

Hiding Place from Every Wind 8 of 8

Soft Zephyrs of Laodiceanism

#0337

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—July 1967

The wind that I have to study with you tonight is remarkable for this factor: it awakens no reaction. By its very nature, it lulls. I'm studying tonight with you the soft zephyrs of Laodiceanism.

Turn, please, to the 27th chapter of Acts. There are some very interesting winds in this chapter. In fact, this is one of the "windiest" chapters in the Bible. You remember it's the story of Paul's voyage, as a captive, to Rome. He was in a ship under the command of Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. After they had sailed up the coast of Syria, they sailed on to Crete and came, in the eighth verse, to a place called the Fair Havens. The ninth and 10th verses tell us that Paul, observing the time of year it was and knowing the weather conditions, told the men in charge that they'd better stay there that winter and not try to venture out. But it wasn't the best harbor in the world, and they were wishing that they could go on to some other place.

And the 13th verse says:

"And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed..."
Acts 27:13.

That soft, south wind made them think that everything was what? Safe and secure. But the next verse, following hard on the heels of the 13th, is full of meaning:

"But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon" Acts 27:14.

Then they were really in the storm for days, as you remember, and it ended in a shipwreck. Their lives were saved through the providence of God.

If you study the map—most of you have maps at the end of your Bible—you'll see the territory that that ship covered: miles and miles in that awful tempest, that terrible storm. And it all came because men let a soft breeze influence them instead of listening to the inspired prophet of God.

I think this is full of meaning for us today, my friends. Of all the winds that I have studied with you—the winds of persecution, the winds of violence, the winds of heresies, the winds of fanaticism, and all the rest—this, tonight, is the most dangerous

of all: the soft zephyr that blows so quietly, so gently. It's like a summer evening, just calm. And really, what it makes you feel like doing is just relaxing and enjoying it and pretty soon, going to sleep.

That's exactly what the enemy designs by it; that's what he wants. He wants a sleeping church right at the time when the greatest storm of all the ages is about to burst upon the remnant. He wants a sleeping church.

Do you know the message of this breeze? It's "Peace, peace."

Turn, please, to the 13th chapter of Ezekiel. We'll see what God says about this. You remember back then in the days when Jerusalem was being scourged because of its sins, God raised up prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel. But there were false prophets, too. The 10th verse:

"Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace..." Ezekiel 13:10.

What was their message? Peace. What did God say? No peace.

Turn to Jeremiah, the sixth chapter, and see what this prophet down in Jerusalem, taught of God, was telling the people and what the false prophets were telling. Jeremiah, the sixth chapter, and the 14th verse:

"They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" Jeremiah 6:14.

And so, as we feel these soft zephyrs blow against our cheeks, God help us not to be lulled into a carnal security and sleep on the enchanted ground. We're almost home, dear friends, but between us and the coming of Jesus lie these awful winds, these burning winds, these icy winds, these tearing winds—all these winds. And this soft zephyr is designed to put us to sleep and think that everything is peace; that we're all right.

Let's turn to the third chapter of Revelation, and we'll see the picture that Jesus paints of our condition today. We have many problems, but this is our *greatest* problem. Revelation, the third chapter, and the 14th verse:

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" Revelation 3:14–16.

It seems that the condition that Jesus abhors more than any other is what condition? Lukewarm. And the pitiful thing is, friends, that many who are in a lukewarm condition are proud of it. They boast about being in the middle of the road. They wouldn't be caught with any heretical movement. They wouldn't be caught in any fanatical movement. They're sure that they wouldn't yield to the hurricane of persecution. They believe in law.

What's their problem? Let me see if we can find it here, this comment in the book *In Heavenly Places*, our morning watch book for this year, page 277. Says the messenger to the remnant:

"But I warn you, be careful how you settle down in the middle walk between spirituality and worldliness"
In Heavenly Places, page 277.

This is the middle of a road but not the road to Heaven. May I read this again?

"But I warn you, be careful how you settle down in the middle walk between spirituality and worldliness" *Ibid*.

