

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Last week in our study if you remember we covered what is called the Rapture of the Church. And if you remember Paul as he was looking to build up this body of believers told them that he did not want them to be ignorant about how this would take place.

And one of the things that this church was ignorant of was the simple fact that when a believer dies they are not missing out on anything. I think the idea that the Thessalonians had was if someone died in the faith before Jesus came that somehow they had no hope and that those who were alive when the Lord came back somehow had a superior position.

Paul let them know this was not the case and he reminded them that we as believers experience sorrow not as the world does but rather from a position of hope. Those who die without Jesus enter into an immediate eternity away from the presence of God while those who have placed their trust and hope in Christ will close their eyes in this world only to open them in eternity in the presence of God Almighty.

Paul then explained that when the Lord comes back FOR the church in an event called the rapture that first the bodies of those that believed and had died a physical death in this world would be resurrected as they will receive their glorified bodies...and then Paul said those who are alive and remain shall be CAUGHT UP into the presence of the Lord.

We talked about how when this happens the Lord Himself will descend with a shout, and there will be the voice of an archangel and there will be the trumpet of God and when that happens you and I that

believe and remain alive shall be snatched away into the presence of Jesus.

Now, one of the questions that you and I may have is what is it that happens after the rapture of the church? Is that the end of all things? Does God at that time establish His kingdom on the earth?

These are questions that I think we all have and just to share for a minute or two here I will give you kind of a small snap shot of some things that will happen after the removal of the church from this world.

It is MY opinion and there are many opinions about what will happen but I believe that there will be a small period of time that takes place right after the rapture of the church and during that time the world is going to be in utter chaos as they are working to explain what happened to all those that believe in Jesus Christ...I wonder what will happen to all the belongings and the homes that people owned that are now gone.

You might also imagine that the influence that the Holy Spirit had through the church will also be removed during this time and so the world will be behaving sinfully to the extreme I believe as it becomes a winner take all society.

The world is going to be desperate for answers and they are going to be looking for peace and no one is going to have any answers...I believe during this time there will be a popular world leader on the scene that people will be looking to and this man is going to be a smooth talker, he will be able to gather the world leaders together, he will seem to have answers when no one else does and he will begin to

propose a peace treaty between the people of Israel and the nations surrounding them. The people of Israel will believe this man to be their Messiah while in reality he will be a man known as the antichrist and we'll talk about this person specifically in the book of 2 Thessalonians.

Now I believe according to Daniel 9 that this peace treaty is going to be a 7 year treaty that the world will enter into and this period of time is also what is referred to as the tribulation period and you can read about this in Revelation 6-19...I personally do not believe the church will be in this world during this time and I'll give you a pretty big reason for this when we get down to verse 9 of our lesson today.

It is my opinion that once the church is removed from this world that the earth will enter a time of judgment, a time that God is going to come against the things that be. This period of time is what is called the Day of the Lord and we'll see that in our text today.

So, first let's go ahead here and read our text and then we'll begin to work through it. Verses 1-11 of chapter 5 say this **But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 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. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be ^[a]sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at**

night. 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. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

¹¹ Therefore ^[b]comfort each other and ^[c]edify one another, just as you also are doing.

So the day of the Lord is another one of those terms that can easily be confused with what is called the millennial reign of Christ...I know for myself when I first heard this phrase I thought it was when the Lord really just took control of things and set up His kingdom...When you look at the scriptures though it's actually speaking of a chunk of time and a series of events that I believe are kicked off by the rapture of the church.

Let me just share some scriptures with you from both the old and new testament that help define the day of the Lord. Let's start in the old testament if you listen to what the prophet Isaiah had to say in Isaiah 13:9-11 which says this 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.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ "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 ^[e]terrible.

And then listen to what the prophet Amos said over in Amos 5:18-20
which says Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!

For what good is the day of the Lord to you?
It will be darkness, and not light.

¹⁹ It will be as though a man fled from a lion,
And a bear met him!

Or as though he went into the house,
Leaned his hand on the wall,

And a serpent bit him!

²⁰ Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light?
Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?

And then over in Joel 1:15 we have this Alas for the day!
For the day of the Lord is at hand;
It shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

And then in the same book of the Bible in Joel 2:30-31 we have this
“And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth:
Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.

