

Do you lock your doors at night? That's the habit at my house. Of course, if someone really wanted in they would find a way; the night's dark silence would be disrupted with breaking glass. It's troubling to imagine, yet it's also how we are to anticipate the coming of the day of the Lord: like a thief in the night. In fact the prophets remind us the Day of the Lord is not light at all, but rather great darkness; the Day of the Lord is night itself. The great and terrible Day of the Lord will come as a thief, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and there is no escape.

What shall we do then? Well, we have a contingency plan for this at my house, and I'll bet you do too. When out of town we employ a small army of dial-timers to switch lights on and off at all hours of the night, and not just lights to be seen, but also radios and televisions to be heard. Why? Because we hope would-be thieves will move on to one of those "not a creature was stirring" homes. If we are not awake, we at least don't want the thief to know it.

But, of course, Jesus is not a thief coming to plunder. The Day of the Lord is His day! Jesus is the rightful King returning to claim His day, coming suddenly with judgment for all days. Let's not think that Jesus will not come back simply because He has not done so yet. He is not slow as we consider such things, but is patient, and His patience means salvation. This is the flame atop the candle of hope, that we are His people. What fear of darkness is there for those who are light in the Lord?

Beloved, there is no eternal night for us. We are children of the day, the heritage of light and so we set aside the habits of night people. We don't live any longer for fading night-pleasures with no thought for tomorrow.

What are the children of light to do? We remember and we wait together. We remember the lowly manger, the garden tears, the cruel cross, and we remember the empty tomb; we remember that just as he did not wait overlong in that tomb, so He will not sit overlong at the right hand of power. We remember, waiting through the night watches, we gaze forward, giving Him no rest until righteousness shines like a lamp, waiting we whisper together into the darkness, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Beloved, encourage one another and build each other up, because Jesus is coming. Hallelujah, He comes suddenly.