Victory Everlasting Gospel Church

December 17th 2016

The title of the sermon is:

**“The Last Night on Earth”**

This is a Joe Crews sermon that I am about to speak on. I have added and I have taken away from this original. You can look up all of Mr. Crews sermons on line and we have quite a few in our lobby. I read this particular sermon and the Spirit hit me and said bring this back to the world, **The Last Night on Earth**. This is something we all should be **thinking** about. Most quotes come from the sermon “The last Night on Earth,” Spirit of prophecy, and the K.J. Bible.

Let us pray

One of the most dramatic verses in the Bible has been translated by Dr. Moffett in these words: **"Evil on evil says the Lord, the Eternal ... it is coming, the hour is striking, and striking at you, the hour and the end. Your doom has come."** [Ezekiel 7:5-7](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ezekiel%207.5-7).

Based on this startling text, our attention is drawn to the most solemn message ever heard by human ears. It is a warning to each person alive on this planet today, because every individual must pass through their **last night on earth**. What will it be like to begin living that final 24 hours of time?

Perhaps you’ve heard about the city of Pompeii which nestled in the shadow of Mt. Vesuvius in old Italy long ago, in AD.79 that mountain simply exploded with volcanic fury and millions of tons of molten lava came pouring down upon Pompeii to completely inundate it, wiping out all its inhabitants. A friend of Mr. Crews has walked over the harden ash and pumice ( gray stone full of cavities) which still covers the excavated ruins of the ancient city. This friend of Mr. Crews described the contorted postures of the victims whose forms have been perfectly pre-served by molding the space occupied by their decayed bodies.

Mr. Crews often thought, “If the stones of the street could speak, what a story they would have to tell about that last night on earth for Pompeii.” The experience of an entire city full of people, overtaken without warning and the thrust into eternity, whether they were **ready or not**. What will it be like when you and I face that same experience? Will it find us clinging to the same old sins that many of them were obviously committing as they were swept away by the sudden deluge of death.

Remember what 2nd Peter 3:10 said**, but the day of the Lord will** **come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with** **fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall** **be burned up.** Does that sound familiar? Compare Pompeii of yesterday and 2nd Peter of today.

Doubtless, many in Pompeii heard that initial explosion and had time to look up to see the terrifying wall of lava just before it engulfed them. We know nothing about their thoughts, but the graphic physical positions of their bodies reveal that sin had become a **science**, and few, if any, were thinking of **death or the hereafter.**

Just like the world we live in today, we take everything for granted. We have no cares of the world, we just think about ourselves, sex, food, alcohol, cars, clothing, drugs, television, gossip, slander, Power, money, and so on. Do we think about the **hereafter? No.** We, just like the people in Pompeii, have been deceived. A sobering thought that today could be our **last night on earth**.

I wonder what Paul must have felt when he preached his gospel of grace to the inhabitants of Pompeii. Surely in his ranging over the chief cities of the Roman Empire he would have visited that center of vice and evil repute. But it is highly unlikely that the apostle received any favorable hearing from the dwellers in that seaport sin city. Perhaps they expelled him out of hand, and Paul had to shake the dust from his feet as he departed.

It was from Pompeii that General Titus had drawn many of his soldiers his infamous assault on Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Perhaps it was one of the citizens of Pompeii who threw the flaming torch which burned the magnificent temple to its foundation.

But now those veterans of foreign wars have returned to their home place tolive out their years of retirement in unrestrained indulgence.Slowly the cup of **iniquity** fills to the brim, and on a night of unusual revelry and drunkenness, the **angel of death** flies low over the streets of Pompeii. It is not hard to imagine how the final call of God was Extended to every man, woman, and child on that last night.

Before the angel of mercy folded his wings, the Holy Spirit pleaded at the door of each heart. Long after the music and dancing had ended, people tossed on their beds, wrestling with the powerful convictions of conscience, but one by one those tender impressions were suppressed and denied. The voice of the Spirit was drowned out by the fleshly clamor for more excitement and sin. The fate of Pompeii was sealed.Why, they had no faith in the Lord and in His power of His might.

Ezekiel 7:5-7 **“Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come. The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains.”**

Verse 8 **“Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations. Pompeii’s fate was sealed.”**

The Bible gives us another striking illustration of the last night on earth. A city was wiped out of existence because of its total abandonment of righteousness to the perversion of iniquity. On the eve of its destruction, Lot made a final visit to his daughters and their Sodomite husbands who had made their home in the midst of the doomed city. But his urgent pleas were ridiculed as groundless fears. The Bible records that **“he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.”** Genesis 19:14. They actually laughed at the old man as he wept over their unconcern. **Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”** Last part ofRev. 18: 4. Why do we continue to linger over the call?