Now that's just a small sampling from the Old testament but all of this
is in agreement that this day of the Lord will be a terrible day, an awful
time for this world and we have it described as a time of great
darkness, and the sun will not shine as it does currently and the moon
will be turned into blood and there will be wonders in the heavens.

We also see this event spoken of over in the New Testament if you listen to Matthew 24:29-30 which says this ²⁹ **“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

In 2 Peter 3:10-12 we have recorded what will happen when the Day of the Lord is concluded when the Word says ¹⁰ **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be ^[d]burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?**

The day of the Lord will begin with the rapture of the church and it will conclude when this world as we know it comes to an end...As this takes place the Lord will come back to the earth, He will establish His kingdom for 1,000 years as He physically reigns on the earth and then at the end of that time we are told Satan is released once again for a very short period of time...He will then be permanently captured and the world as we know it shall be dissolved as it is consumed by fire and then there will be a new heaven and a new earth we are told.

Now I know that might be a little confusing but I just encourage you to read Revelation 19-21 and you'll get a little more information about these things.

So this day of the Lord that we see in our text here is going to be a horrible time that takes place on the earth when the Lord judges sin, when He works to rid the world of Satan's influence and during this time the Lord will also firmly place His attention back on His people Israel.

So let's go ahead here and break down our text now that we have a little bit of understanding here about the day of the Lord.

Look with me at verses 1-2 which say the following **But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.**

So here Paul is just letting this church know that they should already be aware of the times and the seasons and this is really pointing to the fact that this church was already aware of how history and the kingdom of God were going to unfold. We aren't talking about a specific time of day and season of the year here but instead these words are being used as an expression...

And Paul is saying that you guys don't have any need that I would write to you about these things for you know perfectly well that the day of the Lord is coming as a thief in the night...The idea is that the beginning of the day of the Lord when the rapture of the church takes place is coming at a time and an hour that is unannounced. And we talked about this last week.

The simple reality is that you and I must be ready at all times for the rapture of the church. We should have our hearts and minds prepared, we should be looking for His coming.

If you think about a thief in the night you know that they are unexpected...I can remember living in the Dominican Republic and we had thieves come in the night several times as they broken into our Jeep one evening and took some things and another time they actually stole the electric wires from our house so they could sell the copper to make some money...It's always unexpected when a thief comes and you aren't really prepared for it.

It's a sad thing when a thief shows up because it really puts you in a place of being a little scared and upset and you can be a little paranoid...and can you imagine how the world is going to feel when Jesus plucks the church out of this world? Man, it will happen unexpectedly and without warning and the world is going to be reeling from the situation and then the world is going to start going through all kinds of great difficulties.

So Paul tells this church that these things should not surprise you and you know about these events and you should be prepared for them and notice he says you know these things perfectly well meaning you have had plenty of teaching and warning about this.

I wanted to point out to you that while the coming of Jesus is going to be unannounced that you and I as believers are given several clues as to what will be happening in the world when Jesus comes for the church.

Listen to what Jesus had to say over in Matthew 24:4-8 which says this

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for ^[a]all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, ^[b]pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows.

And then listen to what we are told in the same chapter the following in verses 36-39 which say ⁶“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of ^[f]heaven, but My Father only. ³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

And then finally listen to what Paul said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:1-5 which says this But know this, that in the last days ^[a]perilous times will come: ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, ^[b]unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

The idea is that as the day of the Lord is approaching that society will be on a downward spiral morally...People will be carrying on as if nothing is ever going to change, children will be unwilling to listen to parents, men will only think of themselves and they will love money and be proud and blaspheme God as if it was nothing...They will despise what is good and be lovers of pleasure rather than loving God.

I have to simply say that if you look around today all of the ingredients necessary for the return of the Lord are in play. You and I that believe had better be watching, we know the Lord is coming and we know it can happen at any time.

