

**I THESSALONIANS 5:1-11**  
**WALK IN THE LIGHT!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to I Thessalonians chapter 5 as we continue our study in Paul's letter to the church in Thessalonica. Now keep in mind that beginning in chapter 4 of I Thessalonians and through the rest of the letter Paul has been speaking about how we are to walk.

These are just practical ways that as Christians, we are to live out our faith. It truly is where the rubber meets the road. For many Christians, they know the Word of God, they can quote all kinds of verses, debate all kinds of deep doctrinal issues, and yet, when it comes to application of those things, they don't know what to do or they just don't do it!

Remember what John said in I John 3:18, **"My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."** In other words, may the words that we speak line up with the things that we do, how we live out our faith!

I think we have seen the bad examples of people saying one thing and then acting in a way that is contrary to what they are saying! For example, several weeks back there was that big uproar regarding the removal of statues of famous people that promoted slavery in the south.

And we saw them pull down some of these statues saying that they represented hate! And as they spoke for love, peace, and-so-on, we saw that their deeds did not match their words!

What we saw was that as this one statue came down, they kicked it, spat on it, gave obscene jesters to it, yelled at it! I thought it was very hypocritical calling those who supported the statues hateful when they were doing the same thing, being hateful in their actions. And really, yelling at a statue, it is not alive!

Now we can easily come down on them for their two-faced behavior, but what about us as Christians? We know what the Scriptures say, that we are to love people, even those who hate us, spitefully use us! And yet, is that what people see when they look at our lives?

And so, over the last several weeks we have been looking at how we are to walk. How we are to live out our faith! Paul spoke of the fact that we are to walk in holiness. We are to walk in love. We are to walk in honesty. We are to walk in hope.

This morning we are going to look at this next point in regard to our walk, as Paul tells us that we are to walk in the light!

Have you ever walked in darkness before? I am sure you have. It's not easy. Case in point. We have a 90 pound or so Golden Retriever at home and she is a great dog. But when she is asleep, nothing is going to move her, and I mean nothing.

Now that I am a little older, okay, maybe not so little older, but in any case, there are times that I have to get up at night to use the bathroom. I keep forgetting, don't drink a lot of fluids before you go to bed! Circle of life!

So, it is obviously dark in the room and I don't want to turn on the lights and wake Julie up. So, I slowly move towards the bathroom. And before you know it, I am tripping over the dog, and she is not moving but I am as I am stumbling all over the place.

Now, if the light was on it would be easy to see, but since it was dark, obviously it was very difficult to see where I was going!

This morning, as we deal with this topic of walking in the light the focus is going to be on the Day of the Lord. And as you look at the news today, what is the thrust of all news shows? I don't care if they are conservative or liberal or in-between.

The thrust is cataclysmic events! I don't know about you, but when I was growing up, a thunderstorm was not a cataclysmic event. But today it is. They will tell you that there is this potential and that potential and millions of people will be impacted by this storm!

I guess they need to do that to get our attention. It would not sell too well if the meteorologist comes on and says, "It is going to rain today across the state. Now back to sports!"

And you know what, they have us hooked by these reports of cataclysmic events over here, this falling about over there!

We want to know what is going to happen, and we want it presented to us in a spectacular way to keep our attention!

And for Christians, we see this happen to us as well. Let me show you what I mean. This article was from 2014 dealing with this idea of blood moons and how something cataclysmic was going to occur. It didn't and we are still here but that won't stop the next set of books regarding some end-time event that is not supported by Scripture. You can read the entire article as the web site will be in the study on our web page.

So, hold on tight, four blood moons were coming and of this, we are told,

Could a series of "blood moon" events be connected to Jesus' return? Some Christians think so. . . .

A string of books have been published surrounding the event, with authors referring to a Bible passage that refers to the moon turning into blood. "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord," Joel 2:31 says. . . .

Recent books capitalizing on the event include “Blood Moons: Decoding the Imminent Heavenly Signs” by Washington state author Mark Biltz; “Blood Moons Rising: Bible Prophecy, Israel, and the Four Blood Moons” by Oklahoma pastor Mark Hitchcock; and “Four Blood Moons: Something Is About to Change” by Texas megachurch pastor John Hagee.

