

Warnings and exhortations for the last times (Quality: Very good)

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Date: 17 January 1900

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[0 : 00] I must venture now with the word of God that you will find in Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians, the second chapter, reading verse 3. Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians, the second chapter, reading verse 3. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition.

This epistle, which was written to the church at Thessalonica, was written by the Holy Spirit, as we believe the whole of God's word is. Now, I will make this clear.

God's word has been written, we know, by men. And yet, the Bible tells us what kind of men they were. They were men who were moved by the Holy Ghost to write. Therefore, my dear beloved people, we have before us once more today the word of the living God, the sacred scriptures, the Holy Bible. And the things which are written therein are written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. Now, the word that we have read is a very solemn and searching word, because it speaks concerning the second coming of Christ.

And whilst it is not so much upon my spirit this morning to speak particularly with regard to the second coming of Christ, yet the subject is couched in this very sacred and precious, and yet solemn and searching truth. Because the day is approaching, we know not how soon it will come, when Christ Christ will return to this earth with great power and glory. He will return as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

He came into this earth to save sinners. His name was to be called Jesus, that he should save his people from their sins. The Lord Jesus Christ bears many very precious names. And whilst he was upon the earth, he went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed, and those who were under the power of the devil. And he was indeed then, in a very wondrous way, the Saviour, Jesus, and whose power was made known in the hearts of many. And yet at the same time, there were thousands that rejected him. And there were many who said, away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him. Now he is ascended on high. He has led captivity captive. He has received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Let us not forget that our Saviour, if indeed he is our Saviour, is enthroned in glory. He is seated at the right hand of the Father. And when he does return, and return he will, behold, behold, behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him. We cannot begin to conceive what that day will be with our finite, natural minds. But come it will. And I feel a measure of solemnity, and I hope that it will be proved to be holy solemnity upon my heart as I stand here before you this morning.

[6 : 31] And I must sound the trumpet as held with no uncertain sound. A solemn thing when the trumpet gives an uncertain sound.

And that is just how it is in many circles and in many places of worship today. But, oh, the trumpet is to be blown with no uncertain sound.

We can only do this as we keep close to the word of God. We have nothing else to preach but the Holy Bible.

Now, we have then here spoken of the second coming of Christ. And the apostle, the writing says, Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord. Later on, he says in this same chapter, that we are bound to give thanks all the way to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord.

And yet, he must warn them. He warns them as brethren.

[8 : 18] And this is what he says, Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled.

We know that throughout the world, there have been the times when men have really feared that the end of the world had come.

I have never had this experience in a very powerful way as some have.

But perhaps there are those of you here this morning who will be reminded of perhaps once or twice in your life, when, because the hand of God was very manifest in whatever way it was, you may well have thought this must be the end of the world.

You may well have trembled. Great mercy if you did. And if you have, trembled before Almighty God.

[9 : 37] But the Apostle, he speaks words of encouragement to us in this, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Do you know the Apostle Paul wrote these words nearly 2,000 years ago? And yet, at that time, the Holy Spirit gave him a glimpse into future events.

He was given a sight by the Spirit of God of what would happen. And therefore, he had to record this.

And so, I must begin our meditation this morning by sounding this note of warning, that the day of Christ is at hand.

Now, let us not forget that the dear Apostle said this nearly 2,000 years ago. But at the same time, we must ever remember that 1,000 years are as one day with our God, and one day as 1,000 years.

[11 : 20] We cannot understand these things with our finite minds.

We are so limited. Indeed, we can only understand the truth at all by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and as the Holy Spirit exercises the gift of faith in our hearts.

And therefore, we just think of the creation of this world. There are many people still who hold on to the awful teaching of evolution, and they hold on to it out of the pride of their hearts.

They hold on to it because they do not want to acknowledge that there is a God who created all things. And how can we really and rightly believe in the creation?

Well, we can only do so by the Word of God. And the Apostle says, Through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

[13 : 04] So then, may we have this graciously in our hearts this morning, that the day of Christ is at hand.

Oh, may we be given grace to live in the light of this truth, knowing and believing that when that day shall come, this world will be burned up, and all the works that are therein.

And so we have before us a very solemn, searching truth, which we need to be informed of.

God's servant who seeks to edit the Gospel standard, and not only God's servant in this, but other men of God have been seeking to sound notes of warning.

And the editor of the Gospel standard, in his New Year address, among other things, declared this, that he trembled to speak of the tragic things which were in the world, which would certainly take place.

[14 : 39] He spoke particularly with regard to this year, 1988, and that because of particular things that are being spoken of, and which can only come to pass as God gives them leave.