Now when we come to verse 3 of our text I just want you to see that we have a change in who is being talked about...So in verses 1-2 we have the pronoun YOU given over and over and it's clearly speaking to the believers in Thessalonica that Paul was writing to...and then in verse 3 if you just look at that it says this 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.** So in the first 2 verses Paul is clearly speaking to the believers in Thessalonica...so who is the they and the them of verse 3? I think it's pretty clear that this is speaking about those who are unbelievers, those that are not going to be taken in the rapture of the church, those who are going to be left behind.

The truth is that those who do not believe in Jesus are going to be scoffers when it comes to hearing about the return of Jesus for the church. Once again if you listen to what 2 Peter 3:3-7 says you get an idea of how the world will think about Jesus coming back...It says this ³**knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last**

days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation.” ⁵ For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶ by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. ⁷ But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and ^[b]perdition of ungodly men.

The world will be moving on without a care in their hearts for the fact that Jesus is one day going to establish His kingdom, they will scoff at us when we talk about it and yet Paul here as he wrote to the church in Thessalonica reminds the believers that those who don't believe will surely be surprised as this world enters a time of unprecedented difficulty.

Notice it says here that the day of the Lord will come upon them like labor pains and when you think about labor pains the idea is that nothing but the birth of the child will stop them. They come on slowly and get more and more intense and so it shall be as the judgments of God come upon the earth...You can't escape child birth when the time comes and you can't escape the day of the Lord and the judgments that God will bring against the world if you are an unbeliever.

If you just look at the book of Revelation you get a snapshot of how terrible things will be during the 7 year tribulation. There will be water shortages, the sun moon and stars will be struck, there will be earthquakes, there will be famines and all kinds of other difficulties

and the world will desire greatly to escape them but they will not be able to.

And then take a look with me at verses 4-5 which say ⁴**But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.**

Paul here again assures this church that they are not like those who are in the darkness that the day of the Lord would come on them as it will the unbelieving world...Instead Paul says you are sons of light and sons of the day.

I'm so thankful that you and I get to walk in the light as children of God. We are no longer blind as those who do not believe. Our hearts and minds have been opened by the grace of God as we have come to Jesus Christ.

The Word says this about how we are in the light over in 1 Peter 2:9-10 which says this 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; ¹⁰who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

And then in Colossians 1:13-14 we have this which says ¹³**He has delivered us from the power of darkness and ^[c]conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption ^[d]through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.**

And then in John 3:19-21 Jesus said this ¹⁹ **And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.** ²⁰ **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.** ²¹ **But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."**

The reality is that there is darkness and there is light and those that choose to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior have come to the light. The coming day of the Lord will not be a surprise to us, we won't be here for it as the Lord comes and pulls us out ahead of time.

So as Paul is laying this all out here in the text for us he is wanting the church to just be aware of how things are going to unfold...and it's interesting that first in chapter 4 Paul begins by talking about the rapture of the church and then he tells the church at the end of chapter 4 that we are to comfort each other with these words and then when we come to chapter 5 Paul is talking about this terrible day of the Lord that is going to come upon the earth...and I believe that Paul gives us this in the proper order, **the rapture of the church happening first** and then the day of the Lord coming upon the world.

And so now that he has done this he is now going to begin to give some exhortations for this church if you listen to verses 6-7 which say this ⁶ **Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be ^[a]sober.** ⁷ **For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.** You and I as believers are in the light and as such we should be awake spiritually and not asleep to the fact that Jesus is coming back. We shouldn't be like the world is as the world

just goes on as if nothing is ever going to change, we shouldn't allow ourselves to begin to live for the things of the flesh but instead we should watch and we should be sober.

When you think of watching spiritually it means you are aware of the seasons and the times that the world is passing through...I think this is one of the reasons you and I don't freak out when the world around us is crumbling...we know that these things must take place as the day of the Lord approaches.

When you think of watching I think of the watchmen that are keeping an eye on the city during the night. Those who do so must be alert, they must be diligent, they must be on guard and so should you and I be as believers.

We should also be sober and I believe this is pointing to our need to have our heads on our shoulders, to be thinking straight and to have our minds in line with the kingdom of God. I also think it means not to allow our thoughts to be clouded by substances or the pleasures of this world...to be sober minded means we have minds that are filled with humility as we await the coming of our Lord.

