

THE SCOFFING HAS BEGUN

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I have a subject tonight. Last Sunday while I was ministering, I touched a little on the Two Days [Hosea 6:2] really without even knowing how strong that scoffing is today. When I say *scoffing* I'm speaking of what Peter wrote in Second Peter. I don't think we're going to read it all again tonight but I might just read the part where he mentions the scoffing.

2 Peter 3:3

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lust,

Peter used a term that some are questioning today. He said *the last days*. There are people today who are saying: do we *know* if we are in the last days? And their conclusion is that we should act like it.

But Peter and Paul *both* used that phrase to describe things that would happen *in the last days*. That let's me know: the time will come, there will be a people who are going to *know* that they are in the last days.

They're not just going to say: well it kind of looks like it, I should anticipate, I should be getting ready. But by the Word of God, by looking at time, by looking at world events, and by the leadership of the Holy Ghost, they are going to *know* that they are living *in the last days*.

I have to say: that's not somewhere fifty or a hundred years in the future. That time is *now*. If we don't know tonight that we're living in the last days, then I have to say: the devil has played a good trick on us and we have allowed ourselves, in some way, to be deceived. Lord, help us that we can wake up, shake ourselves off before it's too late, and realize the time we're living in.

I'd like to start by going to the book of Acts chapter one. This is, of course, after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is speaking about when the followers and disciples of Jesus had come together. It says:

Acts 1:6

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

We know that in their mind they were already looking to the Millennium, and we know yes that will be a beautiful time of rest. This earth is going to rest from the wickedness and violence, and the influence of evil spirits. It's going to be one thousand years of peace. I have to say: it's going to be a beautiful time.

Let's read the next verse.

Acts 1:7

And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

We're going to come back to that verse but for right now we're going to continue on a little bit. Let's jump down to verse nine.

Acts 1:9

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Acts 1:10

And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel.

They were looking as he went up, it says a cloud took him out of their sight but they were still looking up.

Of course, we know the *two men* were angels.

Acts 1:11

Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Acts 1:12

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

What I want us to look at is they saw Jesus taken up.

I have to say: there was no one like the Lord Jesus Christ. The beautiful words he spoke, the understanding: their minds were opened. The beautiful, marvellous and powerful works he did, and the love that he showed them. He was crucified and they thought *it's all over* but he rose again! Praise the Lord.

Nobody *voluntarily* suffered a death that cruel. Then he returned, triumphant over death, hell, and the grave. And now he's been taken out of their sight and they want to see him come back.

They're looking up, waiting for him to come back. Praise the Lord. These angels tell them *yes he's going to come back the same way he went*, but they said *why are you gazing up?*

In other words: there's going to be *some time*, he's not coming back right now but he already gave you a commandment: *go and wait in Jerusalem*. [Acts 1:4] He didn't say: go and wait with me, I'm going to Jerusalem, just follow me and wait with me there. He said *you go and wait in Jerusalem*. And we know that's where they received the Holy Ghost and where the Church was born.

There was still such a great desire: this is the Lord Jesus Christ and he promised to return. Praise the Lord. So they were waiting and expecting his return. Praise the Lord.

Until the Lord gave some more information, they were limited as to how they could understand *when* he would return. They could still see certain conditions arise and they could see how he was working in the church. There were certain things accomplished that at times they could feel *oh the time is close*.

I want to look particularly at what Paul wrote and then I'm going to ask a question.

Let's go to First Thessalonians chapter four.

Here God has given Paul a certain understanding about the rapture. He says:

1 Thessalonians 4:13

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

1 Thessalonians 4:14

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Praise the Lord.

Now he's going to elaborate. He says:

1 Thessalonians 4:15

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord,

In other words, what would we say today? *Thus saith the Lord*. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 4:15

that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent

Or precede.

1 Thessalonians 4:15

them which are asleep.

In other words, we're not going to go in the rapture but the ones that have died are going to stay dead.