When God warns us against extremes, friends, He's not asking us to be lukewarm. The middle of the road which God is calling us to is the middle of the heavenly road, right in the *center* of God's will. But Laodicea is content—watch the point!—to choose a middle road *between* God's high standard and the wickedness of the world. It's not as bad as the world (oh, no), neither is it as good as the apostolic church.

And before the outpouring of God's final judgments, there is to be among the people of God a revival of primitive godliness such "as has not been witnessed since apostolic times" (see *Great Controversy*, page 464).

Yes, amen, and thank the Lord, friends: it's coming and it's on the way. But no zephyr of 'peace, peace' will ever bring it to us. The whole tendency of a 'peace and safety' message is to lull us to sleep. It is as if the conductor were to come through on the train and say, "Well folks, it's about time to take it easy and relax. The train is moving along. Everything is fine. In the morning we'll be arriving at the Grand Central Station. You can just go to bed, take it easy, and the porter will call you in the morning when we get into the station."

That might be wonderful if it were true, friends. But since it *isn't* true, it *isn't* wonderful. It's terrible.

But God pointed out the false prophets in Ezekiel's day and in Jeremiah's day who were giving to Judah and Israel a message of what? Peace. And He points that out today. He warns us against these lulling zephyrs, this 'peace and safety' message.

Let me read this statement here in *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 409:

“Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan. If doubts and unbelief are cherished, the faithful ministers will be removed from the people who think they know so much” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 409.

Do you remember there in the Laodicean message Jesus says, “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot,” and you say, “I am...” what? “Rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” and you don’t know it (see Revelation 3:17). Those who are under the influence of the Laodicean zephyrs *think* they know. God says, “You don’t know.”

“If doubts and unbelief are cherished, the faithful ministers will be removed from the people who think they know so much” *Ibid.*

“Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan” *Ibid.*

Do not think, my dear friends, that *all* that the false prophets teach is heresy. Oh, no. Listen while I read it in *Volume 5*, page 77:

“The patience of God has an object, but you are defeating it. He is allowing a state of things to come that you would fain see counteracted by and by, but it will be too late... Who knows whether God will not give you up to the deceptions you love? Who knows but that the preachers who are faithful, firm, and true may be the last who shall offer the Gospel of peace to our unthankful churches? It may be that the destroyers are already training under the hand of Satan and only wait the departure of a few more standard-bearers to take their places, and with the voice of the false prophet cry, ‘Peace, peace,’ when the Lord hath not spoken peace. I seldom weep, but now I find my eyes blinded with tears; they are falling upon my paper as I write. It may be that ere long all prophesyings among us will be at an end, and the voice which has stirred the people may no longer disturb their carnal slumbers”
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 77.

Oh, my dear friends, if anything should awaken us from the Laodicean sleep, this ought to. What do you say? But the message of ‘peace, peace’ will not do it—never in this world.

Let me tell you something. A few years ago, a man ordered a barometer from a mail-order house. By and by, the barometer arrived. He unpacked it and hung it up on the wall. But as he did, looking at it, of course, as one would look at a new barometer, he noticed that it pointed to "Hurricane Warning."

He said, "Well, there's something wrong with this barometer." And he boxed it up and sent it back. But meanwhile the hurricane struck, my friends. He believed the soft zephyrs that were blowing when he looked at the barometer instead of believing the barometer.

Our greatest peril today, as a church and as individuals, is to look at our statistics, look at our reports, look at our growth. And thank God, friends, for every soul that accepts the message and thank God for every offering that's given through love.

But I want to tell you something. Like those sailors there at that harbor in Crete that Paul warned, when the soft winds blow softly, there may be a hurricane—it's possible—before long. It was there in the 27th chapter of Acts. So it was with this man I'm telling you about that unpacked the barometer. So it will be with every individual that today allows these soft zephyrs of "Peace, peace, you're getting along quite well. Just be faithful. Keep keeping the Sabbath and paying your tithe and giving your offerings, and pretty soon we'll land in the harbor of God."

My friends, a *storm* is coming, relentless in its fury, says inspiration (see *Evangelism*, page 199). And God forbid that we should think that this is an ordinary time and be content with business as usual.