Hagee’s book is drawing the most attention, with his book now No. 4 on The New York Times best-seller list in the advice/how to section, and No. 80 on USA Today’s best-seller list. [Not anymore!] . . .

In his book, Hagee says something will happen to the nation of Israel due to the tetrad. The four eclipses occur on April 15 and Oct. 8, 2014, and April 4 and Sept. 28 next year. The ones in April occur during Passover, and the ones in October occur during the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. . . .

This time, Hagee suggests that a Rapture will occur where Christians will be taken to heaven, Israel will go to war in a great battle called Armageddon, and Jesus will return to earth. Hagee planned a special televised event on Tuesday (April 15) on the Global Evangelism Television channel. . . .

- [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/15/blood-moon-armageddon\\_n\\_5154043.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/15/blood-moon-armageddon_n_5154043.html)

Make no mistake about it, Christians are gullible for these outlandish ideas about the end times. I remember back in 1988 a book published by former NASA engineer named Edgar C. Whisenant called *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will be in 1988*. And it was specific, Jesus would rapture the church on the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah on September 11-13. His book sold, I think for \$1, and it sold over four million copies!

And it gets even worse. Trinity Broadcasting Network, (TBN) interrupted their regular programs to help Christians prepare for the rapture. I don't know, maybe they were selling rapture shoes or something!

And when this date came and went Whisenant shifted the date to October 3<sup>rd</sup>. When that date came and went, he told *Christianity Today*, "The evidence is all over the place that it is going to be in a few weeks anyway."

But that also passed us by with no rapture and he continued to predict dates of 1989, 1993 and 1994, but his books did not sell as well.

Now if we are walking in the light how come we keep stumbling over these false prophetic ideas? Because we are not walking in the light but listening to the wisdom of man, which you can see is not helpful, it is not beneficial and it can be dangerous.

And that is what Paul is going to be dealing with here, the Day of the Lord and how we can't know precisely the timing of this but we can know the seasons and thus, may we walk in the light!

With that as our background, let's begin reading in I Thessalonians chapter 5 beginning in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this morning as we deal with this subject of the Day of the Lord in the light of God's Word!

**I THESSALONIANS 5****VERSES 1-2**

Keep in mind that Paul has spoken to these young believers in Christ about the Rapture of the Church back in I Thessalonians 4:13-18. And as we saw in our study of those verses the Rapture speaks of the sudden removal of believers from this earth as we will meet the Lord in the air. The dead in Christ will be raised first, and we who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air!

Now, here in I Thessalonians chapter 5, Paul is not speaking of the Rapture of the Church but the Day of the Lord, which is not one specific day but a period of time.

As we will see this morning as we go through these verses, the Day of the Lord begins right after the Rapture of the Church through the Tribulation Period, the Kingdom Age and the creation of a new heavens and a new earth that will be eternal.

This period of time known as the Day of the Lord you can read what takes place in Revelation 6:1-19:16. It is known as the Tribulation Period

We also see this Day of the Lord mentioned in Malachi 4:1-6. In these verses, it is speaking of the Second Coming of Christ.

In Zechariah 14:1-8 we see the Day of the Lord speaking of the Tribulation Period leading into the Kingdom Age.

And in II Peter 3:8-10 we see the Day of the Lord speak of the creation of a new heavens and a new earth, the eternal state.

All this is part of that period of time known as the Day of the Lord that the Scriptures speak of. It is not just one day or twenty-four hour period of time.

Also, and I do find this interesting, the Jewish day was from sunset to sunrise. I see this with the Day of the Lord. Think about it. What happens first, in this period of time, is the Tribulation Period where God pours out His wrath on a Christ rejecting world! You might say it is a time of darkness, extreme darkness!

From there we move to the Millennial reign of Christ and then on into the creation of a new heavens and a new earth. Thus, we have gone from the darkness of the Tribulation Period to the light of the eternal state!

