

LESSON 2



WATCHFULNESS

Scripture Texts: 2 Peter 3:10-14; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

What day is the day of the Lord? In the New Testament, the day of the Lord means our Lord's second coming. Jesus Himself spoke of it in Matthew 24 and Luke 12. In view of the events of the destruction of all earthly creation, Christ's appearance, and the Judgment, why need we consider the command to watch? How much depends upon our watching? Is the command to all or only to weak ones? How many will be watching for His coming? What is there to watch inside ourselves? In our outside conduct? Can we actually be ready to fall while we think we stand securely? We must be watchful and help others to watch, the devil is a deceiver.

MEMORY VERSE: *But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.* — 1 Peter 4:7

Be Prepared

Second Peter 3:10-12. **The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.** There is coming a day when **the heavens shall pass away . . . and the elements**—the substances of which the universe is composed—will be destroyed with all that is in it or around it. There will be a **great noise**. Fire will melt and burn up all **with fervent heat**. Jesus Christ will come. Every human being, living and dead, will see Him and be called to judgment. But none will be told when this is to take place. It will come **as a thief in the night**—unannounced and suddenly. None will have time to get ready. We are **hasting** to that day; saints, joyfully; sinners, fearfully. We cannot change what God has appointed. But whether we meet it with joy or terror is in our hands. It depends upon what we ARE in heart. What **ought ye to be?** *Ought* is a strong word of obligation. It places responsibility upon ourselves alone, not upon some outside authority to force us to be **holy in conversation**, that is, in all conduct. We must be sinless. We must be godly, like God, filled with God. No one is ready for **the day of the Lord** unless an operation of God has been done in his heart. His once-dead soul must be living. Jesus Christ must live in him, the Holy Spirit be in control.

Saints Are in Light

First Thessalonians 5:1-8. **The day of the LORD so cometh . . .** Two things are emphasized in all that Jesus and His apostles said about the day of the Lord. First, it would come quickly and unexpectedly; second, it was the duty of the believers to watch for the coming of that day and be prepared for it. In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8 Paul admonished the Thessalonians that they had already been instructed concerning Christ's coming. It would come **as a thief in the night**. He explained that they had no need for anxiety because they were all sons of light; they were not in darkness.

Great numbers of men and women in carnal security will continue their ways of life, paying no attention to righteousness, but spending their lives in the drunkenness of spiritual disarray. For they are of the night and of darkness. **Ye are . . . the children of light. Watch and be sober.**

The glory of the Church of God is that active spirit of fellowship which supports the weak and strong to the glories of a life lived constantly with Christ, the light. Paul's word was that they exhort one another and build up one another. In the midst of a disillusioned, drunken, pleasure-loving world, true Christians stand out as happy people, their lives covered with light. They have **on the breastplate of faith**, and the **helmet . . . of salvation**.

God's Promise

Second Peter 3:13-14. **Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.** Sin has ruined this present world. Destruction is its only possible end. God is eternal, infinite and perfect love. He planned a way He would not have to leave His creation in this state. We cannot comprehend what this new creation will be. What would this beautiful world be with no sin? No sickness or death?

What God has for His people in the future is beyond our finite minds to picture. With the little information we are given of the new heaven and earth, we are unable to picture boundaries or tell what is involved in the plan. We do know that the redeemed are included. To realize the hope, we are to now use constant care to keep holiness alive and active. WATCH.

Be diligent. We will never drift or grow into holiness and peace. These result from the work of God in the heart joined with the determined purpose of the individual. To be diligent is to be industrious, persevering, painstaking, and attentive. To be sober is to be serious-minded, self-controlled, calm, and steady. These pretty well summarize the Christian life. Jesus said "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12). The kingdom is not for the halfhearted or the good beginners who fall before trial or persecution, who put their hands to the plow but turn back. We must watch daily to resist Satan and obey the Lord. Dedicate yourself to live, sacrifice, and suffer for Him.

One Can Fall

First Corinthians 10:12-13. **Take heed lest he fall.** One can fall by acting in his own wisdom or strength rather than God's. The reason we are urged to watch is that we are easily deceived into overconfidence in our own strength. This is both human nature and the devil's trick. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

God . . . will . . . make a way to escape. If we will take the humble, watchful way, God will prepare an open door for us to escape from temptation. The door may be narrow and the way hard, but it will be wide enough and our strength great enough (by grace) to do right if we will. **Watch unto prayer.** Read Hebrews 12:15. This is the watching that Jesus commands.

JUST A THOUGHT

**A person cannot help the size of his ears,
the length of his nose and tongue,
but he can keep them out of other people's business.**

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