



Message Series Guide

Living Hope

Part 6 – The Day of the Lord

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

Few things in the Bible capture our attention and imagination more than the apocalyptic writings. During Paul's brief stay in Thessalonica, he taught the church about a coming day of judgement. Yet, despite his teaching, the Thessalonians were still puzzled about many of the details. They had three basic questions: What happens to Christians who die prior to the Lord's return? Was it possible that they had somehow missed the Lord's return and were now living in the Day of the Lord? What would be the signs indicating that the end of the age had come? Paul answered the first question in chapter 4 by informing them that they would see their dead loved ones again. Paul addresses the other questions here in chapter 5.

READ:

I Thessalonians 5:1-11 • Isaiah 3:6 • Joel 1:31-32 • Acts 2:20 • Acts 1:6-7 • 2 Peter 3:10

- Why do you think Paul tells the Thessalonians they have no need for anything to be written to them regarding the topic of “times and seasons.” How are the questions and concerns about the end times that prompted Paul to write this passage for the Thessalonians similar to the questions Christians have today regarding the end times? How do you think knowing the exact hour of Jesus' return would affect people?
- What are the blessings and threats implied by the term, “Day of the Lord?” Discuss the different views of end times and which one you most line up with.
- How does Paul contrast the fates of believers and unbelievers in this passage? How does the hope of Christ's coming encourage Christians to live soberly and seriously?
- How is faith, hope and love like the armor that protects our head and heart?
- What does Paul mean by the statement, “God did not appoint us to wrath?” What are some ways in which Christians have viewed this statement? What hope and comfort does this bring?
- What is the connection between 4:13-18 and 5:1-11? How are these both encouraging for the Body of Christ?
- What is the ultimate point of this passage (5:1-11)? How does this message speak to the Church today?

DISCUSS:

- What two images does Paul use to describe the Day of the Lord? Why will the Day of the Lord catch unbelievers by surprise? Why should it not catch believers by surprise? If the Day of the Lord is not to come as a surprise to us, how should this impact the way we live as Christians?
- Explain how a firm hope in the future enables us to live confidently for the Lord today.
- Paul's hope was that his readers would be comforted by his inspired words about the Day of the Lord. Do the end times bring you fear or hope? Explain.
- What nagging questions remain unanswered in your mind about the end times?

PRAY:

Pray that you will continue to live in the light of Christ, while anticipating the imminent return of the Lord.

RESPOND:

What are some things you can do this week to ensure you dress yourself with the breastplate of faith and love, and put on the helmet of hope and salvation?