How different it would have been had they known that it was indeed a judgment message from God. Eagerly they would have responded and hastened out of Sodom had they truly believed that it was their **last night on earth.**

But they didn’t know, and they didn’t believe. Most of us **will never** recognize when that fatal moment approaches in our own lives. Many are snatched by sudden **accidents** and **death** without a second’s notice, much less a 24-hour alert. But suppose you did know that you had exactly **two months**, or **two weeks**, or **two days to live**.

People said, oh, if I had that knowledge ahead of time, I could easily give up all my bad habits and make my decision to follow Christ fully. “of course, but the truth is that none of us are privy to that information, and for many who are hearing these words, that last night is much nearer than you **think or imagine.**

 2 Tim. 3: 1 **“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.**  Verse 2**, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,** Verse 3**, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,** Verse 4 **Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;** Verse 5 **having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.** Verse 6 **For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,** Verse 7 **ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”**

How clever Satan is in **exploiting** this personal area of the unknown in each of us. He well recognizes that **procrastination,** which is the thief of time,is his most effective weapon in causing people to be lost. The longer the decision is postponed, the easier it is to wait a little longer, until finally the putting off process turns into a lethal addiction. The will waxes **weaker** and as delay saps the initiative and makes it less and less likely that the individual will act before it is too late.

But why is it that such a comparative few respond to those calls for surrender? Why should anyone need to be begged to enter the glorious salvation of our Lord? Mr. Crews answered those questions in such a way that you will never forget it. Even Jesus confirmed that only a few would be willing to follow the narrow road to heaven. Most would choose the broad road of death where the great majority would be traveling.

Then we have that shocking statement by the Master to which we have already referred**: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."** [Matthew 24:37](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Matthew%2024.37). How many were saved in those days from the global disaster? Only eight had the faith in God's word to be shut in that monstrosity of a boat. They were the only survivors. Will there be any kind of proportionate number spared "in the days of the Son of man"? All agree that this is talking about the end of the world and the coming of Jesus.

We have heard the statement, "Oh, if I had lived in those days, I would have gone into the ark with faithful Noah." How easy it is to say what we would have done under certain conditions of the past. Others have talked about the noble martyrs who died for their faith during the Dark Ages and have stated with great assurance that they would have gladly laid down their lives for the truth's sake also.

Now it may be true that some would have died for their faith, but few have any conception of what it meant to stand for Christ during those terrible days. Those brave men and women who were burned at the stake, thrown to the wild animals, or tortured in medieval dungeons could have saved their lives by a simple motion of the hand. In most cases they were offered amnesty and immediate freedom if they signaled their willingness to renounce their faith to the mark of the beast.

I think it’s fair to say that one of us just might motion that hand in a heartbeat to avoid persecution and torture. Technically speaking, our denomination has been waving their hands for a while now. It’s called the ecumenical movement.

So the choice was very clear to the martyrs as they watched the bodies of the tortured being heaped around them. They could either suffocate in the midst of the punishing smoke and flame or else they could walk back into the comfort of home and family. Untold millions chose the heroic but horrible living death rather than deny their Savior.

How many Christians of your acquaintance have that kind of self-sacrificing faith and love? Which ones would have followed the martyrs to the stake or the arena, to be torn apart by ferocious animals? Some might, had they lived in those days. But of one thing we can be certain: Only those who would rather die right now than to break God's holy law, would have proved loyal to Him during those years of severe persecution. That is loyalty to God.

Unfortunately, we live in an easy, permissive age where self-denial is decidedly out of fashion. Truth has become very negotiable in the relaxed ecumenical climate of contemporary religion. Pluralism has become so acceptable that membership applicants are given a wide range of what they may believe or not believe. Very few, if any, issues of doctrine are considered important enough to even contend for, much less die for. There are notable exceptions, of course, but these are often found outside the comfortable confines of the so-called Christian West. This also includes the Seventh-day Adventist church.

We have no idea of the cost when we chose to follow Christ. We are not strong in the Lord, we find it hard to change our ways. How do we expect deliverance from sin when like Pompeii, Sodom and Gomorrah, we are dabbling in Satan’s world. People of this world will not change their life style, as they are in self-denial all together.

Noah's Last Sermon

“It has always been fascinating to me,” Joe Crews speaking, “that Noah probably hired helpers to construct the ark, and they perished later on because they rejected the very means of salvation in which they invested much of their lives. And these were the people who had the greatest reason for believing that a flood was coming. Day after day they listened to the earnest message of the old patriarch as he pleaded with relatives and friends to avail themselves of this way of escape.The Bible calls Noah **"a preacher of righteousness"** ([2 Peter 2:5](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Peter%202.5)),which indicates that he might have spent more time calling for decisions than driving nails into the ark.