We also see that Paul is speaking to believers here as he says, “**brethren**” and “**you**”. And for those who are not believers, this day will come upon them like a thief, suddenly, unexpectedly for them, but not for us, not for believers. At least it shouldn’t!

How can we know what time it is on God’s prophetic time-clock? Look at what God’s Word has to say, let it light your way and guide you.

Paul tells them and us that we will know the “**times and the seasons**” and that he does not have to write to them concerning this because they already know. The Greek word used for “**time**” is CHRONOS and it is a general term for time. Think of it like this; seconds, minutes, hours and so on.

The Greek word used for “**seasons**” is KAIROS and it speaks of a specific time.

One writer summed it up like this in regard to these two words. He wrote, “The first designates time in its duration, whether a longer or shorter period; the second draws attention to the characteristics of the period. The first deals with the measurement of time, the second with the suitable or critical nature of the time.” (Edmond Hiebert)

So, let me paraphrase what Paul is saying here before we move on. Think of it like this, “Whether we’re talking about general time or a specific moment, brethren, I don’t have to write to you about this again. I don’t know the exact time because as I’ve already told you the Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, suddenly, without warning.”

Now as we read on you will see Paul contrasting to groups of people, those who are here when the Day of the Lord begins and those who are not. Listen to what Paul says.

### VERSES 3-5

In these verses, I want you to notice that two groups of people are mentioned and Paul is differentiating between the two.

First of all, for one group we see the word “**they**” mentioned twice and “**them**” mentioned once.

The next group we see the word “**you**” mentioned three times and “**brethren**” once and of course, this is speaking of believers.

Again, this is not speaking of the Rapture of the Church here, but a different day, the Day of the Lord which begins in judgment and ends with the eternal state as I have said!

So, this period of time, this judgment that is coming is for unbelievers, those who have rejected Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. That means that the Church must be removed before the Day of the Lord begins!

Besides God pouring out His wrath upon a Christ rejecting world, we all see that He will be dealing with the nation of Israel, the Jewish people once again. He will finish out the seventieth week spoken of in Daniel chapter 9, those last seven years before the Kingdom is established.



Let me see if I can paint a picture for you so you can see what is going to take place because what Paul says in verse 3 has been confusing for many. Paul said this, **“For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.”**

What is confusing is that as you read the Scriptures, especially the book of Revelation, it seems like the Tribulation Period is a time of great distress and thus, there is no peace and safety. So, what is Paul talking about?

I see this played out like this. As the Church is removed and the world is trying to recover from a nuclear war in the Middle East, as Russia and her Muslim allies come down against Israel, you can read of this in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39, God destroys this invading army but the world is in chaos!

No peace and safety, at least not yet. Thus, in the middle of all that we see a man rise up, thrust on the scene and placed into a world power position because he has the answers not only to the problems of war, but economic, environmental, and-so-on.

This man is known as the Antichrist and for the first 3½ years there is a pseudo peace and safety in the world before sudden destruction is unleashed! That is what Paul is speaking of when he says, **“Peace and safety!”** It is roughly those first 3½ years of the seven-year Tribulation Period.

So initially, the Antichrist is seen as a man of peace, a pseudo peace and prosperity but that all ends when he goes into the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem and demands to be worshiped as God!

Now, this man of peace has become a man of war! He will slaughter millions who refuse to take the mark of the beast. And this change takes place around the 3½ year mark of the seven-year Tribulation Period, as I have said.

Now, what was at time of peace and safety has now become sudden destruction. It will be a horrible time those last 3½ years, also known as the time of Jacob's trouble, and it will be so bad that no one will be able to escape the reach of the Antichrist. He will go after all, even the Jews, and God will protect His people, He will protect the Jews even though 2/3<sup>rd</sup>'s will be slaughtered by the Antichrist!

Paul also likens this to labor pains that a woman has as she is preparing to deliver the child in her womb. What started out as slow, not too painful pains, are now getting closer together, more and more frequent and the pain is increasing to intense levels! That is what we see with the Tribulation Period.

In fact, what is birthed from the Tribulation Period is the Kingdom Age where Jesus will rule and reign for 1,000 years from Jerusalem, and we will be with Him!

