

A WORD TO THE WATCHERS

“Let us watch and be sober.”—1 Thess. 5:6.



THE APOSTLE PAUL is addressing the Church, himself included, when he says, “Let us watch and be sober.” He indicates in the context that we are to watch for the Day, for Messiah’s Kingdom, which will produce that Day. We know to expect the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. The Church is to be delivered from sin and death early in the morning of that wonderful Day. Their part is to be in the First Resurrection, to glory, honour and immortality with their Lord.

St. Paul tells us that God has so arranged His Program that the Day will come as a thief in the night—stealthily; and that those who are asleep will not be aware that the Day has come, and might therefore not be expected to be in a waiting attitude. Our Master’s words are, “Take heed to yourselves, lest... that Day come upon you unawares... Watch ye therefore.” (Luke 21:34, 36.) We believe that He leaves the matter in obscurity, because it will be better for us as a whole not to know the exact time. For instance, in the long period of the Dark Ages it was better that Christians did not know just when the time of Christ’s return would come. There were wonderful events transpiring in their day, and have been, in fact, in every day, but so much the more, we read, as the Day approaches.

While the Adversary is ever active in his efforts to do harm to the Lord’s cause, he will be still more seductive in his evil influences during the last days. We must therefore, as the Day draws near, be more and more alert in guarding every point of attack. The Lord allows us to do this watching, and He will reward the faithful ones, for He takes pleasure in the watchers. These will not be careless. Any who are careless will not be of the Kingdom class, for they are not of the kind He wishes to glorify.

God wishes those who are awake to learning more and more of His Plan. These will grow in grace and in knowledge as they watch. They will not be like the world. The world will be in a stupor—they will be unworthy of the Day. Darkness covers the whole earth at the present time. But God’s people are granted a special light: They love the light. “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psa. 119:105.) It is not a light like that of the moon, which reaches far out, but merely a little light at the feet of those who are watching for it. Those who are going to sleep will find their light going out.

EVIDENCE OF THE NEW DAY

The way that the Lord has been marking out for His people all down through the Ages has been a narrow way—a very narrow way. His light is given only to those who are seeking—those who are waiting—those who are watching. These will discern the dawning of the morning.

Others will not see. They have not watched the foregleams of the New Day. While things transpire that are evidences of the New Day, they are quite unconscious. For instance, the wonderful blessings of our day are manifestations of the New Dispensation. The dawn is here. We are astonished that the people do not see. But they attribute these wonderful things to different causes. They think that these are merely the results of man's taking another step forward in progress from the monkey-stage. He has become more intelligent, goes to concerts, churches, etc. He is getting farther away from the monkey! The power to use steam and electricity proves to these that we are entering the *Brain Age*! They forget that the few are talented inventors, etc.

We can see that all these great blessings belong to the New Dispensation. God is bringing it about. We can see that it is not the educated people, but those less educated, who have discovered the wonderful inventions most useful to man. The inventions which have proved the greatest blessings the world has ever known have been discovered by unlearned men. These things are not due to the "brain age," as they tell us. Perhaps none of the present generation will compare with Shakespeare; perhaps none will compare with St. Paul; none perhaps will compare with Solomon, or David, or Moses.

WATCHMEN FOR A PURPOSE

The Apostle says, "Let us watch and be sober." We cannot say that he here refers to abstinence from the use of liquors, tobacco and other things which have a stupefying effect on the nerves. The thought is that we should be watchful and sober in mind. We find a great many people who are excitable—carried about by every wind of doctrine. They cannot give the reason for what they accept. They do not know that the Truth is intended for only the one class of people—for those who are *watching*.

How careful we should watch all the increasing signs of the New Day! But the watchman who stands at the post of duty, and sees things going on, but keeps his mouth shut, is of no use at all. We want a watchman for a purpose! Those who are on the alert should call the attention of others to these wonderful things. They should seek to arouse the Household of Faith.

There are people who are as fully consecrated as ourselves, perhaps, only they are not awake. We should give them a kindly shake to arouse them to see the wonderful things. And since we are to be called away soon to the marriage, we are to remember that a part of our watching should be to keep our garments white. We are to watch to some purpose. If we realized how near the Bridegroom is, how careful we would be of our robes! Others do not know, but the Bride-elect knows how near the Bridegroom is. She will watch and be sober.

In one sense of the word, there might be many things to lead to excitability. We might merely jump up and down as we see the wonderful things, and clap our hands, etc. But not so! We are to be sober. Yet we are not to be stupid-stolid. We should remember that the Lord is giving us this knowledge to be used, and we should use it more and more. As we more clearly see

our imperfections, we should watch and be sober, and we shall accordingly be circumspect, we shall be helpful to others, and will put on more and more the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit—patience, meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. And as we watch, we shall be putting off anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. Thus we shall be pleasing and acceptable to the Bridegroom, and we shall thus be making ourselves ready to enter in with Him into the joys and blessings that are now so near—at the door.

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