

1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-11

Distinctions

Last week, Paul taught us about the rapture of the church!

We need to be ready and to be living with great expectation of this event that can come at any time.

In this event, here is what will happen:

- Jesus Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel with the trumpet of God
- The dead in Christ will rise
- Believers who are alive are caught up
- We meet together in the clouds and we meet the Lord in the air

The rapture of the church will be amazing. We should be looking forward to this time as the end of chapter 4 says: ***And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words.***

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So let's continue in chapter 5. Let's now read at ***1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 -Distinctions***

1 Thessalonians 5:1-2

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

We are now talking about the times and seasons.

The times and seasons concerning the day of the Lord.

And the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night.

Times and seasons, the day of the Lord are topics discussed in the scriptures.

We will look at a few now to address the context of Thessalonians.

Isaiah 13:9-11

Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it.

For the stars of heaven and their constellations

Will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine.

"I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity;

I will halt the arrogance of the proud,

And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

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Zephaniah 1:14-16

The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly.

The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out.

That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress,

A day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess,

A day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm

Against the fortified cities and against the high towers.

So what is **the day of the Lord**? A time period that the Lord pours out His wrath and judgment upon the earth.

*"The important thing to remember about "The Day of the Lord" is that it is not a single day, but more of a period. **Times & seasons.***

There is the "Day of Man" and "The Day of the Lord."

*It is the **season** when God shows His power, His judgment, His authority.*

So, there is a sense in which the entire tribulation is "The Day of the Lord."

One might say that the day of Jesus' glorious return, and the day He judges the nations, and the day He puts down the final rebellion at the end of the Millennium are powerful expressions of the idea, but "The Day of the Lord" is not limited to those ideas." Guzik

It would be as if God is saying, "OK, you have had your day, now it's time for mine!"

Atheist and non-believers often say, "If God is real, why doesn't He make Himself more visible?" On the day He will, and they probably will not like it.

The day of the Lord (these times and seasons) will begin after the Rapture and will include:

- The Tribulation- (the time of Jacob's trouble)
 - **Daniel 9:27**
 - **Jeremiah 30:7**
 - **Matthew 24:4-28**
 - **2 Thessalonians 2:2**
 - **Revelation 6-19:16**
- The 2nd coming of Christ- (the Battle of Armageddon)
 - **2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**
 - **Malachi 4:1-3**
- The 1000-year reign of Christ on the earth- (the Millennial reign)
 - **Zechariah 14:8-9**
 - **Joel 3:18**
- The final destruction of the heavens and earth by fire- (the Great White Throne of Judgment)
 - **2 Peter 3:7**
 - **2 Peter 3:10**

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All of this is laid out in **Revelation 6—19:16**

Distinction #1 The Rapture and the Day of the Lord are not the same event.

1 Thessalonians 5:3

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.

As Paul writes, we see a pattern of "us and them" and "we and they."

For when they say, "Peace and safety!"

During these times and seasons, people (they) will say everything is great, there is nothing to worry about. All is well. The first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation.

And then, ***sudden destruction comes upon them.***

Things will get bad! **Sudden** here can mean unexpected, **destruction** is ruin and death. This will hit people and they will not be ready for it.

as labor pains upon a pregnant woman

When a gal is pregnant, the times and seasons let us know that she is close to giving birth. But we don't know when.

Sometimes women get the fake labor pains, Braxton Hicks.

It fake's them out, but when the water breaks and the contractions start, you know it is very soon!

When our first child, our daughter Alli was born, Missy was getting really close.

We were in such great anticipation of our first child being born. It was exciting!

Until.....her water broke.

We were in bed asleep and she woke me up and said...

Missy: *Kenny my water broke.*

Me: *are you sure?*

Missy: *Look at me!!!*

So we got her ready and headed to the hospital.

I was amazed at the changes in my wife for the following hours.

Missy was a trooper, but she had severe back pain during labor.

She would roll over from side to side. Everything irritated her.

I remember talking to the nurse as the doctor was talking to Missy and she sat up in bed, looked at me and proceeded to tell the doctor and nurses in the room that we would never be intimate again....She was in pain!

The world is in pain right now.

Romans 8:22

For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

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The world, all creation is waiting for the return of the Lord!

And they shall not escape.

They, not us! They shall not escape!

Distinction #2 Us and Them, We and They

1 Thessalonians 5:4-5

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.

Darkness and Light

We are not in darkness? Why are we not in darkness?

Because we have accepted the payment that Christ made for us on the cross.

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him **who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**

John 8:12

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me **shall not walk in darkness**, but have the light of life."

Day and Night

We are ***sons of the day***, we are ***not of the night***

Day and night are explained next....