And now, what is the cure for this? As with every other wind, the answer is Isaiah 32:2:

"...A Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind..."
Isaiah 32:2.

And that Man is who? Jesus Christ. If we come to Jesus, friends, He'll cure us of this "peace, peace," and self-righteous attitude, this spirit of choosing between the terrible wickedness of the world and only going halfway toward the high standards of God. He'll cure us of that whole thing.

I want to notice this point of the middle of the road again. I read it here. May I read it again?

"But I warn you, be careful how you settle down in the middle walk between spirituality and worldliness...You will be wholly on one side or the other..." *In Heavenly Places*, page 277.

"...Ye cannot serve God and mammon" Matthew 6:24.

It's fashionable today to not be too bad and not too good. It's fashionable today, even in the remnant church, to follow the fashions of the world, just so you don't do it as *bad* as some people.

It is a marvel to me, my dear friends, how people can get so worked up over the modern fashions and think that the answer lies in just a few inches. That's an amazing thing to me, how something as wicked and adulterous as these modern fashions can go unrebuked among us. And *if* the rebuke is made, so many people think that that means 'just don't go to the utter limits of outright indecency.'

This is a sample, an illustration of what I'm dealing with tonight, my dear friends. And as long as Laodicea—watch the point!—as long as Laodicea can say, "Look at me. I don't dress the way the 'extreme' folks downtown do. And I keep the Sabbath. I pay tithe. And look at all the things I don't do. I don't do this and I don't do that, and I don't do the other thing," we think, friends, that we ought to have a pat on the back for not being 'extreme.'

Did you ever hear this little verse recited?

Be not the first by which the new is tried,
Nor yet the last to cast the old aside.

Did you ever hear that? That's supposed to be part of the law and the Gospel, to know how to dress and do a lot of other things. But the difficulty is, friends, it wasn't an inspired author that wrote this. And there are some people, God pity us, in this time of peace and safety, who actually think that that, if not in verse, at least in principle, is found in the Spirit of Prophecy. And nothing remotely like it is, my friends. To the contrary: whatever is sin is sin, no matter how *new* it is. And what is righteous is righteous, no matter how hoary with age it is, my friends.

We're living in an age of extravagance. But if my neighbor has a home that costs twice as much as mine costs, no matter how much mine cost, I'm a poor man and a careful man and a self-denying, sacrificing man. Isn't that true? Or is it? Or *is* it? And so with clothes and automobiles and all the rest.

Ah friends, the judgment is going on. And may I tell you something? While literally millions are starving over there in West Africa, we are spending enough in beauty shops to feed thousands of them. We are spending enough in extra gadgets on automobiles that are only for show to feed thousands more. We are spending enough on extra furnishings in our homes that are just status symbols to feed *thousands* more. And so I might go on with the various examples.

But I want to tell you something, friends: no matter how extravagant you are, you can find some people in the remnant church that are far more extravagant than *you* are, and thus the soft zephyr blows that says, "Don't be alarmed. Don't get fanatical. Don't get extreme. Just keep in the middle of the road." Do you see what I mean, my friends?

The apostolic church got so *full* of the thought of carrying the message to the whole world that in the time of crisis, people sold their property and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. And Peter and John didn't get status symbols that made them look like the richest men in Jerusalem, either. When they met that cripple and he, looking at them, begged for an alms, Peter and John could only say:

"...Silver and gold have I none" Acts 3:6.

But oh, thank God, they could add:

"...Such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" Acts 3:6.

It will take something more than our easy-going movements and our desire to keep up with the Joneses. And that doesn't mean, you know, to doing anything *bad*. Why, it would be a *disgrace* if a Seventh-day Adventist would do something and get in the penitentiary, like robbing a bank or bootlegging or something like that. Oh, no, we must do nothing like *that*. Just be good. But be careful—don't get extreme; don't get fanatical.

