

# Don't Fear That Day

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[ 0 : 00 ] And children, you are dismissed to your King's Kids class.! And if y'all would open up your Bibles to 1 Thessalonians 5,! I am going to read verses 1-11.

We've only got three more sermons left, counting today, in 1 Thessalonians. And then we're going to get into the Gospel of John. It's page 1174.

1 Thessalonians 5, 1-11. Hear God's Word. Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you have no need to have anything written to you, for you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

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 and sisters, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.

[ 1 : 13 ] So then let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep, we might live with Him.

Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. May God bless the hearing of His Word. Knock, knock, knock. Knock, knock, knock, knock.

Ah. You have an unexpected visitor at your front door. What would be the first thing you do?

[ 2 : 16 ] Here's what I would do. I would sneak a peek out the side window. Who is this visiting our house unexpectedly? And lo and behold, let's just say it is a bill collector.

I'm guessing many of you may say something like, Okay, family, let's just pretend no one's home. Or maybe it's a police officer. You might be thinking, uh-oh.

What's going to happen? But if it is your best friend, with a smile, unexpected, with a four-pack of Sprecher root beer, you're going to be like, Oh, yeah!

Come on in! Surprise visitors have a way of revealing our hearts, don't they? One of the themes of 1 Thessalonians is the unexpected coming, second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And in the passage I just read, it's referred to as the day of the Lord, verse 2. On that day of His coming. On the day of Christ's coming.

[ 3 : 25 ] And by the way, all the world will know. It will be a glorious, highly public event when Jesus comes back. On that day, what will be happening inside of you if you're here on that day?

What will be going on? Will you be saying, Oh, no! Or will you be saying, Oh, yeah! For many Christians, including the Thessalonians who Paul wrote this letter to, the unexpected, the second coming of Jesus Christ can make you nervous.

It can unsettle you. Even make you fearful. Christian, if the second coming of Jesus Christ is unsettling to you, you are in the right place.

Because 1 Thessalonians 5, 1 through 11, it's designed to assure you. It's designed to comfort you. To put courage into your heart.

In a one-sentence nutshell, here's what God is telling us this morning from this passage. Christian, don't fear that day.

[ 4 : 42 ] Be ready for it. Christian, don't fear that day, the coming of the Lord. Be ready for it. And this passage is intended to assure us that we have nothing to fear at Christ's coming on the day of the Lord.

And it's going to do it by making an extended contrast. It contrasts between two peoples and two lifestyles and two destinies. And so here are the four points this morning that I'm going to walk you through.

That coming day, what you need to know about it. Two contrasting people, point two. Point three is two contrasting lifestyles. And point four is two contrasting destinies.

Christian, you don't need to fear that day. You need to be ready for it. So let's hear what Paul has to say about this coming day of the Lord.

In verses one and two, we read this. Now concerning the times and the seasons, or as Jesus would say, the day and the hour. Concerning the times and seasons, brothers and sisters, you have no need to have anything written to you, for you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

[ 5 : 55 ] Now, Paul is essentially saying here that with regard to the timing of Christ's return, he has nothing new to write them. He already covered that ground when he was with them, when he visited them for a few weeks, maybe a month, maybe two.

We can read that back in Acts 17. When he was there, not only did he lead them to Christ, he explained to them what to expect when it comes to the second coming of Christ.

But there's two things in verses one and two I just want you to see, help you understand. The first one is the phrase, the day of the Lord. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

That's a significant phrase because it shows up frequently in the Old Testament. And what I want to do is just very briefly help you understand the scope of that phrase, what that's getting at.

And we could look at a variety of Old Testament passages, but just to give you a sense, if you looked at Isaiah chapter 13, verses 6 through 16, you would see that the day of the Lord is a terrible thing, is a frightful thing.

[ 7 : 09 ] That it's a day when God comes and he brings with him full and final judgment upon those outside of the people of God, unbelievers.

It's a terrible day. But we also read in Isaiah 27, 1 through 13, that the day of the Lord, for those who belong to God, for who are of his people, who are believers in him, that day is not a terrible day.

That's a joyful day. That's a day of salvation. That's when he comes back and he makes all things right. One, if you are an unbeliever on the day of the Lord, it's going to be a horror.

But if you are a believer on that day of the Lord, it is going to be a day of rejoicing. So the day of the Lord carries that full sense. And we see it in our passage.

In verse 3, 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.

[ 8 : 22 ] The day of the Lord is going to bring sudden destruction. We also read in verse 9 that that day is going to be a day in which those who believe in Christ obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A day of sudden, inescapable destruction for unbelievers and a day in which we will begin to live with him with all of the blood bought forever.

So the day of the Lord is a future coming of God in which he brings with him full and final destruction for unbelievers and full and final salvation for believers.

So what Paul is doing here is he's actually equating the day of the Lord with the second coming of Jesus Christ. The day of the Lord is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you were to open up your Bible to Revelation 19.15, it's a great passage when Jesus is pictured on a great white war horse coming back and he's got four names.

