**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | A Lifestyle for the Last Days |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | 1 Peter 3:13-16 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2430 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
	1. All who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.
		1. If you’re not suffering persecution, it’s because you’re not living godly in Christ Jesus.
	2. If you are a child of God, then you are living in hostile territory.
		1. We are twice-born people in a world of once-born people.
		2. We will be going against the tide most of the time.
		3. What we believe and how we live starts at a different source, it follows a different course and it is headed toward a different conclusion.
	3. Persecution against Christians happened in the Apostle Peter’s time, as well.
		1. What Peter said to those saints then is what God is saying to us now.
		2. 1 Peter 3:13-16
	4. In Peter’s day, the saints of God were accused of all manner of things.
		1. They were accused of subversion against the government because they would not say that Caesar was Lord.
			1. They said that Jesus Christ is Lord.
		2. They were accused of being an economic threat because they preached against idolatry.
			1. Idolatry in that day was a great source of income.
			2. In the book of Acts, we read where Paul encountered this opposition in Ephesus.
		3. They were persecuted because they lived a different lifestyle than the pagans.
	5. The book of 1 Peter is a handbook for survival.
		1. 1 Peter 3:13-16 shows us not only how to survive but how to thrive.
	6. A lifestyle for the last days is not to simply hunker down and sing, “Hold the Fort”.
		1. We cannot hunker down.
			1. We need to sing, “Onward Christian Soldiers.”
		2. Neither can we run because there is no place to run to today.
	7. In America today, we still have some freedoms.
		1. But there may come a time when there may not be anyone to speak up for us if we don’t speak up for ourselves and for others.
	8. In our Scripture today, Peter says that we have to be real.
		1. 1 Peter 3:13
			1. The word “followers” is the word from which we get the word “zealot.”
				1. It refers to someone who is zealous for that which is good.
				2. It is someone who is on fire for the Lord Jesus Christ.
		2. Are you zealous for the Lord Jesus?
	9. Peter also says that we must be ready.
		1. 1 Peter 3:15
		2. When was the last time someone asked you about your faith?
		3. When was the last time that someone asked what is different about you?
		4. Has anyone ever asked you what the reason is for your hope?
	10. In Peter’s day there was persecution, and in our day, there will be persecution.
		1. They will call us intolerant.
			1. We are considered intolerant if we say that there is one way to Heaven and a fixed standard of right and wrong.
			2. We will be called a part of the religious right if we say that Jesus is the only way to Heaven.
				1. The answer is not right or left but right or wrong.
		2. If we stand up for that which is right, we will be called bigoted, fundamentalists, intolerant and narrow minded.
	11. In today’s message, we will find a lifestyle for the last days.
2. settled lordship (1 peter 3:15)
	1. Absolutely nothing must stand in our way of our loyalty to Jesus Christ.
	2. 1 Peter 3:15
		1. The word “sanctify” means to set Him apart.
			1. We set Him apart as Lord.
	3. If you have not once and for all, now and forever, settled the question of Lordship, settle it today.
		1. He is Lord.
		2. Is Jesus Christ your Lord?
	4. Charles Spurgeon said that if the professed convert declares that he knows the Lord’s will but does not intend to do it, then it is our duty to assure him that he is not saved.
		1. Luke 6:46
	5. The apostles preached the Lordship of Christ.
		1. The word “Savior” occurs only twice in the book of Acts, while the title “Lord” is mentioned 92 times.
		2. We cannot have what He gives unless we accept what He is.
			1. He is Lord.
		3. Acts 16:31
	6. There are many who want Jesus Christ as Savior but not as Lord.
		1. They will call upon Him if they get into trouble or difficulty.
		2. If the weather is good, they may go to church.
	7. We must sanctify Jesus Christ as Lord.
3. A solid logic (1 peter 3:15)
	1. 1 Peter 3:15
		1. The word “answer” here is the word from which we get our word “apologetics.”
			1. In theology, apologetics is a reason, a defense of our faith.
	2. 2 Timothy 2:15
		1. We are to study to show ourselves approved unto God.
	3. Many Christians should be ashamed of the weakness and shallowness of their faith.
		1. They understand so little.
		2. Many don’t know how to share their faith.
		3. They are not ready to give an answer for the hope that is within them.
			1. We need to sharpen up on our faith.
	4. College students need to know what they believe in and why they believe it.
		1. Their faith will be assaulted in these last days.
		2. They need a solid logic.
	5. We need to be able to speak up for the Lord Jesus on the job, in society, in politics and in schools, and to do so reasonably with a solid logic.
		1. This does not mean to argue with unreasonable people.
			1. The Bible warns against this.
				1. Proverbs 26:4
				2. Matthew 7:6
	6. We are to share our faith.
		1. God gives us wonderful answers.
		2. There needs to be a sanctified, divine logic in our answers.
		3. 2 Timothy 2:24-25
			1. The phrase “must not strive” means don’t argue or debate.
			2. God has to give them repentance.
				1. We will never argue someone into the Kingdom of Heaven, but we need to give an answer if we want them to believe.
	7. One age-old argument that we will face is why God does not destroy evil.
		1. Some people say that if God were all good, then He would destroy evil.
			1. If He were all powerful, then He could destroy evil.
			2. Evil is not destroyed, therefore, there is no God that is all powerful or all good.
		2. This argument, though, is faulty.
			1. God could not destroy evil without destroying freedom.
			2. A person has to choose to be disloyal in order to be loyal.
			3. A person has to choose not to love in order to love.
				1. Forced love is a contradiction in terms and not love at all.
				2. Matthew 22:36-37

We cannot love God without the freedom to choose to love God.