How can we explain the amazing resistance to the powerful, Spirit-filled appeals of Noah and his sons? It seems almost a classic example of majority influence. The dread of being different has driven many sincere people to reject, out of hand, the appeal of conscience and sound judgment. It happened in Noah's day, and it still happens today. **Prejudice** and **emotion**, once aroused, has a greater influence on decision than all the logical truth in the world. None of the antediluvians could deny the persuasive evidence of those animals marching two by two and seven by seven into the completed ark.

The jeering multitudes reminded those tempted to believe Noah of the cost of non-conformity. They dared not be different and show any support for the unpopular little group of **religious standouts.**

Try to imagine the dynamics of that last appeal Noah made to the crowd of curious onlookers. The sounds of construction have ceased, and the tools have been put out of sight. The animals are all safely on board, and Noah's family has finished transferring all their possessions into the massive windowless vessel. Of all the sermons which have ever been preached in the history of man, this is the one we would have preferred to hear. The drama of this moment was captured by our Lord Jesus when He said, **"As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."**

Another last call - another final sermon, if you please - will be given to the doomed inhabitants of this equally wicked age. This time the destruction will not be by water but by what, **fire**. Yet, there is a terrible parallel between the urgent message of Noah and that of the faithful ones who will give the loud warning cry; that the world is about to be destroyed again.

Jesus described the indifference with which that message will be received. **"They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all."** [Luke 17:27](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Luke%2017.27). What a commentary on the paralyzing effect of sin! People continue business as usual, while the last moments of probation slips away.

Has any other preacher operated under the emotional stress that constrained Noah that day? He was fully aware that in a few moments the door behind him would close forever on any hope of salvation for the human race. Only the words of this final sermon could make a difference for any living soul. The Scriptures indicate that Christ by the Holy Spirit was preaching through Noah to the spirits of those **sin-bound people.** ([1 Peter 3:18-20](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Peter%203.18-20)).

I'm sure there were tears in Noah's voice and on his cheeks as he pleaded with them to join him in the ark. Many in the audience were lifelong neighbors, and perhaps Noah even called them by name as he pressed his appeal for decision. A solemn conviction held the crowd motion-less as the old man paused to wipe his eyes. Then, there was a restless stirring as some began to edge forward as though they would join the little group, but they were instantly drawn back by the hands of relatives or friends.

We cannot enter fully into Noah's feelings as he turned to join his family in the ark for the last time, but we have a strong kinship with him in that lonely, last call he extended to the crowd. The late Joe Crews said, he felt it every time he closed a crusade and gave the final invitation. He always personally knew individuals in the audience who were fighting the Spirit of God. They believed the truth, trembled with conviction, and were **almost** persuaded to come forward. That's the way it must have been with Noah as he turned to beseech just one more time. But finally he had to bring the meeting to a close and walk, weeping, through the open door. And suddenly, the massive door, which it was impossible for those within to close, was slowly swung to its place by unseen hands. Noah and his family were shut in, and the rejecters of God's mercy were shut out.

There were nervous cries from some as the door closed, and then, a babble of excited conversation. "My, have you ever heard anything like that in your life" one voice came out above the others. "Do you think he really could be correct about a flood?" asked another. But, then, there was sharp dissent, and some were pointing to the cloudless sky to loudly affirm what had been heard repeatedly since the ark project began, "It has never rained before and science has proven water is heavier than air, so how can the water get up in the air? Accept the fact that Noah and his family are wild fanatics to believe such foolishness."

For two or three days apprehension continued to grip the community, especially as they passed the tightly closed ark each morning on their way to work. But by mid-week it seemed obvious to all that Noah's prediction had been totally wrong, and even those who had been stirred deeply with conviction were embarrassed by their former concern. To cover their chagrin, some of them began to make mocking comments to anyone who would listen. By the seventh day not one sympathetic sentiment was to be found favoring the cloistered family.

And then it happened! Clouds seemed to appear out of nowhere, and drops of rain began to spatter against the hungry earth. Screams and cries rent the air as men, women, and children fled toward any shelter available. But then the water was pouring in torrents from the heavens, and out of huge cavernous cracks in the ground. Those who were able to struggle to higher levels were quickly overwhelmed and dragged to their deaths, while the great cypress ark floated gently and safely on the rising waves.