But God's servant did say this, and it touched a chord in my own heart. As an under-shepherd here, he said there was the need for people to be informed and to be warned.

That, dear friends, I need help to do now. One does not stand here with a hard, unfeeling heart.

But I stand here, first of all, as before God, I stand here with a measure, I trust, of God-given solemnity in my heart concerning you all and concerning your souls.

Now the apostle says in verse 3, Let no man deceive you. Deception is a most awful sin.

[16 : 13] And I do not feel it wrong to say that there are many men who are in the work of the ministry in many differing shades and forms, God knowing their hearts, and God knowing whether they are his servants or not.

Because it is a solemn consideration that men are either the servants of God or they are the servants of Satan.

They're either God's servants or their servants of Satan. And we know that the devil goeth about as an angel of light to deceive.

Deception is everywhere today. The truth is deliberately covered up. It is hidden.

And very little of God's holy word is proclaimed from pulpits today. If only we knew.

[17 : 33] And it would be for our good if we did know more in a right way. But in many pulpits today, dear friends, the word of God is not even read.

And it is a very searching consideration. Oh, may the Lord then come to us today and that we might be shut in with the Lord.

We may feel to be shut in with the Lord. And if he would shut the world outside, and grant an holy solemnity.

So we must then begin by saying to you, Oh, beware of being deceived. Beware of being deceived.

First by men, and then by Satan himself, and also by our own sinful, wicked, fallen hearts.

[18 : 50] Let no man deceive you. What an awful thing to be deceived. Dear friends, it will be a most awful thing for any one of us to be deceived with regard to the reality of our religion.

And what an awful thing it will be for any of us to be deceived in the day of judgment. Because all of us must stand before God to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil.

there's going to be a day of account for us all. How solemn to be deceived.

Oh, I hope that none of us will be deceived in the day of death. I hope that none of us will be deceived in the day of judgment. And then the apostle tells us this, let no man deceive you by any means.

And our land today is full of people who are seeking to deceive. because of what is recorded in this same chapter.

[20 : 31] And it says this, And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. So much of this speaks of the apostate church of Rome and their pokes.

This is what it speaks of. And this is what it further says. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.

And why? Because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved.

For this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

[21 : 52] I feel that I am right to say this that the very teaching of the Roman Catholic Church is a teaching which holds those that are in it in a spirit of fear their religion is governed by fear.

Dear friends real religion is governed by love. See that is the difference. vital godliness vital godliness is governed by love not our own love that is natural love but it is governed by the love of God in Jesus Christ.

those that are in the Roman Catholic Church and other churches Islam and all the other isms of the world they are held by fear they are governed by fear.

Oh the contrast between such and those who through the grace of God are found in Christ. and and it is because of this because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.

But if we are if this describes our case we will acknowledge that it is entirely through the grace of God the love of God to sinners and we come then to the subject as help a little closer.

[23 : 52] Let no man deceive you by any means for that day and this here speaks of the second coming of Christ for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition.

now here we would come let no man deceive you by any means for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first.

now in this we have clear evidence that we are living in the last day we do not know how long that time will be that is known to the Lord but I feel that I stand upon God's word when I say this dear friends we are living in the last day the solemn evidence of this in our own land and throughout the world just a few then of the evidences that the day of the Lord is indeed nigh at hand except there come a falling away first and I'm sure that there are those here that will understand this except or unless there come a falling away first this is where we are this is the condition that we are in there is a falling away and first of all there is a falling away from the truth men are turned to fables men are turned to the works of men and there is this that stands out today in our beloved land indeed throughout the world itself but we think of our own land we think of Zion the city of our

God and there is a falling away and there is a falling away from the truth the prophet Isaiah speaks very clearly with regard to this in far better words than I would be able to put it and I'm going to read just a verse or two to you from Isaiah prophecy in the 59th chapter and there we have these words for our transgressions are multiplied before thee and our sins testify against us for our transgressions are with us and as for our iniquities we know them living souls are made aware of their sin they are brought to know them in measure and they are brought to turn again and again to see further evidence of sin within their hearts peace now it's a great mercy if we know this that is an evidence of the teaching of the spirit and then the prophet goes on in transgressing and lying against the lord and departing away from our god speaking oppression and revolt conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood see there are many we have bishops in our national church we have leaders in what we can only speak of as religious circles and they are turning away they have turned away from the truth and it's a very solemn matter and the word of god here describes it uttering from the heart words of falsehood turning the truth of god into a lie and this is indeed with us in the land and then there's this and judgment is turned away backward and justice standeth afar off for truth is fallen in the street and equity cannot enter yea truth faileth and and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prime think of this or as the margin renders it such people are accounted mad

and truth is and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey or is accounted mad and this is just how the lord's people are being viewed more and more and dear friends if I understand this rightly it will get worse it's going to get worse I cannot bring anything else before you but this in this particular but it's going to get worse oh this is everywhere yea truth faileth and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey and the lord saw it and it displeased him that there was no judgment and on every hand this is truth in the day in which we live except there come a falling away first so we must begin with this that there is a falling away concerning the truth truth truth is being turned away from and cunningly devised fables are being spoken in its place and thousands are being deceived now I must come

