Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – March 4, 2018

The Last Days! What happens next?

Life Lessons from Four Apostles

Prepared for the Thief

Or, Why You Don’t Need a Colorful Chart to Be Ready for Jesus

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

While many complicate the Last Days with layers of speculation, Jesus, Paul, Peter, and John are of one accord in their relative simplicity.

***We know Jesus will return and our loved one resurrected, but it is foolish to keep guessing about when!*** v. 1

Paul continues his thoughts from the previous paragraph (4:13-18), saying that although we are certain Christ’s return, we CAN’T and WON’T know its timing. Jesus used these very terms in Acts 1:1-11.

***Why is it foolish? Because “everyone knows” that The Day of the Lord will overtake the unprepared.***  vv. 2, 3

While the child is expected, and the onset of labor inevitable, it also is sudden, its timing unknown. The Day of the Lord is a common prophetic term for God’s judgment in the Last Days. Unbelievers will be swept away unprepared. Isaiah 13:1-ll; Zephaniah 1:14-16

***But as “Sons of Light” we will not be taken off-guard.*** vv. 4, 5

Paul emphasizes our new, God-given condition of believing and obeying truth (Light). John 12:35, 36; Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 1:12-14

***For now our life is about self-control, not sleep walking.*** vv. 6-8

Living in the light leads to walking in the light. Unlike the Law, which merely commanded, the new life of Christ brings with it not only a new direction, but motivation and means to obey. Drunkenness is replaced (in the Spirit) with self-control. John 1:5-7; Galatians 5:16-26

***So, be comforted, for Jesus has purchased for us pardon, life, and freedom from God’s wrath.*** vv. 9-11

Though believers are appointed to suffering (1 Thess. 3:3), we are not appointed for wrath (as are unbelievers). We anticipate the return of Jesus to judge our works, but have no reason to fear Him. 2 Pet. 3:1-18

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***Last Days Life Lesson***

***Those who reject Christ will recoil in fear and shock at His return to judge them, but we who have received His forgiveness seek to obey Him, and so anticipate His coming with confidence and joy.***

***Going Deeper--For Growth Groups:***

1. It is possible to know the certainty of an event without knowing exactly when it will happen. How does the “labor pains” picture help?

2. List the reasons/resources Paul says help believers not be overtaken or surprised by Jesus’ return. What does it mean to be watchful?

3. The “Day of the Lord” is God’s judgment. How is it also a rescue?

4. What is it for us to be not “appointed to wrath”? How is this true?