**"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man."** A few faithful ones, counted as fools and fanatics, but courageous enough to follow unpopular truth and proclaim a special warning that the end is near, will be saved. Have you heard it? Do you grasp the lesson our Lord was teaching in the Noah sermon? "As it was ... so shall it be." No ifs ands or buts - "So shall it be." **The last** **night on earth** will come for everyone when the heavens split wide open, and the glorious retinue of angels provide a dazzling freeway of splendor for the King of kings and Lord of lords. It will be unexpected, and it will be too late for those who waited till the door of mercy closed. **For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.** 1Thess. 5:2.

Just as the probation of the antediluvian world ended seven days before the flood, so the probation of the planet will close prior to the outpouring of the seven last plagues before Jesus appears. During those desolating, end-time plagues, the Bible says **no one can** **enter the temple in heaven** ([Revelation 15:8](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Revelation%2015.8)). There will be no intercessor for the human race.The great edict will have gone forth, **"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still ... and he that is righteous let him be righteous still and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly."** [Revelation 22:11](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Revelation%2022.11), [12](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Revelation%2022.12).

Men and women today wait for more convenient circumstances - a different job, retirement, or financial security. They make promises to themselves and others that they will surrender to Christ and obey the truth just as soon as the time is right. What happens when a sudden earthquake comes or a tornado? You may have just spent your last night on earth, doing what? Procrastinating. Do we really want to gamble with time?

Somebody else - Satan - hears those promises and he immediately begins to manipulate events that will make that right moment impossible. Those people keep waiting and waiting and waiting, and many of them will be waiting when the water turns to blood and probation's door has closed on the human race. No wonder the Bible declares **that "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."** [2 Corinthians 6:2](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Corinthians%206.2)

When the flood came and the door of the ark closed, it did not matter how near or how far a person happened to be at that moment. Those who were one foot out-side that door were just as lost as those who were miles away. After **120 years** of pleading, the Spirit of God was **withdrawn** from the earth, the hand of God closed the door, and the fate of a world was fixed and settled. Does that have anything to do with what is happening to the progeny of those eight ark survivors today? Indeed, it does. Because Jesus said, **"As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."** [Matthew 24:37](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Matthew%2024.37).

Millions are waiting in the vain hope that some special event will signal that they can quickly make the necessary preparation to meet the returning Lord. Like most people, they intend to take advantage of that **"… more convenient season."** And while they linger, their hearts grow harder and their wills more indecisive. They lose the precious ability to judge their own need, or discern the panoramic signs of the end.

During the excavation of the ruins of Pompeii, they found the skeleton remains of a woman who was apparently running from the fiery river of lava that was pouring down the side of Mt. Vesuvius. Clutched in her bony, skeletal hands were two jeweled earrings. It was not hard to figure out exactly what had transpired in the experience of that woman. It was obvious that she had been alerted to the approaching destruction and had dashed back in the house to save the baubles in her hands. But the delay made it impossible to outrun the stream of death, and she was overtaken and buried under the lava

Let me ask you a question. What was wrong with that woman? Where did she make her big mistake? The answer is easy. She thought she had more time than she really had.

Then there was Lot’s wife. All were told to head for the mountains and do not look back. She had to look back one more time at what she was leaving behind**.** Gen. 19:26 said, **“But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.”**

These are the same mistakes that the majority of human beings are making today. The holocaust of destruction is fast approaching. There is not an unbaptized, uncommitted individual in the world who is not making these kind of mistakes. They want to be saved and intend to do it **someday**, but they calculate that there is **still plenty of time.**

Are you one who has been postponing the day of decision; that is the unreserved surrender of your will? There is a small chance that you may be right and that you will have another opportunity - but it is only a chance! There is another chance that you are dead wrong. You are gambling over the **salvation of your soul**. You are playing a deadly game of Russian roulette over **eternal life**. Every day that passes, the stakes go higher and higher, and your chances of winning become less and less. The cards are stacked against you. Why gamble that you will have another chance in the future? You don't have to gamble. You have a chance right now.

*“We are living in the most solemn period of this world's history. The destiny of earth's teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being and also the salvation of other souls depend upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of truth. . . . We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us. We are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not.***--**The Great Controversy, pp. 598-601. {RC 116.7}

The door of the ark is still open, and it's only a step inside. Why not settle the uncertainty this very moment? Matt.19: 29 **“…** **and every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.** Surrender your will and say yes to the loving Savior, who longs to give you His peace and assurance.

 “**Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”** John 14:13

Remember this could be your last night on earth. If you would like to renew you commitment to Jesus, come up front now and join me as we kneel and pray…