples of Jesus? How do they live every day? Do you know what they're doing in their private life? Do you know what they're watching on the computer every day? I hope you know. Do you know what type of CDs and DVDs they're watching? You provided them the resources.

Well, what are they watching with that money you gave them? I hope you know. Noah prepared an ark for the salvation of his family first. And then by this process, this is the praise I want you to see.

He condemned the world. He condemned the world. He said, I have nothing more to do with this rotten old world.

I'm not going to live for this rotten old world. Is your way of life condemning the world? When people see the way you live, do they say, hey, this man's not much interested in this world. He lives here.

He lives a normal life. But this is obviously not his home. You know, like foreigners who come to India.

You know by the way they live, this is not their home. They live here. They may rent a house.

They may buy things, etc. But you know their mind is back in their home. Because that's where they're going to go.

They're here for a short while. Maybe they'll come for six months or three years or whatever it is. But this is not their home.

You know that. They're not citizens of India. They're citizens of another country.

They're always interested in knowing what's happening there. They want to find out news about what's happening in their home country. But they live here.

That's exactly how a Christian is supposed to live. And you know them. And you meet a foreigner whose mind, I don't mean by their appearance, but their mind is, you know, that they're thinking of things back home.

And do people get that idea when they meet you? Hey this guy's a foreigner. He lives here. I mean they eat and drink and sleep and have houses and everything and perhaps work here and get jobs.

But their mind is not here. They condemn the world. Noah was like that.

He lived a normal life. But people around him, his neighbors and all saw this guy's got his mind set on building an ark. It's the craziest thing to do.

There's no sea anywhere near here. It's never rained for 2,000 years. What's this guy talking about rain? You know there was no rain until Noah's time? Bible says that in Genesis 2. And so to talk about a rain of water coming from heaven, it's like our saying there's gonna be a rain of fire one day.

God's gonna throw down fire from heaven. It's never happened. I know it's never happened but it's gonna happen.

And that Christ is gonna come. We better build the church. You better make sure your family's in the church.

Better make sure that your heart is not weighted down with worldly cares that you use this world but don't make full use of it. 1 Corinthians 7. There's a great verse about that for believers in our time. 1 Corinthians and chapter 7. It's talking about marriage but it's got some good words there for for us.

It says here in verse 31. Those who use this world as though they didn't make full use of it. Deal as sparingly as possible with the things of this world.

We need to use this world but don't get don't get occupied with it because this world is not everything. In verse 29. I remember as a young man I wrote this on a piece of paper and stuck it on my table.

The time is short. The time is short. In verse 35.

Attend with undistracted devotion to the Lord. Putting those two verses together. I put verse 29 verse 35 together.

The time is short. Give your undistracted devotion to the Lord. I've had that before my mind for many years and I hope I'll keep it all my life.

The time is short. Give your undistracted devotion to the Lord. It doesn't mean you shouldn't get married.

It doesn't mean you shouldn't have a job. It means don't get drunk with it. Like people know the difference between taking one cup of homemade wine and getting drunk.

There's a world of difference between the two. In the same way there's a world of difference between using the world and getting drunk with the world. We have to use the world.

Jesus used it. Jesus used money. He had a house in Capernaum but that wasn't everything to him.

Somebody broke open the roof of his house once and lured somebody to be healed. That didn't disturb Jesus. Not at all.

You read that in Mark chapter 2. You know I can imagine those people coming outside and seeing the crowded house and Jesus and say how to get in and somebody says hey let's take the tiles off. One of the owners say ah it's Jesus man. He won't be bothered with all that.

He'll be more interested in healing somebody not that his house got ruined. And you know those people walked away without even repairing the house. Have you noticed that in that place? Who repaired it? Jesus the carpenter.

He went and fixed it up later. You could see that man's mind was not on this world. Is he the author of your faith? Are you more interested in saving souls than making sure that your house is part spick and span? Let's pray.

It's so important to be ready for the last days. Don't just take this as a sermon that stirred you. But say Lord I want to be ready for the last days.

Help me to be alert. In Jesus name. Amen.

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