[32 : 38] I feel that I must speak particularly with regard to our own little circle of churches and in comparison it is very little I have just noticed that in the gospel standard in the pages there there are about 155 chapels that are recorded and the services and the ministers who will preach and all that that mean about 155 are named but dear friend without any exaggeration at least 60 of our chapel have below 10 people in their congregation today whether you realise this or not it is true and

I have sought feelingly to get my facts straight in this respect but if you think of 155 named chapels about 60 of them at least some of those 60 have no regular congregation at all and at least 60 of them have below 10 people in their congregation and that takes in whoever may be or may not be in the church and the congregation and there are a good many more that have about a very small congregation we have the Lord's favour here in the way that we have but as you all know there are many many empty seats and we would be rightly thankful for the

Lord's mercy and goodness for everyone that attends this chapel and for everyone whom God has made it a spiritual home but we cannot we dare not turn away from the facts of the case and so numerically we know that it is so everywhere truth is fallen in our streets and wherever God's people are comparatively speaking there are but few we know that there are a few of our own chapels who have a much larger congregation but I'm sure that you could speak of it almost as though on one hand or two at the most well dear friends this to me is very searching and it's very solemn one of the things that perhaps the

Lord has used to bring it into my heart today was this that on Thursday I was seeking to preach in small field chapel where at one time as we were told the place was full late Mr.

John Raven was then the pastor a man of God indeed and yet today in that same chapel today there will be four people attending the chapel and the dear godly deacon was saying to me on Thursday that he felt that there were two things that he lived for one was that he might be found right at last concerning his never dying soul to be found right at last he said and the second thing is this house of God and it lays upon my heart he has prayed for years and longed for years to see the Lord work in that place and only the Lord knows whether his cries will be answered but nevertheless these dear friends are facts this is true and what one feels particularly we are not here to cast you down we are not here to wrongly fill your ears with these things but what

[38 : 00] I feel particularly is this that these are things and many other things take our very nation think of our beloved queen in her address to the nation this last Christmas day she herself spoke about our need for toleration and spoke of how she endeavoured to go to a multi faith service and how we needed to be tolerant to other people well we certainly need grace to live in the word of God that says to do good unto all men especially the household of faith but friends we must never never tolerate evil in the light of truth we cannot error and truth can never be mixed and yet our own beloved queen feels and spoke about this the need to be tolerant to other people well we do need to be tolerant in a right way but we can never be tolerant when it comes to the truth of God's holy word we do not set ourselves up as being better than people that belong to the communists or the Roman Catholic Church or Islam or the Muslims or any other people but oh we do so need to stand up and to be counted for the truth it's the truth dear friend that is vital in my own lifetime I feel it would be right to say particularly in the last 20 years or so and I stand to be corrected in this thought but I believe I'm right in saying that there have been many more versions of the Bible translated in the last 20 years or something than there has ever been before and one translation after another has appeared and what is it a sign of it is a sign of this a departing from the truth and men are seeking to water it down and to change its meaning and so error creeps in and takes the place of truth this is something that's happening and to my own heart what I feel particularly this morning is this it points to the second coming of Christ because this word is indeed being fulfilled for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and on every hand we have evidence of this what did we read in our second reading this morning we read this forbidding to be married there are many many many young people that are living together today unmarried and it's growing that is another evidence the awful disease of AIDS which we cannot and dare not just brush aside and many other diseases but the disease of AIDS which has come about through immoral loose sinful living and it's only the beginning

I'm not and would not be an alarmist but this disease it is it is a judgment from God it has fallen not only upon England but it's fallen upon the nations of the world and it's because of a departing from God and godliness and the very foundation of truth there are many people today who talk like this and they say well we don't want to be married we don't want to be married dear friends marriage was ordained by God and to all those who are favoured with a God given husband or wife it is something that God will always honour and God will always own and bless well we could go on the time has gone

I can only hope that you will go home this morning and at least feel that your pastor has stood before you with a burdened heart Amen conclude our service by singing hymn 496 day of judgment day of wonders hark the trumpet's awful sound louder than a thousand thunders shakes the vast creation round how the summons will the sinner's heart confound 496 heart ■■■ mad cry starting

Thank you.

[45 : 24] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.