He says here:

1 Thessalonians 4:16

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout,

The *shout*, that was in Brother Branham's ministry. This was going to be *way* in the future. Did Paul know how far in the future it was? No, he did not, but the Lord had revealed to him that there would be a shout. He says:

1 Thessalonians 4:16

with the voice of the archangel,

That's not an elaboration. That's a second phase or a second time period. The voice of the archangel is still in front of us. That's the Judgement Seat of Christ. That's the first part of Revelation 10.

Then he says:

1 Thessalonians 4:16

and with the trump of God:

That's what the dead in Christ will hear, so he says:

1 Thessalonians 4:16

and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Both in verse fifteen and verse seventeen Paul says *we which are alive and remain.*

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Praise the Lord.

I can't wait until that day. That's a beautiful day and it's just in front of us.

Yet there are voices today that are doing everything possible to get people's eyes off of that. I have to say: why would you want to get your eyes off of that when this world is so full of wickedness? I thank God that my Lord Jesus Christ is coming soon.

I want us to see something here: in two places Paul said *we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord*. So Paul was looking at himself *I'm going to be here when the Lord comes*. In other words, he thought it was going to be in his lifetime. That's what he felt *at that time*. Can we see that?

We which are alive and remain. He didn't say: those of you, if there are any left but I don't know if I'm going to be here. He could've just said: those who are alive and remain. But he said *we*, right?

Now, let's go to First Corinthians seven.

Here he has a beautiful teaching on marriage. He was especially dealing with the issue that there were a lot of unbelieving couples where one of them had converted to Christianity and the other hadn't.

1 Corinthians 7: 29

But this I say, brethren, the time is short:

What time? The same time that we read about in Revelation chapter ten when the angel says *time shall be no longer*. [Revelation 10:6] He's speaking about the coming of the Lord. This is the same Paul who said *we which are alive, we're not going to go before those who have died*. [1Thessalonians 4:15]

He says:

1 Corinthians 7:29

the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none.

Now don't misunderstand that. It doesn't mean to be unfaithful. It also doesn't mean to abstain from that relation between man and woman. But what he's really saying is that while we're on this earth, we are working on the marriage: what can you do to please your wife? What does she do to please you?

I'm just going to throw something out there: maybe you're going to build a garage because she wants a garage. Paul is saying: don't put so much time into the garage but it's better that you be studying the Word and praying. Yes, you still love your wife. She's still your wife, let's not misinterpret that.

He says here:

1 Corinthians 7:30

And they that weep, as though they wept not;

What does that mean? There will come a time when we're going to be so close to the coming of the Lord that if a brother or sister in the Lord dies, we're going to know that it'll be just a short time before we see them again. Once that miraculous war starts as well as other conditions, it'll be just a little time until they're back anyway. So why weep?

He says here:

1 Corinthians 7:30

and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not;

I think here of the natural things: oh I just got a great job. Well that's nice but if the Lord is coming in a year, what's the big deal about the job, right? That's going to change everything when we get close enough.

1 Corinthians 7:30

they that buy, as though they possessed not;

1 Corinthians 7:31

And they that use this world, as not abusing it:

Amen.

1 Corinthians 7:31

for the fashion of this world passeth away.

1 Corinthians 7:32

But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

1 Corinthians 7:33

But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

Again, let's not misunderstand that. Paul is not saying that you're worldly if you get married. I remember even as Brother Jackson felt the time was getting close, he said: if you're able to marry, if you're only married a few months, then praise the Lord that He gave you that time.

What Paul is looking at are *the responsibilities*. Let me say it like this: if we read the whole chapter, he's saying if there's not a need to be put in a situation where there are going to be responsibilities that take up our time, it's great if we can avoid that.

But I will say just as Brother Jackson said: even if it's for a few months, if it's true love, praise the Lord, marriage is a wonderful thing.

Now the point in all of this is that Paul *thought* the time was short, right? Do we not believe that there were some who pushed *pause* on the marriage button because of what Paul said? I have to say: I think we would be foolish to think that didn't happen.

But one day the Lord revealed *more* to Paul. As he saw time going on, he could see: it's not happening in my day or it sure doesn't look like it. Then he began to pray and seek the Lord, and God gave him *more understanding*. I'm not going to get into all of that right now, it's in Second Thessalonians. He said *first there will be the apostasy, the falling away, and the man of sin will be revealed*. [2Thessalonians 2:3] Amen.