1 Thessalonians 5:6-7

Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

Sleeping and Watching

Spiritual watching and spiritual sleep.

We are not to sleep or be ignorant of the things that are happening around us.

Sleeping here is a metaphor:

- Sleep speaks of ignorance
- Sleep speaks of insensibility
- Sleep speaks of no defense
- Sleep speaks of inactivity

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Rather we are to be aware! **Watch**

Habakkuk 2:1

I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am corrected.

We see things going on in the world then we are to find out what the Lord has to say about them.

Spending time in God's word will give you a wonderful filter to discern what the Lord has to say about the world, our lives and the future.

Psalms 139:23-24

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

If you are spending most of your day on social media or watching the news without the filter of God's perspective, you will become extremely anxious and irritable.

The knowledge of what is going on without the Lord's perspective on things will leave you empty.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Try this, open your Bible to this verse as you read social media or watch the news. Make a check list by this verse.

Is the information you are reading or listening to true, noble, just, pure, lovely, is it a good report, is there any virtue in it, is it praiseworthy?

This is one of the many standards of God's word!

God's perspective will bring hope for your life and not leave you anxious and worrisome.

and be Sober

What is the opposite of being sober? Being drunk right?

Ephesians 5:18

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

Being drunk is dissipation, which means it leads to nothing profitable. It is good for nothing.

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So instead of being drunk, we are to be filled with the Spirit! Sober!

When you are drunk, who is in control? The alcohol is, not you!

Being sober and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead you is:

- a better way to live
- a better way to make decisions
- to work
- to have a relationship
- to parent
- to be a friend

Doing life under the influence of alcohol will leave you wanting.

Doing life under the influence of the Holy Spirit will bring you peace.

Distinction #3 Watch and be Sober, don't Sleep and don't be Drunk.

1 Thessalonians 5:8

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.

putting on the breastplate of faith and love

Notice that these are defensive pieces of armor.

Faith, hope and love should be consistent characteristics of the believer in Jesus.

Colossians 3:12-14

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

After Paul teaches on the spiritual gifts in **1 Corinthians 12**, he shares in the beginning of **chapter 13** that any of the gifts without love, are useless.

Then he defines love for us in verse 4:

1 Corinthians 13:4

Love suffers long and is kind;

This is what love is! Being kind in the midst of suffering.

Do not kid yourself thinking that love is anything else.

Then the rest of vs 4 thru 7 we learn what love **is not**.

He spends the remaining of the chapter telling us how important love is.

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1 Corinthians 13:13

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Love biblically? Giving unselfishly to meet the needs of others without expecting anything in return.

Your life will change drastically when you start to focus on what fruit the Holy Spirit wants to bear in your life. This is another filter.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

There is something that believers have that the world does not. It is something that should be evident in our lives. As evident as walking around with a helmet on.

Hope! **The hope of salvation!**

I love the way Paul explains hope in **Romans 5**

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

As believers in Christ, we are NOT promised a *get out of jail free card* in this world! We will endure the things of life like anyone else.

But for believers, God is doing a work in us.

All working toward giving us hope!

Our hope is this! We have a relationship with God now and forever!

Distinction #4 Making the choice to be sober and wear (live) faith, hope and love.

1 Thessalonians 5:9-10

For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

Remember the distinctions between us and them.

As a believer in Christ, our sins have been forgiven!

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Christ took the penalty of sin for us on the cross. God's wrath and judgement on our sin.

We are **not appointed** to that **wrath** but we have **obtained salvation** because we have accepted Jesus. Jesus has made that payment for us.

The day of the Lord, the wrath that will be poured out on this earth is not for us. We will be with Jesus! We will be caught up with Him and live with Jesus forever!

What preserves us from the corruption of this world?
Because of Christ, we have received from Him faith, hope and love.
The Spirit of God is now living in us!

Romans 8:9-11

But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

With Paul's allegory of waking and sleeping, us and them, we should now understand that we are different!
As believers in Christ, whether we are literally awake or asleep, we are covered by the blood of Jesus.

Distinction #5 Believers are not appointed to wrath but salvation through Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore, comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

This should not be confusing, this should bring comfort and we should build each other up knowing that we (believers) are very different than they (non-believers).

This should also motivate us to share the Lord with our friends and family. We would not want any of our loved ones to go through the time that God pours His judgment out on the earth.

Distinction #1 The Rapture and the Day of the Lord are not the same event.

Distinction #2 Us and Them, We and They.

Distinction #3 Watch and be Sober, don't Sleep and don't be Drunk.

Distinction #4 Making the choice to be sober and wear (live) faith, hope and love.

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