Let me also say this. In regard to the Rapture of the Church, there are no signs to tell us how close we are, in a sense. We know the seasons, but specific signs, not really.

Then how do we know that time is getting close for the Rapture of the Church? Because we look at what will happen just prior to the start and on into the Tribulation Period and since that is getting close, we know that the Rapture, which proceeds the Day of the Lord, and thus, it must be even closer!

And look at what we see as we look at the Scriptures and what is happening in the world! We see that Israel is back in the land. We see Russia making alliances with Muslim nations as they prepare to attack Israel. We see the Pope trying to unite the religions of the world together into a one world religion just as the Bible tells us.

In fact, the Bible tells us that the last days religious leader will be the one who will usher in the Antichrist, get the people to follow after him. And we see the gathering together of the nations of the world into a one world government. And many others signs we are told of.

And like I have said, in regard to the Day of the Lord, we are given many signs, we see many signs telling us that the Day of the Lord is getting closer and thus, the start of the Tribulation Period.

Thus, if the Tribulation Period is close, so too is the coming of the Lord for His Bride, the Church.

It is tragic that many churches don't teach on this subject, many Christians are unaware of what is coming.

In Matthew 16:1-3 we are told, **"Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said to them, 'When it is evening you say, "It will be fair weather, for the sky is red"; and in the morning, "It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening." Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.' And He left them and departed."**

Also, in Luke 19:41-44 we are told, **“Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, ‘If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.’”**

You see, Jesus rebuked them because they did not know what time it was on God’s prophetic time clock! The day of the coming of the Messiah was at hand, He stood before them and they did not see Him!

Folks, we are living in the days when the Lord could return at any moment for His Church, His Bride!

We need to wake up and take notice of the days we are living in, for the trumpet is being prepared to sound! And Paul will deal with this as we read on.

But before we do, listen to I Thessalonians 5:4-5 once again. Paul tells us, **“But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.”**

Listen carefully to what I have to say here because there are those who believe we go through part of the Tribulation Period or even all of it. And we don’t.

First of all, why should we not be overtaken by this day of judgment? Because we are no longer children of darkness, we are children of light in Christ and thus, we will not be overtaken by the Day of the Lord in regard to His judgment because we will be removed before it begins.

Again, I do realize that some Christians believe we will go through part or all of the Tribulation Period, but I don't think the Scriptures support that.

Remember what Jesus said in Revelation 3:10, **“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”**

You see, we are not earth dwellers, our citizenship is in heaven and we will be kept out of this judgment that is to come upon the earth dwellers!

Before God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness, righteous Lot was removed.

In Genesis 19:22 the angel said to Lot, **“Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there.’ Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.”**

The judgment of God could not be poured out until righteous Lot was removed!

And in II Peter 2:6-9 we are told of this incident, **“and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds) - then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.”**

Thus, before God pours out His judgment upon a Christ rejecting world, His people, His Bride will be removed!

And listen to what Paul tells us in I Thessalonians 1:10, what these new believers were looking for and resting in. He wrote, “**and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.**”

Who are they waiting for? The return of Jesus Christ from heaven.

What is He going to do? He is going to raise the dead you might say. The dead in Christ and those who are alive and remain when the Lord comes for His Bride the Church will be caught up with Him, we all will get our new bodies!

And what about the wrath that is to come? Paul says that Jesus is going to deliver us from the wrath of God that will be poured out upon a Christ rejecting world. That just tells me that the Rapture has to occur prior to the start of the Tribulation Period, as I have said!

We also see this in I Thessalonians 5:9 where Paul said, “**For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.**” Again, when His wrath is poured out at the start of the Tribulation Period, the Church, His Bride will not be here, we will be with Jesus in heaven!

One writer summed it up like this for us. He wrote, “The tragic result of unbelievers’ unpreparedness for the Day of the Lord is that they will not escape divine judgment. The use of the double negative *ou me* [not] stresses the comprehensiveness of the Day of the Lord, which will bring destruction on every unbeliever alive when it comes.