We read about the pioneers of this message, and it's fashionable to tell about their sacrifices. It's the thing to do in promoting offerings to tell about how James White labored with a pain in his side to earn money to give this message; how he mowed the hay at a few cents an acre, and how Sister White, his wife, since they were so poor, had to choose one morning between taking the few pennies she had and buying some food for her little baby or buying a little bit of cloth to make it a garment.

Oh, that is all very fine. We come from a wonderful heritage. But don't let anybody get anywhere near that kind of sacrifice today! That would indeed be fanatical and extreme, wouldn't it? Do you see what I mean, my friends? And yet we're told that this work is going to be finished in sacrifice greater than it took to begin it. I wonder when and where we shall see it. I'll tell you this, friends: if we could go tonight to some portions of the world, we would see just that kind of sacrifice among the people of God, but not very much of it *here*.

I remember when Elder F. D. Nichol, the editor of the *Review*, spent some time in a trip around the world visiting our missionaries and our people in foreign lands. And he testified and wrote it in the *Review* when he came back that one of the biggest things that impressed him on the trip was the riches and the extravagance of our people here in America, the impact of it as he came back to this country after being in the foreign fields.

Do you know something, friends? If you were to take *all* the people in this world and divide them into two classes—the upper class and the lower class, as far as riches and standard of living, comforts of life and all that—do you know which half of the world *everybody* here tonight would be in? The upper half. Now let's take that upper half and

divide it again. We're taking half the world, now, that's in the upper half as to the standard of living. We're going to divide it again. Do you know which one of *those* halves, a quarter now, everybody here tonight would be in? Again, the upper half. And you can do it again and *again*, my friends, and still it's true.

There's hardly any portion of the world that has the affluence, the rolling tides of money, and the things that money can buy that this country has at the present time. And what are we doing with it?

Do you know that as our tithe increases due to inflation and due to this great stream of money that's running, our offerings do not keep pace with the tithe in proportion? What does that mean? At the very time, when because of a rising tithe, showing a rising income, we ought to have *more* and a *greater proportion* to give to the cause of God, the figures show that we are spending more and more on ourselves.

Where's it going, my friends? Ah, that God may help us in the closing hours of this old year to examine our bank accounts, examine our books of record, and see what we've been spending our money on this last year.

Do you believe that this is meat in due season, friends? But the soft zephyrs of Laodiceanism will never stir you up. The 'peace and safety' message will never wake you up. Oh, no. *Something* must happen to us, my dear friends. God forbid that persecution should have to come to our beloved church before we wake up, for if we wait for that to wake us up, we shall, like the foolish virgins, many of us, find that already it's too late to get the oil. *Now* is the time to wake up. *Now* is the time.

I wish you'd turn to Matthew, the 26th chapter, please. Here we find Laodiceanism represented by the sleeping disciples. You remember that Christ had been with His disciples in the upper room, and He had told them of the approaching crisis, but they weren't listening very much about that. They were thinking of the coming kingdom.

So as they went to Gethsemane and Jesus met that terrible encounter with the powers of darkness, He urged his disciples to do what? Pray. And what else besides pray? Watch. And what did they do? They went to sleep. *Volume 2, page 205:*

"By these sleeping disciples is represented a sleeping church, when the day of God's visitation is nigh. It is a time of clouds and thick darkness, when to be found asleep is most perilous"
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 2, page 205.

By these sleeping disciples is represented what?

"...A sleeping church, when the day of God's visitation is nigh" *Ibid.*

I want to tell you something, friends: a hurricane doesn't put people to sleep. A tornado doesn't put people to sleep. A burning wind doesn't put people to sleep, nor some terrible dust storm. The thing that puts people to sleep is this soft zephyr of Laodiceanism, this "Peace, peace. All is well. Don't get excited. Keep in the middle of the road. Don't get really bad like the wicked world, but don't get on fire like the apostolic church. Somebody might think you're a fanatic."

Do you know the difference, friends, between faith and fanaticism? Would you like to know? Both are on fire. One is on fire from the Most Holy Place. It has the Word of God. The other is on fire from the enemy. The difference between faith and fanaticism is this: faith is enthusiastic about doing everything God says; fanaticism rides its own hobby and has distortions, perversions.