Now we know the office, we know that's the pope but we don't know *the man*. I seriously doubt it's this current pope but he has pushed so far, it could very well be the next one will just step right in, everything has been prepared. God showed Paul *first of all that man of sin will be revealed*. Praise the Lord.

Now let's go to First Timothy just to see where this went. I'm only going to read a few verses.

Paul said:

1 Timothy 5:14

I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

In Spanish it says *the younger widows*.

1 Timothy 5:15

For some are already turned aside after Satan.

If we were to go back to First Corinthians chapter seven, basically the overall point that Paul had was: whatever situation you've been found in, if possible stay there. For example, if you've been *widowed*, don't go looking for a husband. [1Corinthians 7:8] He even speaks about how the woman who is *unmarried* can give herself to prayer, reading the Word and serving the Lord. [1Corinthians 7:34]

But *now* what is he saying?

He says *I will that they marry*. [1Timothy 5:14] He said *some have already turned aside after Satan*. [1Timothy 5:15]

What does he mean there?

Somehow maybe they've been tempted and there probably was fornication. That goes all the way back to what he said *it's better to marry than to burn*. [1Corinthians 7:9] When he said *to burn*, he doesn't mean to burn in hell, but he's talking about to burn with the natural human passion that God himself put there for the relationship between man and woman.

Now he's saying *that the younger women marry*.

Going back he said *we which are alive and remain* [1Thessalonians 4:15] and then he said *time is short* [1Corinthians 7:29] if you're *unmarried* it's better to stay that way if possible. [1Corinthians 7:8]

I said I was going to ask a question, so here's the question: was Paul wrong? That's the question.

Do we see Paul write here around verse fourteen or fifteen: by the way, brothers and sisters, I was wrong? Do we see Paul coming around and saying: forgive me, I know some of you made decisions but I was wrong? Do we see Paul ever doing that? You know we don't. He doesn't say that anywhere, right?

Was Paul proud and arrogant? Maybe he couldn't admit that he was wrong? If that was the case he wouldn't have said *I will that the younger women marry*. Somebody who's proud and conceited would've just said: still don't marry, or they would've just kept quiet.

Did the Lord come in his physical return during Paul's life? Of course he did not. But Paul could see the Lord had allowed him to believe that. He could've showed him sooner but He didn't. The Lord could've given Paul a dream or a vision where he could've seen himself being martyred in 70 AD, but Paul knew that for some reason the Lord did not let him see that *then*, but *now* He has.

We have to understand: the sense of urgency that the Gentiles and even the young Gentiles had at the beginning, the Lord used that to push them in their spiritual growth. Then when it was time, when they really needed to see that the Lord was *not* coming in their day, God used the same Paul to show *that*.

He said *don't let anybody use our first letter or a letter as though it was from us to try to convince you that he's coming right now*. [2Thessalonians 2:2] *That day shall not come until there's first an apostasy, a falling away*. [2Thessalonians 2:3]

Now if we can't see that the apostasy has taken place, then our eyes are not open. There is an *open rebellion* against God, of even the most basic Godly principles. We have people in this country, men and women who would kill if they were allowed to. They want to turn back this thing and make abortion legal again.

I have to say: look at the animal kingdom, I would say look at humankind but we see how spirits have entered in. We're going to celebrate Mother's Day on Sunday. God put a natural desire in the female that she desires to have young, to have babies.

We look at the bear, what does the mama bear say? Don't you dare come close to mine, they're mine. And it's not just the bear, we can look across the animal kingdom: the dogs, the cats, the deer, it doesn't matter. The mother cherishes and loves her offspring.

It used to be that young girls were so happy when they got married: I'm going to have a child. But now we have men and women, it seems to some extent the women are the louder voice: give us the right to abort! That's just one example.

So what do we see here?

For a time Paul thought *time was short* and he gave instructions accordingly. *Then* when the Lord showed him *more*, Paul understood the Lord allowed it to be like that, though he may not have seen the entire reason behind it. And *we* may not fully be able to see why the Lord did that.