Believers should be comforted by the reality that they will be Raptured before the coming of the Day of the Lord and not experience its horrors. Yet the knowledge that that event looms large on the prophetic horizon should also motivate them to evangelize the lost. The tragic reality is that those who reject the Lord Jesus Christ will experience God's temporal and eternal wrath. In the sobering, pensive words of the writer of Hebrews, "How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb 2:3)." (John MacArthur, I Thessalonians 5:3)

And when Paul speaks of us as not being of the night or of the darkness he is speaking of deception, evil and unbelief.

On the other side are believers who are of the light and of the day and thus, we stand in truth, in righteousness and salvation.

But, listen to how Paul is going to admonish us because we can let our guard down, we can become lazy and, well, I will let Paul explain. Let's read on.

### VERSES 6-8

Talk about a warning for the days we are living in – **WAKE UP!** You see, we are not of the night, we are not of the darkness, thus, our spiritual lives should not be marked by sleep. We need to be awake, aware, active!

And when Paul uses the Greek word here for "**sleep**" it is not the same Greek word that he used back in I Thessalonians 4:13 where it spoke of the death of the believer. Here it is a spiritual sleep that Paul is speaking of. Hiebert put it like this, "The word *sleep* is here used metaphorically to denote indifference to spiritual realities on the part of believers. It is a different word than that in 4:13-15 for the sleep of death. It covers all sorts of moral and spiritual laxity or insensibility."

It is not time to be apathetic, lethargic in our spiritual lives. We need to be alert, we need to be watching. Yes, the unsaved have an eat, drink and be merry mentality because they are willfully ignorant of the judgment that is to come. But we are not of the night but of the day and may we act accordingly for in this world of spiritual darkness, we are a light to shine forth Jesus!

I realize that it is easy to fall asleep, spiritually speaking. Paul, in Romans 13 tells us that many have already gone asleep in their relationship with God, they are not alertly looking for His return!

He wrote in Romans 13:11-14, “**And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.**”

Paul, like a drill-sergeant, is calling for those Christians who have fallen asleep to ***WAKE-UP, GET OUT OF BED!*** But how can a child of God fall asleep?

There are few things we can look at and hopefully learn from so we don't fall asleep!

First of all, Paul tells us that we are to ***WATCH!*** In other words, you can only fall asleep when you close your eyes, so keep them open, watch what is going on!

In I Peter 4:7 Peter tells us, “**But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.**”



In Ephesians 6:18 we are told, “**praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.**”

And in Revelation 3:2 Jesus said, “**Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.**”

Keep your eyes open, be watchful!

Next, Paul tells us to **BE SOBER!** In other words, don’t let the things of this world cause you to fall asleep to the things of God!

You know how it was, at least for me. I have a few drinks and before you know it I am out like a light. Not any longer, I haven’t had an alcoholic drink in some thirty plus years.

But that can happen to us as Christians as we allow pastors, teachers to tickle our ears, making us feel so good about ourselves and there is no conviction of sin, there is no drawing closer to God. And before you know it, we are out like a light, spiritually speaking!

Paul warns us in II Timothy 4:3-5, “**For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**”

And in the end, what you have is a group of people that complain because this need is not met in their lives, they didn’t get this, they didn’t get that. You see, it becomes all about them and not the body of Christ and ministering the gift that God has given to them to honor the Lord and bless the people!

When we get comfortable in our sin, when we get comfortable in our life, it is easy to fall asleep!

Thus, be sober! Work hard and you will not fall asleep!

And lastly, it is easy to fall asleep when you sit down or lay down, thus, **WALK!** I know that there are some that sleep walk, but the thing is, you are already asleep. I am talking about walking, being awake, obviously!

Paul said in Ephesians 5:8-10, **“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.”**

Notice what Paul is saying here. He is saying that we **“were once darkness”** not that we “were once in darkness.” Our lives were dark; the works that came forth were fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, coarse jesting and the like. But now we are light because we are walking in the light, we have received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

In other words, that is where you were at, the old man, that old life but now you have been delivered into the kingdom of God and thus, walk accordingly.

