

August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Pinecrest Baptist Church  
p.m.

Sermon Title: The Day at Hand in the Days of Believers  
Sermon Text: (Romans 13:11-14)

I am convinced beyond all shadow of doubt that there is a frontpage Bible doctrine that is saturating the Christian world with its absence; and in so doing weakening the fabric of the faith, and the influence of Christianity.

According to Pew Research:

- Their last survey on this matter that I could find was done in April of 2006.

- 79% of American Christians believe that Christ actually will return to earth.

- 21% said they did not, or refused to answer the question.

- 20% said they believed He would return in their lifetime.

- 80% said He would not return in their lifetime/ or they chose not to answer.

And therein lies a real problem. – Most people have the same syndrome the brothers of Jesus had.

- They believed a Messiah was coming – but it couldn't be Him.

- Many today are quick to say, I believe prophecies will be fulfilled, but when they are – that's not it.

For example, there are people still today, I have listened to them argue, (though they seem to be few), that recognize God promised to bring Israel to their homeland; but what happened in 1948 wasn't really it.

- Some people enjoy believing promises; as long as there are no fulfillments.

- Just like the first time Jesus came...

- Messiah is coming, but it can't be now; and it can't be Him.

- There will be those after the Rapture who will say, "Of course I believe in the rapture, but that wasn't it."

Most people are more comfortable with a Prophecy than they are a Reality.

The Bible is right and true and wonderful on paper; but nothing makes some people more uncomfortable than when the Bible's words come to Life before their very eyes.

If all Christians, rightly understood, fundamentally believed and actually functioned under the promise that Jesus is coming again, virtually everything in our lives would be different.

Let me show you:

**Prayer Life would be a Priority** – 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 – "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

- When the Day at Hand, resides in the heart of the believer prayer is not a second-rate ritual, it is a first class fundamental.

**Worship Life would be Wonderful** – Hebrews 10:25 – “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.”

- When the Day at Hand is in the heart of the believer, church houses will be filled, worshippers will be thrilled, and no one will be in a holy hurry. – When the day at hand is in the heart of the believer Sunday will be the Lord’s Day, not the Lord’s hour.

**Evangelistic Life Would be Explosive** – 2 Corinthians 5:11 – “Knowing therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.” –

We don’t persuade men, because we have no real terror of the Lord, or fear that He will come anytime soon. If we actually believed the Lord’s return was imminent, it should light a fire in our efforts to win others to Jesus.

**Personal Lives Would be Purified** – 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:2-3 – “Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

All of those sins men don’t take seriously would become desperate enemies to us. How’d you like to

have a beer in your hand, and a cuss word in your mouth when Jesus returns?

- What condition, behavior, or action, do you want the Lord to find you in, when He returns?

**Our Relationships Will be Right** – James 5:8-9 – “Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.”

Now friend, those are just a few crooked things that would get straight if you and I realized that Jesus really is coming; and it actually might be anytime now. – His coming, is as Real as your Dying. – (you know its coming; and it can be at any moment.)

\*Note – The New Testament intertwines the day of the Lord into everyday commands and overarching themes over 300 times in 27 books. I counted forty passages of scripture in 27 books, in which the coming day of the Lord is the central thought.

That being said, we turn to our text:

Three things to know:

I. It is the Last Time – “**knowing the time.**”

What time is it? It is the last time! How do we know that, or is it just theological opinion?

**A. The Scripture Declares It**

1.) 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:18 – “Little children, it is the last time...”

2.) Hebrews 1:2 – tells us that “in these last days” God has spoken to us through His Son.

3.) 1 Peter 1:20 – tells us that Christ was a mystery in the Old Testament, but “was manifest in these last times for you.”

\*Note – We know that it is the last time, because the scriptures tell us in black ink on white paper, and that shouldn't be too hard to understand. – It is the Last time!

Now if that's the case; what then is the last time?

- The Last Time is the time period between Christ's Ascension Day, and His Coming Day.

- Peter explained this on the day of Pentecost that coming of the Holy Spirit was a partial fulfillment of the prophecy written by the prophet Joel.

Acts 2:16-17 – “BUT THIS IS THAT WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET JOEL; AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS, SAITH GOD, I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH: AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS.” (A quotation from Joel 2)

- All of that is to say, it is not the opinion of the preacher that we are living in the last days, but it is the declaration of the scripture.

### ***B. The Scriptures Delineate It***

\*Note – The scriptures give an outline of all of History, both past and future.

1.) There is an Explanation – When you put together the prophecies of Daniel 9:24-27 and

Micah 5:2-3, you find a starting point of chronology from then, into the future.

a.) Artaxerxes the Grecian King gives the order to Nehemiah to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. (start marking time)  
b.) 483 years from that Messiah would come.

c.) Messiah would be cut off for an unrevealed amount of time.  
d.) At the close of that unrevealed amount of time, the Day of the Lord will begin.

\*Note – Right now, you and I are living in this Unrevealed amount of time; known only to God the Father.

2.) There is Dispensation – A Dispensation is a period of time in which man is answerable to God based on the revelation that he has been given. – God revealed Himself to man in different ways, and different means throughout History, but the book of Hebrews tells us that “in these last days, God has spoken to us through His Son.”

a.) Dispensation of Innocence – Adam and Eve until their fall.  
b.) Dispensation of Conscience – the time between the Fall of Man and the Flood of Noah.  
c.) Dispensation of Government – This was the time between the Noah and Abraham.

d.) Dispensation of Promise – Between Abraham and Moses – God Promised Israel's Glory.

e.) Dispensation of Law – From Moses until John the Baptist. – “For the law and the prophets were until John.”

f.) Then came the Dispensation of Grace, through Jesus – which is obviously where we live.

