

Fathers in the Last Days

1Thesalonians 5:1-6

“It has been said that as goes the family, so goes the world. It can also be said that as goes the father, so goes the family.” Voddie Baucham Jr

Few would argue that one’s father plays or played a big role in the shaping of our lives and that of our family, either through his positive or negative presence, or in his physical or emotional absence. Michael Griego

Nothing is more vital for Christian men, fathers, heads of households to look for & prepare for the coming of the Lord. The bible warns us to get right or get left---***left behind that is***, when Jesus returns for our families & His church in the rapture. Paul speaks of the urgency of the hour & the temptation for men/fathers to disregard the signs of the times & get caught up in the worlds system & perish along w/ unbelievers.

Jesus is coming again & those who are ready ***will go in***. And those who treat Christ’s words & Paul’s warnings as trivial will not. As we look in ***retrospect*** the fact is, Christ came for every one of those Paul wrote to & every one who lived in the city of Thessalonica—some to everlasting life, others to everlasting punishment. **We** now have our chance, will we **listen** or not? Will we **take** Christ’s warnings & Paul’s urgings **seriously** or not? Will we **heed** the bible’s instruction or not? Will we get right or get left behind

In Capernaum---Jesus headquarters & home base for His ministry. A place where He called Matthew, healed the paralytic lowered from roof, healed Peter’s mother-in-law, often preached in the synagogue, cast out a demon, healed man w/ withered hand, raised the Centurions slave from sick bed, paid tax w/ shekel in fishes mouth, home of Peter & Andrew---all this & more--the witness of godly men & w/ godly families, Jesus teaching & miracles yet the ***city remained in unbelief.***

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Today a great witness has gone out, friends saved, prophecies fulfilled, people longing for real living-**reconciled to Christ**-time is short--yet some like those in Elijah's day *'how long will you hesitate between two decisions?'*

A Time/CNN poll finds that more than one third of Americans say they are paying more attention now to how the news might relate to the end of the world & have talked about what the Bible has to say on the subject. Fully 59% say they believe the events in Revelation are going to come true, & nearly one-quarter think the Bible predicted the 9/11 2001 attack.

And many men, fathers & others in spite of what they see & hear remain much like those during the times of Jesus, in a state of unbelief. Not turning to Jesus for eternal life. **Jesus said of those in His day-----**

Matt 11:23-24 "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. "Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."

To whom much is given much is required. Men & fathers today have a greater responsibility than those. We look back at Christ death, burial & resurrection, we look today at the prophetic signs all around us. We look ahead knowing that Jesus could come at any time for us. Don't get side tracked, the time is short. Jesus rebuked those who were willingly ignorant.

Matt 16:2-3... "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' "And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening. 'Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?"

1Thes 5:1-6 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. 3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.

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Times--Chronos—a fixed occasion, long or short, a particular period.

Epochs—Kairos—time things brought to crisis, decisive time waited for.

You will not be able to pinpoint the precise time Jesus will come for you, the family, church. No **alarm** will sound to indicate this is the exact moment of His return. Yet the signs of the times will be a sure **give-a-way** as to the **close proximity** but not precise period.

If you were waiting at the airport w/ a ticket saying flight 005 departs at 8:45 am you know what time you are leaving. But if you're holding a **standby** ticket, you know you will leave eventually but there is no fixed time, no decisive period that you can point to. You know you are going to leave, you just don't know what time, what flight you'll be on. After Jesus resurrection..

Acts 1:6-8.... "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses....."

Jesus is saying don't try to figure out the **precise period** of Lord's return-rapture fatigue--but be witnesses, men, fathers of faith in a dark & sin-infested world--WAITING

2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

Paul treats it as a **no-brainer**, 'you know perfectly well', day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night'—It is what the Lord taught.

Rev 16:15 "Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame."

Day of the Lord is a series of events beginning w/ the rapture as a thief—revelation of the anti-Christ to the world, the great tribulation, culminating w/ the second coming & the millennial reign. ***Olympics-not 1 but a series of events***

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Paul goes from Christians '*you*' '*brethren*' to the unbelievers '*they*' '*them*'

3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

All attention is for peace & safety apart from God, they are gods & all is done thru their efforts apart from ***Prince of Peace***. ***Ronny 'I truly thought we would achieve peace in my generation for my kids sake.'***

Worldly fathers have no eternal reference point in terms of God's plan for family or planet earth—only focus their attention on man's ability to achieve peace, safety, prosperity apart from Gods blueprint laid out in His word.