Don’t make excuses for living in sin. Paul put it this way in Colossians 1:13-14, **“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”** Again, the idea is walking in purity as God has called us to walk!

The bottom line is this. As Christians, as we are walking in the light of God’s Word, in the midst of this dark world, we will shine. Yes, we were once darkness, but now we are light in the Lord and we need to walk accordingly!

The bottom line is this, if you are walking with the Lord you will not fall asleep! Keep moving!

I hope that makes sense because in our day there are all kinds of ideas that are put forth to put us into a spiritual sleep. Paul is admonishing us to **WAKE-UP!**

Now, make no mistake about it, we are in a spiritual battle. Satan can't take away our salvation because we are secure in Christ. But he can destroy our witness and he is out to take as many souls with him to Hell!

And, because we are in a spiritual battle, we must put on our spiritual armor and Paul speaks of the breastplate of faith and love.

The breastplate covered the vital organs of the soldier.

Faith speaks of trusting in God, that we don't have to worry because God is in control of all things. That inward reality is then manifested outward in our actions – they are done in love!

You see, our faith in God is seen in our love towards Him and then is manifested in our love towards others.

Then there is the helmet of salvation which protects our mind.

In the context here, Paul is not speaking of salvation or sanctification but our future glorification – God will complete the work He has begun in us! That is what Paul said in Philippians 1:6, “**being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.**”

Listen to how The Living Bible puts this verse, “**And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing [that good work] and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you.**”

Amen to that! I know I have a long way to go but where I am today is farther along than a month ago, a year ago and so on. And as much as we mess up, as much as we fail, God does not give up on us. He keeps working and working and working and one day, He will take us to glory and the work will be complete! Praise God for that!

Of this John MacArthur tells us, “When faith is weak, love grows cold. When love grows cold, hope is lost. When hope in God’s promise of future glory is weak, believers are vulnerable to temptation and sin. Only those who keep the breastplate of faith and love, and the helmet of the hope of salvation firmly in place can resist effectively the onslaught of the forces of darkness.”

And the battle is intense and I think it is only going to get more intense. ***STAY AWAKE!***

I like what John said in I John 3:1-3, **“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”**

As we keep our eyes upon Jesus, as we look for His return, we stay awake because we are watching, we are sober and we are walking! And it helps us to mature in the faith, grow in the faith as we want to be doing those things that please Him when He returns and He can return at any time!

VERSES 9-10

Before we were saved we were condemned and awaiting God's judgment but now that we are children of God we are no longer appointed for judgment but salvation through Christ.

Paul put it this way in II Corinthians 5:21, **"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."**

That is the basis for our salvation; we are saved by Grace through faith and not by the Law through works.

And here is a sobering thought. God does not pour out His wrath upon us because Christ took that wrath. All of the wrath that was due us was poured upon Jesus when He hung on the cross of Calvary!

Listen carefully to what Jesus said in John 3:36, **"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."**

As you read this you can clearly see that Jesus is saying that whoever believes in Him, in Jesus; receives Him by faith into their lives, has everlasting life and whoever doesn't will see the wrath of God come upon them, the judgment for sin. See, our sins have been paid in full by Jesus, He bore God's wrath as He hung on the cross and thus, we have life in Him.

And I realize that some try to soften the wrath of God today so not to offend people, I guess they want to make people feel more comfortable. But you can't do that. Let me explain.

One writer put it like this, "The word does not mean a sudden gust of passion or a burst of temper. Rather, it is the settled displeasure of God against sin. It is the divine allergy [dislike] to moral evil, the reaction of righteousness to unrighteousness." (Tenney)

And keep in mind that God has done everything He could to free man from this wrath, but it is man's choice. God will not force you to come to Him and repent of your sins asking Him to be Lord and Savior of your life.

In fact, Barclay makes this interesting point regarding this. He wrote, "It is not that God sends wrath upon him; it is that he brings that wrath upon himself." How true!