\*Note – In case you haven't been counting, that's six. There is one more to come. The Dispensation of the Kingdom of God on earth.

- The Bible tells us in Romans 9:28 – “**because a short work will the LORD make upon the earth.**”

Get it in deep, that we are in the Final stages of the Ages

II. It is Night Time – “The night is far spent, the day is at hand.”

\*Note – What does he mean that the night is far spent?

#### **A. The Absence of Christ's Presence –**

1.) John 9:4-5 – “**I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**”

\*Note – Now we are the light of the world as He is reflected in us.

\*Note – Notice who this message is for – It is for believers. Only believers can sleep. Unbelievers are dead!

\*Note – As Paul is speaking of Darkness of the World, he is trying to awaken the Brightness of Believers.

- The Brightness of the Believers is Christ living through them to the point that the world cannot ignore it.

\*Note – It is Night Time due to the Absence of Christ's Presence; but it is also Night Time due to the Practice of Man's Sin.

**B. The Practice of Man's Sin – “Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day...”**

\*Note – In short live like we are in the light of heaven's noon day sun, rather than like we are able to hide in the dark.

Note – Paul gives Four characteristics of the “Night Life” that is an offense to God, and has no business in the life of the professing Christian.

1.) Unrestrained Living. – “rioting” this word means simply “letting loose, or carousing.”

- just letting this old flesh have a good time.

Now someone always says, “if you ain't hurting nobody, then what's wrong with?” - There's no scenario where you “ain't hurting nobody” – Because every time you ignore the scripture, you're hurting the heart of God.

- The next time someone say to you, it doesn't hurt anything to let loose a little, oh yes it does.... What the common man calls fun in that light – the Lord calls sin.

(Don't ever get the idea that God's against “fun” – He's against ‘thaaat kind of fun.’)

## 2.) Intoxicated Living – “not in drunkenness”

- a.) “methay” – and it speaks to anything that “intoxicates.”

\*Note – That is everything from methamphetamines to money; from alcohol to affluence.

(Years ago, when I was pastoring my first church, the church set in hand the plan to write a church Constitution – not a new covenant – but a Constitution, essentially pulling together all of our “precedents” and structuring them as a guide for the next generation. – And one of our older men on the committee spoke up and said, “I believe we need to change the church covenant.” He said, “Our church covenant says we will not engage in any intoxicating drink as a beverage; but it says nothing about marijuana; it says nothing about heroin.” – And He was right – He said we don’t need to do away with it, it needs to be expanded...”

- Here’s the point Spiritually Speaking as our Christian character, behavior, and witness goes – you don’t have to come within 5 counties of a beer to get intoxicated.

- Let a businessman hit it big; and find his groove and find out he’s good at making money, and there he goes...

- Or someone gets some notoriety in town, and some ability to influence others, becomes a mover and a shaker, and there he goes . . .

\*note – It is Night Time in any home where the Lord Jesus is relegated to your religious life, while your heart and mind are under the actual influence of something else.

## 3.) Immoral Living – “Chambering and wantonness.”

- a.) Literally without marriage
  - (1) living together without marriage.
  - (2) sexual activity outside the bonds of marriage.

\*Note – It is living out before the eyes of others a declaration that Matrimony is NOT Holy. – Never get the idea that a people can “create,” “define,” or “design” marriage in their own way – Not for the Christian. – Paul said RUN FROM IT – it is not to be part of the Christian life.

## 4.) Insolent Living – “strife and envying” –

This is being unable to get along with. Puffed with pride, stubborn in your attitude and dealings with others.

- a.) the words that Paul puts together here describe – “passionate contentions” – “contentions with zeal and ardor”

\*Note – Road rage is NOT a Spiritual Gift!

\*Note – Generally speaking, this language that Paul is using here describes someone who will “passionately fight to get their rights, their way, and their privileges, and what they deserve.”

\*Note – Now all of that being the case – the Apostle says, When these characteristics, Unrestrained Living, Intoxicated behavior, Immoral unconcern, and Personal Insolence, you can write down they are absolutely asleep at the wheel.

(Now if they are saved, these are things that like just Lot, should be vexing their righteous souls, every day.)

III. It is High Time – “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to *fulfill* the lusts thereof.”

**A. “Put on the Armor of Light”**

- 1.) Armor is your protection
- 2.) The armor of Light is the truth of God’s Word and our Lord Jesus.

\*Note – In short, I’ll hide right behind His truth as I go out in this world.

(In some ways a preacher should have it easier than everyone else. I’m to be the dumbest man in the room; and I’m good at it. – Why do you say that? – Because I have to be told what to say! – I can’t make anything up on my own, I get to put on His Word, and His Son, and hide behind those all day long.) – But you don’t have to be a preacher to do that.

**B. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.”**

- 1.) Paul is not saying – turn your Christianity off and on, and now is time to turn it on...
  - a.) He is saying, you are consciously live distancing yourself from your nature, and toward your Savior.

Christ is to be seen on the OUTSIDE – As a Uniform, you always wear. He is to be the visible part of your behavior, your demeanor, and your character, NOT because you are performing; but because your flesh is having less and less influence in your life.

**Conclusion:**

- It is the Last Time
- It is the Night Time
- It is High Time for Christians to live like it. – What do you want Jesus to find you doing when He returns?