* + - 1. If God were to destroy evil and force love, then there is no love at all.
			2. So, to destroy evil would be to take away the opportunity to choose, which would be in itself an act of evil.
		1. The great question is not, “Why doesn’t God destroy evil?”
		2. The great question is how could God love us so much that He would allow His Son to die on a cross to save us from our sins.
		3. These types of questions ought to cause us to go to the Word and see what the Bible teaches.
	1. Get in the Word of God and study to show yourself approved.
		1. Some people say that they can’t learn, but they can.
			1. It’s a matter of motivation.
				1. People learn what they want to learn, and they know what they want to know.
1. A superior lifestyle (1 peter 3:15)
	1. Why would anyone ask you about your faith?
		1. Because of your lifestyle; when they see your superior lifestyle.
	2. 1 Peter 3:15
		1. Meekness is strength under control.
			1. The Roman army was called meek.
			2. Moses was called the meekest man that ever lived.
				1. Numbers 12:3
				2. Moses certainly wasn’t weak.
			3. Matthew 11:29
		2. Fear does not mean cringing dread.
			1. It means reverence.
	3. When others see us with lives under control in a chaotic age, then they know that there is a difference.
	4. Sadly, some people don’t see many Christians with meekness and reverence.
		1. They think of us as hate mongers or arrogant.
			1. Angry rhetoric is not the answer.
		2. James 1:19-20
			1. Our speech should be seasoned with salt, and a full mind needs to be wedded to a loving heart.
			2. The logic and the lifestyle have to go to together.
	5. 1 Peter 2:21-23
		1. Peter wrote this when Nero was the emperor.
			1. Nero took Christians and poured oil and hot tar on them, nailed them to crosses, and then set them on fire and used them to light their gardens.
			2. The Roman Empire was turned upside down and the Gospel of Christ spread because of the ability of these Christians to suffer righteously, as the Lord Jesus gave us an example.
	6. We can win an argument but lose the audience.
		1. We need to use the logic and the love and turn that into a lifestyle.
		2. True humility will disarm those who oppose us.
	7. Paul and Silas were thrown into prison for preaching the Gospel in Philippi.
		1. Acts 16:22-33
		2. There was an earthquake, and the prison doors were shaken loose.
			1. The shackles fell from the hands and legs of Paul, Silas and all of the other prisoners.
		3. None of the prisoners tried to escape.
		4. The jailer had heard Paul and Silas at midnight praising God and praying.
		5. The jailer asked what he must do to be saved.
			1. He saw something in Paul and Silas that he had never seen before.
2. a steadfast love (1 Peter 4:8-9)
	1. 1 Peter 4:8-9
		1. We should have a steadfast love in our churches that stands out against the hostility, wickedness and hatred that’s in the world.
	2. Our churches need love, not only for one another, but also for the lost.
		1. We need to show love for those who are broken by sin.
		2. We will not lower the standard of what God says is right and wrong, but we need to show love to those who have participated in abortion.
		3. We believe in the permanency of marriage, but we need to show love to those who have been broken by divorce.
		4. Those whose minds have become twisted and tortured with the pollution of pornography need our help and love.
		5. Those caught up in the homosexual lifestyle need Jesus, and they’re not going to be saved by our self-righteousness.
			1. We will preach against abortion, divorce, adultery and sin.
			2. But the only way to reach this world and our cities is to sanctify the Lord in our hearts, be ready always to give an answer for the hope that is within us, to have a lifestyle that is different, and to be soaked and saturated with a genuine, steadfast love.
3. A satisfied longing (1 peter 3:15)
	1. 1 Peter 3:15
	2. Hope is a longing that is satisfied.
		1. It is more than certainty.
		2. It is faith transformed into reality in our hearts and lives.
			1. Faith is rooted in reason but goes beyond reason.
			2. Faith becomes its own best reason, and the Bible calls that hope.
	3. The world is wondering if there is hope and an answer.
		1. The answer is Jesus.
		2. We need to demonstrate that the Bible is true, the Holy Spirit is real and that there is hope in Christ.
			1. We need to have in our own hearts a satisfied longing that Jesus has met the deepest needs of our hearts.
	4. Though we love our nation and freedom, our job is not ultimately to save America or to preserve our freedom.
		1. Our responsibility is to stand up for Jesus Christ and to be a witness for His grace and power with unshakeable hope.
4. CONCLUSION
	1. It is never too late for God.
	2. We need a lifestyle for these last days.
		1. We need to settle it once and for all, now and forever, that Jesus Christ is Lord.
		2. We need to understand what we believe and why we believe it.
		3. As God’s people, we need to live like God’s people and live a superior lifestyle so that others can see a difference in us.
		4. We need to show genuine, Christ-like love.
			1. We won’t overlook sin and we won’t compromise, but we will love others to Jesus.
		5. We need to do all of this with a settled hope in our hearts, a satisfied longing that Jesus has met the deepest needs of our lives.
	3. God has called us, anointed us, and equipped us to do what we ought to do.
	4. If you’re not saved today, God wants to save you.
		1. And He will save you if you will trust Him.
	5. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
	6. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
		1. Romans 3:23
		2. Romans 10:9-10
		3. Romans 10:13
		4. Acts 16:31
		5. John 3:16