

BE YE SOBER

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The more I'm thinking about this message tonight, the more I feel like it might be a prelude to what we're going to look at on Sunday.

We're living in a very serious time and I'm not sure everybody really sees or perceives the seriousness. I think if we really all could see how important the time is, I believe even our services would be more attended.

Of course, we're happy to see everybody who's here tonight but there are more who could be here. I don't say that to criticize any brother or sister but to say: if we could really see how serious the time is, we would be concerned for our life. That's how serious it is.

When we look at the things that have gone on in this world and the things that are happening now, I believe we should take a strong look and realize: we are not very far away from the evil in this world.

We see what happened in Israel two years ago. There were people who woke up that day and thought it was just going to be another beautiful fall day. A lot of young people said: it's a beautiful day, we're going to go to a music festival.

I think it was a Saturday – I might be wrong on that – but they got to the festival and all of a sudden they began to hear shooting from different places and then it just turned into a nightmare. Many were killed, others were taken hostage.

I honestly feel that it was probably better for those who were killed because of the torture, the physical, mental, and emotional torture they had to suffer. For some of them it was just over two years. We thank God that on Monday – well for us it was Monday, it may have been Sunday evening for them – those last hostages were freed.

Maybe I was a little too hard on Trump on Sunday. I don't believe there was any malice in the plan that he worked on. He did his best with the understanding that he has. He has an earthly understanding. And with what he does understand, I'm sure he gave it his best effort.

But like I said Sunday: it's the wrong plan. Anything that tells Israel to stay out of their own land is the wrong plan.

On top of that, the agreement has already been violated by Hamas. One of the points was that Hamas would not be in authority. Yet they are asserting authority right now: they're fighting against other Gazans who want to take authority.

Another thing is: they said they were going to return all of the dead hostages and they haven't done that either. So they have already broken the agreement.

I said: it might be a year, and I was thinking of something more like a terror attack. But it hasn't been a week and they've already broken the agreement.

Coming back to our point: those young people thought *today is another beautiful day*, and it turned into a nightmare. So we need to be walking close to the Lord and not just think: well, that's over there. We don't know what can happen here. There are still some things that have to happen here to get this nation in the right place.

I don't know how many have been looking at the news for New York but they are having a mayoral race, and according to the polls, the person who is the frontrunner right now is a Muslim.

I would have to say: first of all, how in the world can a Muslim be in first place? I know there are people who will say: that's a horrible statement, that's a racist statement. Well, it's *not racist* because Muslim is *not* a race: *it's a religion*.

But *Islam* is so contrary to the Christian religion and to Judaism. And we know that the foundational building blocks of this country are Christian, so to consider this man: not only is he *Muslim*, but he's *anti-Israel*.

Now that's probably not a surprise, but he has even said: if Benjamin Netanyahu comes to New York, I'm going to have him arrested. We're talking about *the Prime Minister of Israel*.

We think of all that Netanyahu has done and all that he's been through in the last couple years, and even what a large Jewish population there is in New York. So to make the statement: *if Prime Minister Netanyahu comes to New York, I will have him arrested*, I have to say – as we were saying on Sunday – those things have to change before the Woman of Revelation 12 comes to the United States. She's not going to come so that she can be put in jail. Amen.

But it says: *she's nourished, she's cared for, she's fed*. [Revelation 12:6]

So again, there are still things that have to come on this nation. We see some things moving in the right direction but there is still *a force* that wants to go against that. And *that force* is going to have to be dealt with.

So if we could, let's go to First Peter chapter 5. And we're going to start in verse 8.

This, of course, is Peter. He says here:

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion,

I'm glad it says: *as*, and not: he is. It's *not* that he *is* a roaring lion.

1 Peter 5:8

as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

We're living in a time and a day when typical professing Christianity wants such a watered-down, bed-of-roses-with-no-thorns picture of what Christianity is, they don't want to think that there's anything fearful. And when I say that, I'm *not* saying: we should live in fear, but *we do have to be knowledgeable of the dangers*. Praise the Lord.

They want to paint it that if you believe there are dangers or things like that, you're one of these fringe elements with crazy ideas.

But if we look at what Peter said, he said: *the devil is looking to see whom he may devour*. Amen.

The devil is not really after our flesh. Yes, of course, he would love to kill us. And if it weren't by the grace of God and the barrier that God puts, telling the devil: *keep your hand off*, then he would. But more importantly, he's after *our soul*.

He says here:

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober, be vigilant;

Now the word *sober*, in the modern term, we use it to mean: *not drunk*.

But the way it's used here, I actually looked it up so I could say it correctly. It means: marked by sedate, gravely, or earnestly thoughtful character or demeanor. Another translation is: marked by temperance, moderation, or seriousness.

We've read before where Paul said that *the aged men should be sober*. [Titus 2:2] But if we were to continue to read, he also said *the young women* [Titus 2:4] *and the young men*. [Titus 2:6]

Here Peter is not putting this on any particular group, he's saying this *to everybody*. And again, it's: *spiritually sober*.