Notice it will be like a woman giving birth, pregnant w/ child. Intensity of birth pangs signals the birth of the child. ***I didn't even know I was pregnant***

So too the intensity of signs of the times indicate the soon return of Christ. Unbelievers are unaware of world conditions, birthpangs, leading to Christ return-He is standing at the door.

They ***will not escape***, the judgment that is about to come upon the earth.

Believers do escape ***Luke 21:36 "But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."***

Men, fathers are we doing anything about what these birth pangs are pointing to. Are we getting our house in order? Are we more committed to Christ today than last week or last year? Or do we look at all this as a curiosity, unconcerned, life as usual, go our way, indulging our families in the things of the world & putting Christ on hold, 2nd, 3rd, to all else?

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; **5** for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; **6** so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be **alert** and **sober**.

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Believers are not in darkness but are of the light--Jesus said the signs of My coming are merely the beginning of birth pangs. Today we see the intensity of those signs, indicating the time is short, 'the Lord's return is close at hand.'

At the same time skeptics, even carnal fathers have become desensitized to signs of times, they go around in a fog w/o spiritual light to guide them. Ignorant to the prophetic picture, but skilled in worldly things, what's hot & what's not, children of the night, dwellers of darkness, sensual sleepers—as Peter 3:3,4 says '*in the last days mockers will come w/ their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying 'Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning...'* Uniformitarianism

So Paul affirms what believing fathers are to do--watch, patiently wait, anticipate the Lord's return. He is coming like a thief so we are to be *alert* & *sober*. As Jesus said *Matt 24:42 "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.*

Alert – be cautious, attentive, not idle or lazy fathers lest some temptation or calamity overtake you.

Sober - discrete, watch where walking, don't be a careless dad & stumble.

In spite of all the warnings & indicators telling men & world to awake from slumber & Christian fathers to leave laziness & stay stirred up.

For those not ready, though warned & have indicators saying the time is near, yet no response---Jesus will come suddenly as a thief—He will take the world by surprise. Jesus warned His disciples

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Matt 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

Matt 24:43 "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

*** New Orleans, city built below sea level. Politicians used levee repair funds to build parkways & renovate gambling casinos. Aug 29, 2005 officials were shocked when levees broke.

*** Mt Krakatoa in Indonesia began erupting May 1883, 3 months before the giant explosion that killed 36,000 people. Some locals climbed to top of volcano to look inside.

*** Six years later 1889 in Johnstown Pa. Residents had a running joke ***'the dam has burst, take to the hill'*** – well South Fork burst & there was no time to head for the hills killing 2,500 people.

*** Mt Pelee erupted on the Caribbean island of Martinique May 8, 1902. In the nearby city of St Pierre residence smelled sulfur fumes for weeks. The Governor was up for re-election May 10. Not wanting to lose votes he set up roadblocks to keep voters in town before casting their ballots. The local newspaper mocked those who worried about the situation. 40,000 died.

Heb 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. (KJV)

We began as one nation under God but we live as though God doesn't exist & Christ will never return. We act as if we will never have to answer for our sins.

Our nation enacts & endorses immoral laws from abortion to gay marriage. We are the leading distributor of pornography around the world-

Child porn is rampant w/ no end in sight. ACLU promotes & defends every kind of perversion & attacks every kind of decency.

We are ripe for judgment & for the Lord's return. Some men & fathers oblivious to the precarious position we are in, storing up wrath for the day of wrath. We have been given so much & at the same time ignore God.

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We are like Southern Europe during the 18th and 19th C – They began the practice of using church vaults to store gunpowder. Problem was the church had steeples & bell towers which were susceptible, in times of storms, to be hit by lightning, in turn detonating the explosives. In Brescia Italy 1769, 3000 people died & 1856 on the island of Rhodes 4000 died when lightning struck.

Storm clouds are brewing, Jesus is coming- ***Matt 24:27...just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.*** For saintly fathers it will be glory for the sinning fathers it will be gory-- gruesome, judgment & destruction.

Matt 25:13 "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

So men, fathers, leaders in the home & every area of influence God has put you in, arise & be a man of God that we might have families of God and a nation w/ God. **Happy Fathers Day.**