

How to be ready, not surprised, when Jesus comes back

Some surprises are fun. Some surprises are not.

Today, we're looking at a chapter of the Bible that tells us there is coming a day — God has promised it — a day that will completely surprise the people of this world.

What day are we talking about? The day Jesus comes back. The Bible also calls it **the Day of the Lord**.

And on that day, the world will be divided into **two kinds of people**: Those who are ready, and those who are not.

Those ready will find themselves full of joy, comfort, and peace, but those who are not ready, will find themselves overwhelmed with sorrow and destruction.

That's what makes **1 Thessalonians chapter 5** such an important chapter. If you're ready, this chapter is encouraging. If you're not ready, this chapter is a wake-up call.

GOD WANTS YOU READY, NOT SURPRISED, WHEN JESUS COMES BACK.

How can you be ready, not surprised, when Jesus comes back? This chapter shows **four ways**

Way #1 — Put Your Faith in Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:1–5)

Now to what Paul writes in verses 3–5. Notice the contrast of what Paul says in verses 3-5.

While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.

Paul calls them “brothers.” That means they belonged to the family of God. How do you enter the family of God? In John 1:12, we are told that those who receive Christ — those who believe in His name — are given the right to become children of God.

Paul also calls them “children of light.” How do you become a child of light? Jesus said, “I am the light of the world.” And in John 12:36, He said, “Believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”

The difference is faith in Jesus. Believing in Jesus will transfer you from darkness to light. From wrath to salvation. From destruction to eternal life.

Way #2 — Be Careful How You Think (1 Thessalonians 5:6–11)

Paul says, in verse 6, based on your destiny, compared to the destiny of people who are headed to wrath, live and think differently.

It starts in the mind. To be “sober” means to think clearly. Think about what is true according to the Bible. The Bible says Jesus is coming back; it’s going to be a great day for believers, and it will be an even better day for believers who honored Him with their lives.

The world is asleep to the return of Christ.
The world is drunk on the things of this world.
The world is not thinking about eternity.

But you are not of the world. So think differently.

Way #3 — Live in Community with Your Local Church (1 Thessalonians 5:12–15)

Your growth as a Christian is directly connected to the people you surround yourself with.

Verses 12-15 are all about being ready within a local church family. Everything Paul speaks of here requires community. You cannot live these verses in isolation.

Paul gives three clear instructions for life in community of the local church.

#1 - Respect and Love Your Spiritual Leaders (vv. 12–13)

#2 - Want God's best for One Another (v. 14)

#3 - Choose Goodness Over Revenge (v. 15)

Way #4 — Walk with God (1 Thessalonians 5:16–28)

As Paul closes this letter, he fires off a rapid series of commands. What is he describing? A life that walks with God.

Walking with God looks like:

Joy - “Rejoice always.”

Constant dependence - “Pray without ceasing.”

Gratitude - “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **Being**

sensitive to the Holy Spirit - “Do not quench the Spirit.”

Discernment - “Do not despise prophecies, 21 but test

everything; hold fast what is good.” **Holiness** -

“Abstain from every form of evil.”

Growth - “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”

Praying for others - “Brothers, pray for us.”

Noticing other people - “Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.”

Prioritizing the Bible - “I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.”

Resting in grace - “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”

Message #5

1 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 5:1-28