

Reflecting on 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

September 20, 2020

Introduction: In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, Paul talks about the Day of the Lord. He uses this teaching as the basis to encourage the church about their existence in a world of darkness.

Paul instructs the Thessalonians to live as children of light. From this teaching, we identify two steps to letting our lights shine brightly:

Step 1: Don't Be Afraid of the Day of the Lord—Believers have no reason to fear the Day of the Lord. (1-4, 9-10)

Step 2: Let the Day of the Lord push you toward Christlikeness—The Day of the Lord should motivate believers to Christlikeness (5-8, 11)

To summarize these verses, we offer the following Big Idea: *The Day of the Lord should cause us to live as light in this age of spiritual darkness.*

Up for Discussion:

1. (For Sunday) How would you summarize this message in one or two sentences?

2. *(For Sunday AM)* As we explored the truth of this passage together, did the Holy Spirit make any specific application to your life? If yes, please share it with the group.

3. In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, Paul describes the Day of the Lord as sudden and severe. This concurs with Jesus' statement in Mathew 24:36 that no one knows the day or the hour of His second coming. Why might these factors—the uncertainty of the time and the severity of the judgment—cause fear in the hearts of the Thessalonian believers?

4. In verses 5-6, Paul instructs the church that they are children of light. As such, he challenges them to be alert (“awake”) and self-controlled (“sober”). In what ways does the world push us away from these virtues toward spiritual apathy and unchecked desire?

5. This passage gives a shorter version of the armor of God listed in Ephesians 6:10-18.

- Compare the list of spiritual virtues (e.g., righteousness, truth, etc.) in Ephesians with those in 1 Thessalonians 5:8-9.

- For each passage, describe the (encouraging) main idea Paul wants his readers to understand.

6. In verse 11, Paul gives a final exhortation for the church to “encourage one another and build one another up.” What are some practical ways you can encourage other believers?

7. In your opinion, how seriously does the average member of our church take his/her responsibility to encourage spiritual growth (edify) brothers and sisters in Christ? What would it take for your Life Group to be more intentional in fulfilling this important task?