Sermon Notes for November 6, 2016

The Day of the Lord

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

Introduction

John Stott observed that there are two distinct problems that have always fascinated mankind.

- What happens when you die?
- What will happen at the end of the world?

Clearly those questions were on the mind of the Thessalonians.

- In I Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul answers the first question.
- In I Thessalonians 5:1-11, he answers the second question.

The disciples also wanted to know when the Lord would return. Twice they asked him, “Is this the time when you are going to establish your kingdom?” Matthew 24:3 and Acts 1:6

Jesus replied, “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.” Acts 1:7

How are we to live in light of Christ’s return?

I. Always be ready. I Thess. 5:1-3

Now about times and dates we don’t need to write you.

- Times – “chronos” refers to chronological time.
- Dates – “kairos” refers to seasons.

You already know everything you need to know.

The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. Sudden and unexpected.

The Day of the Lord will be like labor pains. Sudden and unavoidable.

What is the Day of the Lord?

It is the day when Jesus Christ will return to establish his kingdom on the earth. It will be a day of judgment for his enemies and a day of salvation for those who love him.

The Day of the Lord is one of the great themes of the Old Testament prophets.

“The great day of the Lord is near— near and coming quickly. The cry on the day of the Lord is bitter; the Mighty Warrior shouts his battle cry. That day will be a day of wrath— a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds
and blackness—a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the corner towers.

“I will bring such distress on all people that they will grope about like those who are blind, because they have sinned against the Lord.” Zephaniah 1:14-17a

“Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand—a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was in ancient times nor ever will be in ages to come. Before them the earth shakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine. The Lord thunders at the head of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty is the army that obeys his command. The day of the Lord is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it?”

Yet there is hope.

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.” Joel 2:1-2, 10-13

Always be ready!

II. Be alert and self-controlled. I Thess. 5:4-8

This day should not surprise you. Since we belong to the day,

- Let us be self-controlled,
- Let us be alert—wise in how we live,
- Let us put on faith, love and hope.

Be alert and self-controlled at all times and be involved in service, not speculation.

Be ready as though Christ were coming today, yet live your life as though you will be here for your lifetime.

“The truth of the second coming of Christ transformed my whole idea of life; it broke the power of the world and its ambition over me, and filled my life with the most radiant optimism even under the most discouraging circumstances.” R. A. Torrey

III. Live with anticipation not apprehension. I Thess. 5:9-11
“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath, but to receive salvation though our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Jesus bore the wrath of God for our sins so that we can be saved.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

All who put their trust in him as Savior and Lord will be saved.

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up as in fact you are doing.”

Biblical prophecy isn’t meant to give us all the details and answer all our questions. It is meant to calm our fears and give us hope.

Conclusion

So how do we live in light of Jesus’ coming?

Always be ready.

Be alert and self-controlled.

Live with anticipation not apprehension.