Another writer put it like this. He wrote,

It is clear that when we think of the word "wrath" as applicable to God, it must be divested of everything that is like human passion, and especially the passion of revenge. It is one of the most obvious rules of interpretation that we are not to apply to God passions and feelings which, among us, have their origin in evil. [God's wrath] is the opposition of the divine character against sin; and the determination of the divine mind to express that opposition in a proper way, by excluding the offender from the favors which He bestows on the righteous. We admire the character of a father who is opposed to disorder, vice, and disobedience in his family, and who expresses his opposition in a proper way. We admire the character of a ruler who is opposed to all crime in the community, and who expresses those feelings in the law. Why shall we not be equally pleased with God, who is opposed to all crime in all parts of the universe, and who determines to express His opposition in the proper way for the sake of preserving order and promoting peace?

- Albert Barnes

That just makes sense and when we understand that God is a holy God and all that He does is right, it is perfect, there is no darkness in Him at all, then His judgment is right, it is perfect!

Also, keep in mind that we are dealing with a people, the Jews, who were committed to the Law, keeping it for their salvation. And yet, did you notice that you do not see anything dealing with the keeping of the Law, obeying the Golden Rule, with going to church, with tithing, with just doing the best that you can, working your way into heaven.

The reason you don't see it is because that is not how you enter in! John makes it very simple, **"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."** John 3:36. *BELIEVE* not *WORK* your way in! It doesn't get any simpler than that!

Now, when it says in verse 10, **"that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him"** it is interesting.

You see, is Paul speaking of those who have died in the Lord when he says those who **"sleep"** or something else? Most commentaries say that this is speaking of those who have died in the Lord, and it may be.

The problem I have with that is this. If that is true, why didn't Paul use the same Greek word that he used in I Thessalonians 4:14 for **"sleep"**? The Greek word in I Thessalonians 4:14 is, KOIMAO, (koy-mah'-o) and it speaks of being dead.

But here, in I Thessalonians 5:10 the Greek word is KATHEUDO, (kath-you'-do) and it is the same Greek word that is used in I Thessalonians 5:6, which spoke of being sleepy, not paying attention.

So, what is the point? First of all, it does make sense that those who are living in Christ and those who have died in Christ will live together with Him. There is nothing wrong with that statement, but that, like I have said, is not the point that Paul is making here.

Keep in mind that there are those who believe if you don't live up to a certain standard you will miss out on the Rapture. You have to be good enough, you have to do this and not do that and if you are found worthy, you will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

What is the problem with that statement? ***"If you are found worthy!"*** You see, I can tell you right now, none of you are worthy, none of us are worthy to enter in before the King of kings and Lord of lords.

The only way we are worthy is because of the righteousness that Christ has imputed into our lives by faith. He took our sin and He gave us His righteousness! So, this idea of a partial Rapture does not fit because you will never be worthy, good enough to enter in.

Either the work is finished by Christ or we will add our good works to grace to make it better. That is not going to happen. Grace is a wonderful gift of God and you don't make it better by adding works to it, you cheapen it, weaken it, make it of less value when you add works to it.

Remember what we read about this word, "**sleep**" back in I Thessalonians 5:6. Here it is a spiritual sleep that Paul is speaking of. Hiebert put it like this, "The word *sleep* is here used metaphorically to denote indifference to spiritual realities on the part of believers. It is a different word than that in 4:13-15 for the sleep of death. It covers all sorts of moral and spiritual laxity or insensibility."

Thus, what Paul is saying here is that those who are living for Christ and those who are sleeping, not paying attention to all that is going on, will live together with Christ! And seeing that Paul is speaking of the Day of the Lord in this chapter, I think it is safe to say that He is saying that both groups of people will be Raptured to the Lord!



If that is true, and I believe it is, why do anything for the Lord? That is a question that you have to decide how you will answer it. If you are not living for the Lord, why not? If you are not serving the Lord, why not? If you are not looking for His return, why not?

I will tell you this. When Julie has been gone for a week or so, when she is preparing to come home, I am excited. I am cleaning the house, preparing for her to come home. I watch the clock, I can't wait for her to come home!

Why do I behave that way? Because I love her so much and I want to be with her and I can't wait until she comes!