Over in Luke 21:34-36 the Lord said this in relation to what we have here when He said ³⁴ **"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with ^[h]carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may ^[i]be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."**

Today I would ask are we ready for the Lord's return? Are we ready for the day that He comes back? Are we living in the light rather than in the darkness? Are we watching expectantly, soberly and with diligence?

Paul continues on if you look at verse 8 which says 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.** So we should be sober but we should also be putting on the armor of God...we should be putting on the breastplate of faith and love meaning we are protecting our hearts and the vital organs of our Christian lives...and we should be putting on the helmet of salvation on a daily basis...The idea is that you need to know you are entering into a daily spiritual battle and we need to make sure we are properly equipped as we do so.

You know these characteristics that include faith and love and salvation are items that the world just does not understand. Those that live in the darkness have no hope and they don't know what real love is. But we who believe should be putting these items on each and every day of our lives.

And then we come to verse 9 and I will tell you this is one of the reasons that I believe in a pre 7 year tribulation rapture of the church.

Here we are told if you look at verse 9 the following ⁹ **For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,** You and I are not appointed for the wrath of God...Meaning we won't come under the final judgments that this world is going to face one day. I would just point out that when the church is pulled from this world and you see the first seal judgment of chapter 6 in Revelation you have the antichrist coming on the scene, and then you

have war, and famine and widespread plague that comes upon the earth and then listen to what we have over in Revelation 6:12-17 which say ¹²I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and ^[g]behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the ^[h]moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky ^[i]receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, ^[j]the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

So during this time that is found in Revelation 6 the rulers of the world and all the inhabitants are going to know that this is the wrath of the Lamb that is coming against them...Here in our text in Thessalonians we are told that we are not appointed for wrath meaning we must be out of here before this time that is described...You might also make note that in the book of Revelation in chapters 6-19 there is something missing...and it's the church, not one mention of the church in all those chapters and verses.

Over in 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 we have this which says For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised

from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

And then in Romans 5:8-9 the Word says this ⁸ **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** ⁹ **Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.**

Plain and simple you and I are not appointed for the wrath of God and I believe this includes all of the 7 year tribulation period. I do know there are other opinions about this but I'm just expressing where I fall with these things as I look at the scriptures.

Now if you look at verse 10 we have a great reminder which says this ¹⁰ **who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.**

So you and I are not appointed for wrath for one reason and one reason alone and it's because Jesus died for us that we might live together with Him for all of eternity...and this covers us both while we live and if we happen to die before His coming for the church.

Do you know that Jesus died for your sins? Do you know that Jesus is the only way to have a right relationship with the Father? Do you know that Jesus chose to die so that you and I might be forgiven? And if so have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior? If not the Bible says today is the day of salvation...I would tell you today if you are not living for Jesus then you are living in the dark and the day of the Lord if it were to come today would be a dark and terrible time for you for sure...**It's better to be rapture ready** meaning you have placed your faith in Jesus and to choose to live your life with watchfulness and

soberness and to put on love and faith and to walk in the salvation that is yours in Jesus Christ.

And then Paul says this in verse 11 when he says¹¹ Therefore ^[b]comfort each other and ^[c]edify one another, just as you also are doing. We should be edifying and encouraging one another and just like the end of chapter 4 said we should be just pointing each other ahead to the coming of the Lord. We should be looking up for our salvation is drawing near. We should be hoping in the Lord and looking to Him in all we do and we should be spurring each other on in the faith.

Today if you need to get right with Jesus I just encourage you to do so and listen if you have questions about Jesus then please by all means let me know as I would love to talk with you about it.

Let me pray for us and we'll conclude in worship.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 “The Day Of The Lord”

Introduction

Isaiah 13:9-11

Amos 5:18-20

Joel 1:15

Joel 2:30-31

Matthew 24:29-30

2 Peter 3:10-12

Verses 1-2

Matthew 24:4-8

Matthew 24:36-39

2 Timothy 3:1-5

Verse 3

2 Peter 3:3-7

Verses 4-5

1 Peter 2:9-10

Colossians 1:13-14

John 3:19-21

Verses 6-7

Luke 21:34-36

Verse 9

Revelation 6:12-17

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

Romans 5:8-9