But when the Lord showed him *more*, Paul did not come back and say: oh I'm so sorry, forgive me, maybe I should just stop preaching. He *knew* the Lord had His reason. It's even more beautiful when we consider that the Lord gave Paul a bigger and clearer picture that *we* can profit from *today*.

Why am I saying all of this? There are voices tonight that say: Brother Jackson was wrong. They indirectly say: he was in error, he committed an error. I have to ask: what was the error?

They say: when people thought the Lord was going to come in 2004½ they were taking out big mortgages because they thought they would only have to pay for a couple years. They wouldn't really have to pay it.

I have to say: that's their problem, that's their fault. Why did they do that? Brother Jackson never said to take advantage of this financially.

They also say: people got married and then they're like: oh no, it's *until death do us part*. They said that on their wedding day in the sight of God and men. I have to say: if you're not in love, don't get married. It's pretty simple.

I didn't do all of that stuff. I got married. But after 2004 came and went, I didn't say: oh my goodness. I said: thank you Lord, You gave me a wonderful wife. And I thank the Lord today for my wife. No one should get married if they don't feel that way.

To make a statement like: Brother Jackson was wrong because people got married and they thought it was only going to last a few years. That's a pretty sad argument for saying that he was in error.

I know looking at my own life it helped me to get more into the scriptures. I also know that Brother Jackson preached on that for about ten years. It wasn't something that he said here and there, and then he never touched it again.

As I said on Sunday, I thank God I got to hear him preach on that in Mexico. The exactitude of it was beautiful as he showed things related to the Seventy Weeks. [Daniel 9:24] Things the people of Israel should have known.

We know there were a couple that did: there was Simeon and there was Anna. [Luke 2:25-38] They had a better understanding than the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And God allowed them to see the Lord Jesus. Praise the Lord.

I have a slide but I don't have time to show it tonight, I will pick this up on Sunday.

If we were listening and not just focusing on 2004½ which these men who are scoffing today, they didn't believe it in the first place.

I was so happy at the end of one of the Conventions, I believe it was in 1993. It was on Sunday, Brother Jackson just gave a little explanation. I didn't have a calculator, I didn't have an iPhone, and right there I calculated: two-thousand times three-hundred-and-sixty equals seven-hundred-and-twenty-thousand.

$$2000 \times 360 = 720\ 000$$

Divided by three-hundred-and-sixty-five, that was the hard part. I did that in the back of my bible. It gave me about nineteen-seventy-one-and-a-half.

$$720\ 000 / 365 = \sim 1971.5$$

Brother Jackson had said that started in 33 AD because of the crucifixion and the resurrection. I added thirty-three and it gave me two-thousand-four-and-a-half.

$$1971.5 + 33 = 2004.5$$

I was so happy.

This Brother from Europe was giving me a ride back to the airport that afternoon. He was a very well respected minister among us. I was so happy, I told him about it. Well that was a mistake. I don't remember his exact words but basically it just squashed my rejoicing. Basically he said: we don't need to be looking at that. I felt terrible because he was a great minister.

My point in saying that is: he's one of the biggest voices today. That's nothing new. There are men today who *openly withstood* Brother Jackson even while he was here.

Many others say: we follow and we believe Brother Jackson's ministry, but they don't want to listen to the ministers who have been *faithful from the beginning*. They say: turn them off, take them off, and now they're going to bring in all these others. I have to say: that's a mistake.

The one thing I knew after we got to about 2007 is that we didn't know what the starting point was. The part of the Two Days [Hosea 6:2] was already well understood. What I want to show is that Brother Jackson himself knew there was a possibility that the starting point was not exactly where he thought it was.

That's what I want to show but I thank God for what he taught. I never said he was wrong about that. Of course we know the Lord didn't come in 2004, I'm not saying that. But what I'm saying is: it was not an error on his part to minister what he did. He showed what God gave him and that was a great help for us who have gone on beyond that time. If we're spiritual, we can build on that and have a clearer picture today.

I'm going to go ahead and close.