He says:

1 Peter 5:8
be vigilant;

What does *vigilant* mean? It means: alertly watchful, especially to avoid danger.

We have to understand, Paul said: *in the last days, perilous times shall come*. Amen. [2Timothy 3:1]

We are in perilous times.

The enemy is going to do everything he can to get us, first of all, *to believe a lie*, if he can do that.

There are churches around this world full of people who are *believing lies*. They have been – I'm going to say it like this – *they have been devoured by the enemy*. Even though they're sitting in churches and they can sing *Amazing Grace* so beautifully, their heart is in the wrong place: it's *not believing the Word*.

We have to believe the Word.

And if the devil can't get you to believe a lie, he's still going to try to bring things into your life to get you distracted. Many times those could be things of the world. I'm not talking about what is openly sin, but simply things that come into our life to get our mind off of the things of God.

So he says: *be aware, be sober*.

He says here:

1 Peter 5:9
Whom resist steadfast in the faith,

Praise the Lord.

That part – *in the faith* – what is that? That is: *what we believe of the Word*. We should be meditating on the Word of God. We should not believe something just because Jason Bright said it, or because any other brother said it.

Yes, we have to listen to what brothers have said, but at the end of the day, we also have to have our own time *reading* the Word of God, *meditating* on the Word of God.

What did David say? He said: *how I love to meditate on thy law.* [Psalm 119:97]

Now, of course David being a Jew, he had the Law as the basis. Today, we have the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But if the only reason we believe is: yes, I believe that there is *one Week left* because *that's what I hear preached.* I believe that the Two Days are coming to an end pretty soon because *that's what they're preaching to me.* I believe that the Temple is going to be rebuilt because *that's what they're preaching.*

Well, it's good to know what's being preached. First of all: I hope we do know. But at the end of the day, we have to make the connection between *this Word* and *the Revelation of the Word.*

So Peter says: *be firm in the faith.* [1Peter 5:9] And being *firm in the faith,* you can resist *the enemy.* Praise the Lord.

If we *know what we believe,* and again: if we *meditate on that,* if we *think on these things,* praise the Lord, *that strengthens us.* And we can *resist the enemy.*

He says:

1 Peter 5:9

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Praise the Lord.

I was saying: the devil can bring things into our life to get us distracted. Sometimes he can do that through discouragement as well, or just the magnitude of problems we face. And sometimes we can think: *I'm the only one* going through this.

What did Elijah say? He said: *I'm the only one left!* [1Kings 19:10] And the Lord told him: well not really, *there are 7000 that I have reserved.* [1Kings 19:18]

I have to say: we should be able to take comfort that our brothers and sisters throughout the world are going through these things too. They are also struggling. But by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can have the victory. Praise the Lord.

He says here:

1 Peter 5:10

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus,

How beautiful! When we stop to think about that – *He chose you and me in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world* [Ephesians 1:4] – we should be so joyous!

He says here:

1 Peter 5:10
after that ye have suffered a while,

Sometimes we don't think it's *a little while*. But he says here: *after you've suffered a while*. In Spanish it says: *a little while*.

Let's see what He can do, and what He *will do*.

1 Peter 5:10
make you perfect,

That means: *make you complete*, that you're not lacking something in your spiritual walk, in your spiritual growth.

He says:

1 Peter 5:10
make you perfect, stablish,

In other words: *establish you*.

Again, what is He going to establish us on? He's going to establish us *on the Rock of this Word*. Praise the Lord.

There are so many voices tonight that are *deceiving voices*. We have to be *led by the Spirit of God*. And not only do we have to be *led by the Spirit of God* but we also have to be *meditating on the things that God show us*. That will *establish us and give us discernment*.

It was maybe a week ago, I saw a video of a man who was talking about a minister – I'm not going to mention the minister's name but it's a minister that we all know – the man gave the minister's name and he said: this man is a convicted sex offender. And if you don't know what's going on, if you don't investigate, the first reaction is: oh my goodness, I didn't know that!

And even worse, then we can go and tell somebody else: did you know *this* and *this*? We see that happening online all the time: people forward stuff. I'm not saying that things don't need to be forwarded but we have to use *wisdom*. We have to *have wisdom*.

I kind of suspected, I kind of knew what the case was as soon as I saw the title, but I watched the video. And about two thirds of the way through, the man who was speaking – in a very subtle way, you have to listen closely – he brought out that the person with the conviction is *the son of this minister*. Basically, he's a Junior. And so: he has the same name.

But you see: the young man who made the video, his objective is just to smear the name of that minister.

Now, I have my own issues with what that minister preaches. But when somebody puts out a video, they *use the person's name*, and they *know what people are going to think, they are purposefully deceiving people*.

And *this* from somebody who tries to say that *we have been deceived*. You would think: if somebody wants to expose *deception*, they would *not themselves* also do things in a deceiving nature. That right there should help people to see *the spirit behind that*.

That's just an example of what we have to be careful of, and that we need *wisdom*, we need to *be sober*. [1Peter 5:8]

And *after we've struggled, after we've been through* – as Peter said – *certain afflictions for a while*, he says: *God is going to make us perfect. He's going to settle us*. [1Peter 5:10] That means: *make stable and strong*.