Oh, that God may stir our hearts! He certainly wants to keep us from extremism and fanaticism, and God keep us from it. But, ah, if the only way we know to keep away from fanaticism is to be lulled to sleep with this Laodiceanism zephyr, God pity us when the hurricane comes, friends, because it'll be *too late* to get ready then! Too late...

Now, we're looking at Matthew, the 26th chapter, and we see Jesus. How many times does He go and pray? How many times does He come and find the disciples sleeping? Three. Isn't it pitiful, my friends? And Jesus says this represents what? A sleeping church. Oh friends, what will wake us up?

Did Jesus go to sleep that night? Why not? Ah, there was a burden on His heart. Everybody woke up pretty soon. Do you know what woke them up? The mob woke them up. And believe me, the remnant church is going to be wide awake in a short time when the mob comes. But only those who have prayed with Jesus in this preparatory time will know how to meet the mob.

Peter thought *he* knew how to meet the mob. He met them with a what? Sword. But only a little while later he was doing what? Denying his Lord. One of the saddest verses in the Bible is the 56th verse of the 26th chapter, the last part:

"...Then all the disciples forsook him and fled" Matthew 26:56.

Listen, friends, did they mean to do it? Was it some deadly heresy that had infected them? Was that what caused it? Oh, no. They had slept when they should have been praying. They felt secure when they were anything *but* secure.

There's only one place to hide, my friends, and that's in Jesus. If we will press up close to Him, we shall find in His broken heart a place to hide.

But, I want to tell you something, friends, and if you forget everything else we've studied in this series, remember this: there is no way to hide in Jesus from *any* wind, from every wind, without sharing His sorrow over sin and His burden for a perfected

people. May I repeat that? There's no way to hide in Jesus from these winds without sharing His sorrow over sin and His burden for a purified and perfected people.

Oh, if we will, instead of allowing these soft zephyrs to put us to sleep, if we will go with Jesus in our imagination to Gethsemane and Calvary, there we shall find evidence of a loving heart, broken for us, that will keep us awake, my friends. It will keep us awake. We'll pay no attention to these soft zephyrs. While our Savior is giving His life for us, we will be alive and alert and awake to give our lives for Him and with Him for others.

You remember that wonderful statement in the book *Education*, page 263, which tells us that:

“The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God”
Education, page 263.

All Heaven suffered in Christ's agony, but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. What happened in Gethsemane and on the cross is to help us to understand how sin hurt God the minute it started, and how it's still hurting Him. This is enough to keep us awake, friends, if we can sense just a little bit of it.

This (please watch this point!), this is what Christ hoped to accomplish by taking those disciples with Him into Gethsemane. Oh, He hoped that as they would see the blood trickling down His face and hear His agonizing cries, He hoped that sin would lose its chilling, lulling power, and that they would exert themselves to pray with Him and to plead with Him for victory.

This is what He's hoping for today. This is what His heart is longing for. And friends, all over this world—you and I have no way to measure it, but I know it's true because we're in that time of night—all over this world God has men and women (yes, and boys and girls), whose hearts are heart-to-heart with Jesus in this solemn closing work. They're praying instead of sleeping. They're pleading with God for victory instead of being lulled to sleep by the Laodicean zephyr. They are finding in their lives the victories that come through pleading with God, and they're laying hold of other souls and involving them in this spirit of intercession.

The revival is on its way. The reformation is on its way. Are you involved? Will you be? Oh, God grant it for every soul!

Shall we bow our heads?

Precious Lord, make these scenes real and living to us. Here in Gethsemane while Jesus prays, may we watch with Him and not be lulled to sleep by the zephyrs of peace. May our hearts bleed with His. May our tears mingle with His for ourselves and for dear friends, and loved ones, and brothers and sisters, and for a needy world.

Oh, Jesus, keep us praying till the vision of Thy love so *fills* us that nothing else shall have any power over us, and thus may we share in the Latter Rain and the Loud Cry and the finishing of this work and the triumph of Thy church, for Jesus' sake, amen.

Copyright 2021. All rights reserved.

W. D. Frazee Sermons
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org