The same is true for the Lord. I can't wait for Him to come. I want to make sure I am living in such a way that it will honor Him when He comes. Not for salvation, but out of love for Him. I watch for signs of His coming! I can't wait until He does come!

I want to hear those words, ***“Well done good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord.”*** I don't want to make it with no rewards. I want those crowns that I may lay them at the feet of Jesus because, apart from Him, I can do nothing!

Now, in knowing all this, all that Paul has said, what are we to do with it? That is a great question because Paul will answer that in I Thessalonians 5:11. Listen to what he says.

### VERSE 11

We are living in a day when communication is as fast as a Facebook post, a Tweet, or whatever. And people are gaining all kinds of information, some true and some not, at record speed! We can't even keep up with the new information that is out there.

Let me show you what I mean with this article that was written in 2010. We are told, Today at the Techonomy conference in Lake Tahoe, CA, the first panel featured Google CEO Eric Schmidt. As moderator David Kirkpatrick was introducing him, he rattled off a massive stat.

Every two days now we create as much information as we did from the dawn of civilization up until 2003, according to Schmidt. That's something like five exabytes of data, he says.

Let me repeat that: we create as much information in two days now as we did from the dawn of man through 2003.

*"The real issue is user-generated content,"* Schmidt said. He noted that pictures, instant messages, and tweets all add to this.

Naturally, all of this information helps Google. But he cautioned that just because companies like his can do all sorts of things with this information, the more pressing question now is if they *should*. Schmidt noted that while technology is neutral, he doesn't believe people are ready for what's coming.

*"I spend most of my time assuming the world is not ready for the technology revolution that will be happening to them soon,"* Schmidt said.

- <https://techcrunch.com/2010/08/04/schmidt-data/>

Is that crazy or what? And with all that information, we see more and more people who are anxious, who are worried about this and worried about that. Even Christians are getting into this with all kinds of warnings about the end of the world because of the blood moons, because of this and because of that.

And what does Paul say here? **“Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.”**

Comfort each other with the Word of God. Edify or build them up in the faith. Help each other to grow. Yes, they were doing this but Paul is admonishing them not to stop but to go even further!

Like it or not, we do need each other. We are part of the body of Christ and yes, individual members, but part of the body. Thus, just like the human body we work together for the betterment of the body! We don't shut down, isolate ourselves, get into our little pity party because of this or that. We serve the Lord faithfully, no matter what and that can be difficult but that is why we need to comfort and encourage each other, build each other up in the faith!

I like what one writer said about this. He wrote, “It is clear that in the primitive churches the care of souls was not delegated to an individual officer, or even the more gifted brethren among them; it was a work in which every believer might have a share.” (Hiebert)

I realize for some, they think the pastor is to do everything. Not true. He too is part of the body of Christ and thus, as the body works together people will be comforted, they will be edified or built up by the body of believers working together for the betterment of the body!

And make no mistake about it, with all the talk of disasters and Christians marketing unbiblical books about the world coming to an end, we need to be in God's Word so that we are not confused by what is going on.

I Remember back when the year 2000 came and all computers were to shut down, all our missile defense systems would fail, we would be in chaos with all kinds of looting as people tried to get food and essentials to live by and they could not get money from the bank?

What I found interesting was that the world was at ease while Christians were in a panic. There were Christian organizations selling survival kits, and they sold like hot cakes.

I knew people who headed for the hills, bought land in the middle of nowhere, protected themselves, had weapons as they tried to find comfort.

That is the exact opposite of what Paul told the Thessalonians. He told them to bring the comfort of God to the brethren and to the unsaved as you share Jesus with them. Build people up in the faith. And here's the thing. In doing that you will be comforted, you yourself will be built up.

Remember what Paul just said, **"But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation."** I Thessalonians 5:8. Folks, no matter how bad things might get, let us never lose faith, love or hope because that is what we are to bring to others!

The Day of the Lord is coming where He will pour out His wrath upon a Christ rejecting world. But prior to that, **"... the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."** I Thessalonians 4:16-18. Amen to that!

May we ***WALK IN THE LIGHT!***