

ACT WISELY AS THE END DRAWS NEAR

Note to the speaker:

We know that the end is near for this world. Reason with the audience as to how the gravity of that fact ought to affect our lives. Do our choices and decisions reflect that we realize that what we do now affects our future, our life or death?

WHY WE KNOW THAT THE END IS NEAR (6 min.)

Jehovah's Witnesses are convinced that the end of the wicked system is near

This is worthy of consideration, as it is a life-and-death matter

Mankind cannot continue in its present course

"As man heads into the last decade of the 20th century, he finds himself at a crucial turning point: the actions of those now living will determine the future, and possibly the very survival, of the species. 'We do not have generations, we only have years, in which to attempt to turn things around,' warns Lester Brown, president of the Washington-based Worldwatch Institute" (*Time* 1/2/89 30)

Problems include growing food shortage, unchecked population growth, water shortage, effects of pollution, inadequate fuel, even threats to oxygen supply (*g79* 9/22 4-10; *g90* 2/8 31)

Evidence indicates that we are in last days foretold in the Bible (*gm* 134-48)

SERIOUS QUESTIONS FACE EACH ONE OF US (5 min.)

What is the wise course to follow? Where can we find the answer?

Should you turn to men or to God?

Have scientists solved man's problems, or have they helped to bring on the present crisis? (*re* 94; *g82* 11/8 4-5)

Who best knows man's needs?

Did not God create man and the earth?

Does not God best know earth's cycles and resources? (Job 38:4, 24, 28, 34-36)

Will God bring an end to this system and establish a new system?

Should you not look to God? (Ps 24:1, 2; 25:4; 32:7, 8)

Who are the people with whom you should now associate?

Social reformers? Scientists trying to solve problems?

God outlines course of wisdom for those expecting to survive

Wise to associate with those following this course (Ps 14:1; Pr 13:20)

NEED FOR SOUNDNESS OF MIND, ACTING WISELY AS THE END APPROACHES (5 min.)

Bible counsel at 1 Peter 4:7 is now especially appropriate

May have first applied in limited way to comparable situation (*w75* 340)

Written c. 62-64 C.E., shortly before the end of the Jewish system in 70 C.E.

By acting wisely, Christians in Jerusalem were able to survive (*w86* 8/15 19)

Christians in other lands would be mentally prepared for that end and able to make necessary adjustments (1Pe 1:1)

Prime application of 1 Peter 4:7 is in our day

Peter emphasized time of "the revelation" of Jesus (1Pe 1:7; 4:13)

Are we preparing to survive? Are we making adjustments to be ready to live in new world? (*bw* 181-2)

ACT WISELY TO GAIN GOD'S APPROVAL (20 min.)

Develop obedience from the heart to God's sovereignty

Life depends on God; he is Source of sun, air, food, our very life-force

We should daily strive to obey him

Shun things he condemns: immorality, lying, misuse of blood (*su* 134-7)

Associate with true Christians and share in the preaching (Mr 13:10)

Prepare now for life in the new world

We can expect to have new revelations of his will then (Re 20:11, 12; *re* 298-300; *w73* 364)

If *in our heart* we want to obey God now, we will likely have the same view in new world

If now we obey grudgingly, we may in time rebel even in new world

The Israelites passed through Red Sea but soon complained (Ex 16:1, 2)

Display true Christian personality, fighting against bad tendencies

Avoid selfish ambition (1Pe 5:6; *w88* 8/15 3-7); laziness (Heb 6:11)

Be cultivating fruitage of spirit (Ga 5:22, 23)

Resurrection does not change one's personality (*lp* 175-6)

Ask self: 'What am I as a person? Do I show improper interest in another's mate? Immoderate use of alcohol? Domineering personality?'

Now is time to act wisely by correcting wrong tendencies

Be vigilant in prayer (1Pe 4:7)

Do you have a close relationship with Jehovah, evidenced by daily prayers? (Ps 86:3)

Should approach God on even most personal aspects of life

Closeness to God will stimulate you to do what he wants you to do

Not be begging off, concentrating on this life

Not focusing on education, retirement, luxuries

Do you have a problem here? Open your heart to God (Col 4:2)

Put emphasis on God's spiritual blessings and promises

Bible does not describe in detail many physical aspects of new world—housing, travel, communication, clothing

Concentrates on spiritual blessings (Ps 85:10-13)

Arrangements of a physical nature will be pleasant

Spiritual things will bring greatest joy

Those who cultivate this spirit now will truly fit in with arrangements in the new world (*lp* 158-64; *tp* 106-7)

NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION FOR ALL OF US (9 min.)

Peter was aware of this need (2Pe 3:11-13)

He kept close in mind his Christian work and acted accordingly

As the end draws near, should we not act wisely? (*w*86 5/1 18-20; *sl* 307-9)

Come into active, approved relationship with God

Not just attending meetings

Means starting on an everlasting career

Those already serving God must not grow weary, be distracted

Would be easy to slip back into wicked system waiting to be destroyed

Be active in finding people who really want God's rule

Deeds of godly devotion now will be a pattern one will be able to follow forever (*bw* 148, 180; *w*73 6/15 360-70; *w*90 3/1 10-14, 18-23)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)