

Sunday Sermon: November 10, 2019

Sermon Text: 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

Sermon Theme: The Advertisement about the End

1. A warning of what will be missed
2. A promise of what will be given

⁵ All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. ⁶ God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰ on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

All the Christmas decorations have gone up in the stores, that means the season of advertisements is upon us. With huge Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Christmas sales, every store wants to grab your attention and make sure you know what is on sale, when it's on sale and how to get it.

Sometimes these sales are so important to us we make sure that we are there to pick up the item we are looking for.

God wants us to know about an event that is so much bigger than any sale. He wants us to know about Judgment Day. In his Word, he gives us little bits and pieces, little advertisements to grab our attention so that we will know that the end of the world is very real, it is coming, and what will happen to us when it does come.

Today, we will look at one of God's advertisements for the end of the world and we will see a warning and a promise. We will see that God's warns of what will be missed by those who do not listen to his call to repent and believe. We will also see the amazing promise of all that God will give to those who do believe.

Whether we know it or not advertisements try to persuade us to do something. There is the clear instruction to get to the sale, but there is also a more subtle persuasion. Many advertisements have a subtle warning in it. Maybe you have heard that subtle warning. "Get down to Bob's Furniture. Sale ends Sunday." "These prices won't last forever. When they're gone, they're gone." "This is your last chance to see these kinds of deals." That subtle warning is that you will miss something great if you don't get to this sale.

Imagine you are looking for a computer. You have been waiting for the advertisements to come out because you know that there will be some sort of deal on computers during the buying rush. But, as you look at the choices, you are just not sure that these are the best computers for you. The prices are still high and there are so many different options of things. Yet, the more you look what thought might go through your mind? It does says \$300 off, if I don't buy it now, I will have to pay more later.

Advertisers know that a little bit of fear can go a long way. If I don't go to the sale, I will miss out on these great savings. I will have to pay more later. Maybe I won't even be able to afford a computer if I don't buy one now. This subtle warning can often move us to action.

While advertisers use a subtle warning to get us to take notice, there is nothing subtle about the warning that God gives when he talks about the last day when the Last Judgment will come.

When that day comes, time really will have run out. There really will be no more chances. When this day comes, there will be no more time to wait for something better.

Jesus warns us about what will happen on that Last Day in Matthew 25. **“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.**

There are many places, many advertisements of the end of the world in the Bible. There are many passages, visions and prophecies even the book of Revelation. But nothing is as clear as when Jesus talks about what he will do on that Last Day when the end of the world comes.

We confess that when he comes again in glory he will judge the believers and the unbelievers. The time of grace, to repent and believe, it over. What is left is judgment and blessing. We hear about that judgment in our sermon text. **⁶ God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power**

Many people walk through life fearing God and his judgment. They are waiting for the lightning bolt to strike or the shoe to drop from heaven and hit them because they have sinned. They live in fear of a God who will judge them. While some fear God and think that all the bad that happens comes from an angry God, there are just as many who don't care whether there is a god or not. Their lives are not difficult, they are not living in the streets. They do not struggle with major problems in life. Rather than being afraid of God, they live without thinking about God at all. As long as life is going well, they are happy.

Here God gives a warning to whomever does not believe in him. He warns that the punishment for unbelief no matter it's form will not be an earthly one. **They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.** The punishment for unbelief will be eternity in hell.

Advertisements are always trying to motivate you to do something. They always have a call to action. "Get to this sale now." In the same way God's message of the last judgment also has a call to action. In his great love and mercy, God does not want anyone to face that punishment of eternal death in hell. Instead, he calls out to all people like we heard in our Old Testament lesson. Maybe they will hear my message, turn from their unbelief, and avoid the punishment.

God gives us this time on earth, this time of grace, to hear and believe. God's call to all, especially those who do not believe, is the same one that John Baptist and Jesus used. "Repent, for the kingdom of God is near." God does not want anyone to wait for something better when they hear his call, he wants them to come to faith now, to avoid the punishment that comes at the end.

Advertisements don't want you to miss the sale. They use the subtle warnings in them to get you to think. But the advertisements also use promises to get you to come to the sale. They promise great deals, huge savings and opportunities that can't be missed.

Back to our computer that we want to buy. What if we do go to the sale, we do select a computer, we buy it and we find out later that it was a really good deal. We see later that same computer except it is much more expensive. How do we feel when the promise of the good deal is actually true and that good deal is ours?

If God's words about the Last Judgment were all warning, destruction and punishment we would have reason to fear that day. Who of us would ever want to stand before a Savior who is preaching destruction and punishment? Not me, and not you either. We realize that we are sinners and whenever God talks about punishment and destruction, we should be included in that punishment and destruction because we are sinners.

If we were on trial and were judged for our sins, we would have every reason to fear Jesus' return. However, God gives all who believe a great promise in the judgment. He tells us about a great deal that he has done and gives to us. He will not judge us as we deserve because Jesus has already been judged for our sins. He tells us that instead of being judged, we will be counted worthy of salvation, because through faith in Jesus, our sins have been taken away. **this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.**

¹⁰ on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

Thessalonians is not a letter of warning of punishment, it is a letter of hope and comfort because Jesus has bought us back from sin, death and the devil. These are Gospel words of safety and security in forgiveness and eternal salvation that Jesus has already given to us.

These Gospel words shows us the great promise of love that God gives to us freely and fully now and forever. Because Jesus has taken our place, we have nothing to fear in the judgment because he has prepared our place in heaven. Jesus talked about that place. (John 14:2) **⁶In my Father's house are many rooms. I am going there to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back to take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am.**

Still the judgment hasn't happened yet. While we wait God also gives us a call to action: Be ready. Stand firm in faith. Live your faith.

The apostle Paul sums up this call this way (2 Corinthians 5:14-15) ¹⁴**For the love of Christ compels us, because we came to this conclusion: One died for all; therefore, all died.** ¹⁵**And he died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves but for him, who died in their place and was raised again.** This call to action has a place in our lives. We no longer live for ourselves and the sin that lives in us, instead we live as God's children and heirs of eternal life living that faith and putting it into action until the last day.

God gives us an advertisement for the last day. While there is a warning for those who do not believe, there is great joy and comfort in God's promise for those who do. On that day, our Savior will victoriously announce his greatness as the Lord of the universe and bring all those who believe to his eternal side. Come Lord Jesus, quickly Come. Amen.