Then he even specifically says:

1 Peter 5:10
strengthen

Again, how? *Spiritually*. So when we hear all these voices and different things that are going on, *we're not soon shaken*.

That's another thing Paul said: *don't be soon shaken in mind*. [2Thessalonians 2:2]

When we hear somebody come out with something, even if they seem confident and they have a case so strong *against what we see as Truth*, we should get to a point that we're not a weak people all of a sudden worried: well, maybe they're right.

Again, we have to believe *the Word of God*. It's not about believing me. It's not about believing another brother. But the Lord *does use men* to bring the Word and we should *be strong in the faith*. [1Peter 5:9]

Now let's go to First Peter chapter 4 – well, we're already in First Peter – let's go to chapter 4 verse 7.

Peter says here:

1 Peter 4:7

But the end of all things is at hand:

Why would Peter say that? Well, first of all, he was there on the day of Pentecost. He saw the 3000 come in. [Acts 2:41] This is *years later*: he's *not* seeing 3000 come in every day anymore. But actually, he's seeing the church come to a point of stability, especially among the Jews.

Remember: *Peter was called to the Jews.* [Galatians 2:7]

Now, we know *the end did not come yet* but he tells us what our mind should be when the end is coming.

He says here:

1 Peter 4:7

the end of all things is at hand:

We can say today: *we know according to Scripture that this is the case.* God allowed him to write that – not so we could look back and say: well, Peter was wrong then – but there would be a people that *this applies to.* And that's *you and me.*

So continuing in verse 7:

1 Peter 4:7

be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Amen.

So again: *be sober, watch unto prayer.* Those are the instructions. I have to say: *that applies to today.*

We have people today – I may bring this out a little more on Sunday morning – but there are people who will look at us today and call us a *cult*. I have to say, I mean: you can call anybody whatever you want.

But they'll say: *these people believe that there's going to be a rapture and just a chosen few are going to go in.* And then they try to make it sound like *true Christians don't believe that.*

I have to ask: what Bible are they reading?

I could maybe understand if they *didn't claim* to be Christian *themselves*, if they just wanted to point their finger at us and say: they believe this. Well, *yes we believe it*. But when they say that *they are Christian*, I have to ask: what Bible are they reading?

I'm just going to read Second Peter chapter 3 and verse 1. We've read this many times but just to bring this to our remembrance.

2 Peter 3:1

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

So first of all, he says: *your pure minds*.

They want to point their finger at us, call us *a cult*, and all kinds of things.

But the people Peter was writing to here – I apply it to myself, and you should apply it to yourself – he said: *I stir up your pure minds*. Praise the Lord. In other words: *your mind has not been contaminated*.

We see: first of all, we know the world as a whole has been contaminated. Then we also have to see: if we have been brought to *believe false doctrine*, our mind has also been *contaminated*.

There is a *big lie* out there today that being a Christian is just all about: *love, love, love. God loves you*. And: *you can do something wrong, He still loves you*.

Now does God love us? *Of course He does*. If we commit an error, will He forgive us? *Of course He will*.

But they take it to the point that you don't really even need to be concerned with living right because God loves you. And: you can fail Him over and over, and He will just forgive you over and over.

Will He forgive? *Yes, He will*. But we know if we truly are His children, He will also *chastise us* because He does not want us to continue to break His ordinance. *He wants us to live right*.

Then when we take it even further and say: He expects us to believe His Word – do you believe that *God is One or Three?* – they will either tell you that *it doesn't matter, their salvation doesn't depend on that*. Or if they say: *it matters*, they will tell you that *He's Three*, and we have to believe *that*.

So again, there's a myth out there that this is all – I don't really know how to express it – that this is all just *wonderland*.

I will say this: yes, there is a – if I can use that word – a *wonderland* awaiting us. But what did Peter say here in verse 3? I'm going to jump down because of time.

2 Peter 3:3

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers,

Who are they *scoffing* at? The same ones whom Peter said *had a pure mind*. [2Peter 3:1]

He said:

2 Peter 3:3

walking after their own lusts,

See, that's the problem: they want to live how they want to live. And they realize: they *can't live in truth* and also *satisfy the flesh* like they want to.

So they really make Christianity out to be just this superficial environment: oh, we can all love one another. Basically: we can all do whatever we want, God will forgive us if we make a mistake. Don't be worrying about the coming of the Lord.

And that's the next verse. He says:

2 Peter 3:4

And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

Now they don't use those exact words because then they would be exposing themselves: I'm the one Peter was talking about. But they say: oh, *this one* set a date, *that one* set a date. And now: *they're still setting dates*.

What's their motive? So that we *don't look at time*.

But further down, Peter himself said: *don't forget, one day with the Lord is as a thousand years with man*. [2Peter 3:8] Why would he be talking about *time* if we're supposed to forget about it?

Like I said, this is probably just a prelude. But let's go ahead and ask the Lord for His help tonight and thank Him.