

New Year's 2021

12/27/2020

1. It seems to me that God has directed me to talk to you this morning about how to view the coming days
 - a. I'm basically talking about here in America
 - b. But what happens here does affect much of the world – (that may not be true in future)
2. 2020 was one of the strangest years ever
3. There have been seasons of distress before
 - a. WWI – WWII – wars in places we can't even pronounce
 - b. People have been enemies since Cain & Able
 - c. But, in the 20th century man killed more men than all the other centuries combined
 - d. And in the major wars, you usually knew who your enemies were – although, that's not totally true
 - e. But now, the enemy is becoming hard to identify
4. Today people are not sure how to look at events & philosophies & categorize it
5. This is the information age – we are flooded w/ information
 - a. But can we trust the information being disseminated?
 - b. Who is controlling the information that is being released?
6. I hear a lot of people say that they will be glad when this year is over & that they hope next year will be better
 - a. I want you to have realistic expectations about our future
7. There is a seismic shift taking place in western civilization
 - a. It is going to change in appearance

Daniel 7:7 "After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

- b. Western civilization changes
 - c. But the change isn't for the better
8. So, how are believers to look at these changes?
 - a. **First** we are not to worry that things are out of control

b. God never loses control

Daniel 4:35 "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'

c. Things may look like they're falling apart but they aren't

d. **Second** we are to remember that God loves His own – He is responsible for your wellbeing

Hebrews 13:5 *Make sure that* your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"

⁶ so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?"

e. **Third** we are to live intelligent Christian lives

Philippians 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,

¹⁰ so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

¹¹ having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

V.9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,

1. "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more"
 - a. Love is "agape" – self-sacrificial love
 - i. We are to live self-sacrificial lives for Christ
 - ii. That is the opposite of living for yourself – it is the opposite of selfishness – most believers in the United states are living very selfish lives
 - iii. The pandemic has given many an excuse to pull out of Church & live w/out being bothered by others
 - b. Some have good reasons for not coming back to church – but few have a good reason for not engaging w/ other believers

- c. They will pay a heavy price for living selfishly

1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

² If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

³ And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

V.9 x And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,

- 2. "that your love may abound still more and more"

- a. Abound" – means to exceed a fixed number or measure, beyond numbering
- b. Your love for God, others should be beyond measure
- c. We don't have the privilege of not caring

- 3. "in real knowledge and all discernment"

- a. "Knowledge" – literally means having full knowledge – to know for sure
- b. "discernment" – is to know instinctively, intuitively, to have insight
 - i. This comes b/c of a regular walk w/ God

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

- c. We must be intelligent if we are going to be of value to others thru the coming days
- d. How are we supposed think & feel about things happening around us?
- e. **First** know that Satan would love to isolate all believers from each other
- f. I don't believe that many of the restrictions concerning this pandemic are for the purpose of keeping people safe (I'm speaking of nation wide)
- g. I believe that they are for 4 reasons

- i. #1. To control people – fear is a great controller
- ii. #2. I believe that the restrictions are for the purpose of breaking our economy
 - 1. If the US economy goes down – globalism can continue
 - 2. The antichrist can't take over w/out globalism
 - 3. I believe it is a satanic conspiracy
- iii. #3. Government wants government to become your god
 - 1. Society wants government to take care of us from the cradle to the grave
 - 2. The antichrist will make that a reality for a season
- iv. #4. I believe Satan wants to defeat believers by isolating them from each other
- v. God's plan is for believers to be in contact w/ each other, encouraging each other

Hebrews 10:25 *not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

- 1. "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some"
 - a. There is an intrinsic need for believers to be in touch w/ other believers
 - b. Some don't have access to a legitimate church – if you do, don't take that lightly
- 2. "encouraging one another"
 - a. We connect w/ each other to encourage one another in Christ
 - b. Be an encouragement in someone's daily walk
 - i. There are a lot of depressed believers right now
- 3. "all the more as you see the day drawing near"
 - a. Christ coming is closer than it has ever been!
 - i. The signs are obvious
 - b. I personally don't expect 2021 to be better than 2020
 - i. It is not going to get better

Matthew 24:7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

⁸ "But all these things are *merely the beginning of*

birth pangs.

⁹ "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.

c. While Christianity has connectivity in it – it also has individuality at its core

d. There is a lot of talk about socialism today among our politicians

e. It has invaded the pulpit also

i. Someone sent me this:

While people hear us talk of casting the mighty from their thrones and raising the lowly... of filling the hungry w/ good things while sending the rich away empty... inevitably, some will say, "That sounds like socialism."

But we remind them...it is the Gospel of Luke.

f. Forced socialism is sin!

i. The early Church tried socialism & it failed

ii. The pilgrims tried it & failed

iii. It will always fail in the end b/c man is corrupt

g. God deals w/ man on an individual basis

i. No one can be saved for someone else – you are saved when you yourself trust Christ

ii. Your walk w/ Christ is very personal

Philippians 1:10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

1. "so that you may approve the things that are excellent"

a. "approve" – weigh, prove, discern, approve, try, judge, test, assay

b. Same root word found in Romans 1 (δοκιμάζω)

c. How are we supposed to process the happenings every day in news?

d. We are to look at what is happening as an observer not a participant

e. If you get mad or depressed b/c of the news – you are participating in it

f. Don't be a participant – be an observer of what is happening

i. Remember, you already know that the world is falling apart!

ii. The world has rejected God & He is giving them over to their own futile thinking

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,
¹⁹ because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing to be wise, they became fools,

V.28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,

³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

³² and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

- iii. This is happening right before your eyes
- iv. The Church has become anemic – this too is a sign of the times

2 Timothy 4:1 I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

² preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

³ For the time will come when they will not endure

sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,
⁴ and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

- g. Don't let what is happening upset you – know that God is doing what He said He was going to do 2000 years ago

Philippians 1:11 *having been filled with the fruit of righteousness* which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

- 1. "having been filled with the fruit of righteousness"

- a. Don't let the world steal your peace

James 3:17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

¹⁸ And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

- b. The world is seeking peace & it is never going to find it
- c. Peace can't be found on the outside

John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.