**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | A Thief in the Night |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2175 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
	1. The purpose of this message is get us ready for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
	2. In this age, we are living between two mountain peaks: the blood-drenched slopes of Mount Calvary and the sunlit peaks of glory of Mount Zion.
		1. Between the crucifixion and the coronation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. EXPECT A SURPRISING DAY (1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-2)
	1. A thief in the night comes surprisingly, when we are not expecting it.
		1. And so it is with the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
	2. Paul is not setting a date for the Second Coming.
		1. Paul referred to the certainty and the uncertainty.
			1. The certainty: He is coming.
			2. The uncertainty: we do not know when.
	3. Acts 1:6-8
		1. The disciples, sitting with Jesus before His ascension, wanted to know about prophecy.
		2. Anyone who sets a date for His return is disobeying the Lord.
			1. It is not for us to know.
		3. We need to get our heads out of the clouds of prophecy and get our feet on the pavement of soul-winning.
		4. We need to share the Gospel and get people ready for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.
	4. We are 2,000 years nearer than we have ever been before.
	5. Jesus came on time, He was born on time, He died on time, He rose on time and He is coming again in His own time.
		1. He may seem slow, but He will never be late.
		2. 2 Peter 3:8-10
			1. In God’s heart and mind, it has been no longer than two days.
			2. The Day of the Lord will be a very troubling time.
				1. The church will be taken out at the rapture.
				2. God will pour out His wrath upon this world.
			3. The raging waters of God’s wrath are pounding against the dam of His mercy.
3. ESCAPE A SUDDEN DESTRUCTION (1 Thessalonians 5:3-4)
	1. Those who know the Lord will escape the sudden destruction.
		1. The rapture of the church will take us out before this day comes.
	2. “The Day of the Lord” refers to the Great Tribulation.
	3. Luke 23:28
		1. Jesus’ day has not yet come.
		2. Joel 2:1-2
			1. The Day of the Lord will be absolutely totally distinct.
		3. Jeremiah 30:7
			1. “Jacob” refers to fleshly Jews.
			2. There will be a national deliverance for the Jews out of the Great Tribulation.
		4. Daniel 12:1
		5. Matthew 24:21
	4. A solemn day
		1. There has never been a day like this day.
		2. Revelation 6:15-17
	5. A sudden day
		1. 1 Thessalonians 5:3
			1. This is the calm before the storm.
			2. Preachers may be called “calamity howlers” for this type of preaching.
			3. But the world will be caught by surprise because it will not hear and it will not heed God’s Word.
				1. This was the same in Noah’s time.
			4. The church will not go through the Great Tribulation because it is not a time of peace and safety.
				1. The time of peace and safety is when the day comes and the church is delivered out of it.
		2. Matthew 24:36-39
			1. Jesus is referring to the day of His coming.
			2. What were the days of Noah like?
				1. Life continued as normal.
				2. God called Noah into the ark. Then the flood came and it was too late.
				3. This was a solemn day and it was a sudden day.
	6. A sure day
		1. 1 Thessalonians 5:3
		2. It is a day like unto a pregnant woman, it is coming.
			1. So it is with this judgment.
4. ENDURE A SURROUNDING DARKNESS (1Thessalonians 5:4-9)
	1. We must endure a surrounding darkness.
		1. The world is already in darkness.
			1. Moral darkness
			2. Spiritual darkness
			3. Social darkness
			4. Political darkness
		2. We must not sleep; the world is asleep.
			1. The world has been put to sleep by the devil.
	2. Be aware and wise up.
		1. 1 Thessalonians 5:5
		2. Christians are the only ones who can make sense of what is going on.
	3. Be awake and get up.
		1. 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7
		2. The stage is set for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
			1. This is not a theory to be discussed, it is a truth to be lived.
			2. Luke 19:13
				1. “Occupy” means to do your job; getting the world ready for His coming.
	4. Be alert and dress up.
		1. 1 Thessalonians 5:8
		2. Keep your heart right.
			1. The breastplate of faith and love.
			2. We need to love Jesus and one another.
			3. We need to put our faith where God put our sins; on the Lord Jesus.
			4. Without the breastplate we are not ready to live in these dark days.
		3. Keep your head right.
			1. The helmet of the hope of salvation.
				1. We are not to have a hope-so salvation but a know-so salvation.
				2. In the Bible, the word “hope” means absolute certainty, rock-ribbed certainty based on the Word of God.
				3. The Second Coming is called “the Blessed Hope.”
	5. We need to know that we know that we are saved.
		1. Because we are living in surrounding darkness.
5. EXPERIENCE A SURE DELIVERANCE (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11)
	1. “Salvation” in this passage means deliverance.
	2. The fact that Jesus is coming at any moment is a fact that will comfort and it will edify.
	3. Reasons why the church will be taken out before the Great Tribulation:
		1. Explanation
			1. 1 Thessalonians 5:9
			2. The Tribulation is the great day of God’s wrath.
				1. God chastises His children, but God never pours out His wrath on His children.
				2. God’s wrath is for the unsaved.
				3. God has not appointed His children to wrath.
			3. 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10
				1. Jesus delivered us from the wrath to come.
				2. Genesis 7:16-17

The flood didn’t come until Noah was taken out and safely in the ark.

* + - * 1. Luke 17:26-30

The days of Lot were marked by sexual perversion and economic prosperity.

Ezekiel 16:49

* + - * 1. Sin that used to slink down back alleys now struts down main streets.
				2. Before the flood came, God took Noah out and put him in the ark.
				3. Before God destroyed Sodom with fire and brimstone, God sent an angel to tell Lot to get out of the city.

God would not pour out His wrath upon His man Lot even though Lot was a compromising, worldly Christian.

* + 1. Expectation
			1. 1 Thessalonians 5:10
				1. Paul was expecting Jesus in his lifetime.

Paul was not wrong in his thinking.

* + - * 1. 1 Thessalonians 4:17

Even 2,000 years ago they were living on the edge of eternity.

1 John 2:18

* + - 1. If the Tribulation comes first, then we are not looking for Christ, we are looking for antichrist.
				1. Paul was looking for the Lord Jesus Christ.
			2. When you are looking for the Tribulation to come, rather than looking up, you are looking around.
		1. Edification
			1. 1 Thessalonians 5:11
			2. The fact that Jesus is coming at any moment is a great comfort and a great edification.
			3. If we believe that the church is going to go through seven years of a day so horrible that Jesus, Jeremiah, Daniel and Joel said, “There will never, ever, ever be a day like that,” that would not edify us.
				1. It is not, “Even so come, Great Tribulation.” It is, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Revelation 22:20

* + - 1. We are not looking for antichrist, we are looking for Christ.
			2. We are waiting for the trumpet to sound.
1. CONCLUSION
	1. We can expect a surprising day.
	2. We can escape a sudden destruction.
	3. We must endure a surrounding darkness.
	4. We can experience a sure deliverance.
	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