[ 9 : 37 ] But in verse 15, we read this, that when he comes, he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

It's a horrific picture. But we also read in Revelation 21.3-4 that when he comes back, when the new Jerusalem descends, God will wipe away every tear from our face of believers.

It's quite a contrast. We also read that the day of the Lord in verse 2 is coming like a thief in the night.

Thieves come unexpectedly. They don't text you to let you know at what hour they're coming. And what Paul is doing here is he's just simply reiterating what Jesus taught in Matthew chapter 24.

And you can read what Jesus taught about the day and the hour of his return in verses 36-34. He says, And what Jesus is referring to is the day in which he will come back and he will bring with him destruction for those who do not believe and he brings salvation for those who do believe and nobody knows when.

[ 11 : 06 ] No one in this room knows when Jesus is coming back. And so, we're not to try to guess. We're not to try to speculate.

Here's the closest thing we can do when it comes to trying to anticipate the coming day of the Lord. It's this. By the end of today, we can, Lord willing, say, well, we're one day closer.

You see, the window isn't lengthening to Christ's return. The window's closing. We're one day closer.

We can say that. And what that does is put us in a state of readiness. We need to be ready. Like a thief who comes in the night. We gotta be ready. Does anybody remember Y2K?

If you are young and never heard of that before, Google it. You'll find it interesting. But for those of us who lived through it, there was a lot of people prepping, getting ready for a global computer glitch, which never really happened.

[ 12 : 24 ] We knew the day and the hour, and we were getting ready for it. What we're being told here is, hey, we don't know the day or the hour. But we need to be ready for it.

And it raises the question, how do we get ready for that day? A day we don't know. Well, we're not to fear that day. We're to be ready for it.

So let me ask you two questions before I move on. Have you considered that Jesus Christ may return in your lifetime?

Have you considered that? And then, does that strike fear into your heart? Or does that stir longing in your heart?

That day. That coming day is one day closer. So now let's move on to the next point, two contrasting people.

[ 13 : 25 ] And this passage uniquely assures us that we don't need to fear that day by way of a running contrast. And the first contrast I want you to see is a contrast between two people.

The day people and the night people. Let's look at the day people. In verses four and five, Paul says to these Christians, but you are not in darkness, brothers and sisters, for that day to surprise you like a thief.

It's interesting that he says you're not in darkness. You're not like those in whom sudden destruction will fall upon and they cannot escape it.

But brothers and sisters, family of faith is how he addresses them. These are the day people. And look at verse five. For you are children of light, children of the day.

It's a contrast between day and night. Children of the day are Christians who have by God's grace been delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of the beloved son, the kingdom of light.

[ 14 : 34 ] We who were once dead to God, following the prince of the power of the air in the domain of darkness, have now by God's grace been made alive to God, are following King Jesus, and are in God's kingdom citizens of the kingdom of light.

That's who we are right now. If you're a child of the day, you're a child of the light, which means you are a child of the living God. He has adopted you by his grace into his family.

And it's not on the basis of anything that you have done, John 1.12. And because God is light, I mean Jesus said, I am the light of the world. We now bear the family resemblance.

If you're a Christian, you have been lit up by God's grace, and God will not abandon you.

He will not unadopt you. We have all the legal rights and privileges of being sons and daughters of the living God, and that means an eternal inheritance for which we are waiting and long for, and Jesus is bringing back with him.

[ 15 : 50 ] Christians, don't fear that day. Because of who you are, by God's grace. And that's contrasted with those who belong to the night.

In 5.3, they're described as people who are saying there is peace and security, peace, peace.

When there is no peace, they think all is well. When in fact it's not, then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains upon a pregnant woman.

I am not a woman, nor am I pregnant. But my understanding is, you don't really kind of set a date for contractions to arrive, and they're inescapable.

These are people who will experience sudden, inescapable, eternal destruction on the day of the Lord.

They're of the night. In verse 9, we infer that those in darkness will be objects of God's wrath on that day. And what Paul says is very clear in 5.5 regarding Christians.

[17:00] We are not of the night. We are not of the darkness. That is not who we are anymore. What we have here is a contrast of identity.

Those who are children of the day, children of God, and those who belong to the night. Unbelievers. Who you are.

One of the great assurances that you don't need to fear that day is who you are in Christ. You know what an ID card is, don't you?

Driver's license. Student ID. Passport. Just imagine every Christian carrying a grace ID card.

You can pull that card out. I don't have my wallet on it, but you pull that card out. Your name's on it. It's state, sinner saved by grace.

[18:04] Adopted by the living God. Under my name, it would say, son of the living God. If you're a lady, you'd be daughter of the living God. It would have your rebirth date on it. The day that God, he gave you new life.

And if you smelled it, if you smelled that card, do you know what it smelled like? Do you know what the fragrance it carries? It's the fragrance of Jesus.

Because your identity is in Christ. It's your grace ID card. It's who you are. The argument here, where Paul starts with these contrasts, is you don't need to fear that day because of who you are in Christ.

Christ. That's the point of these contrasting people. You don't fear that day because you carry a grace ID card. It's who you are.

Which brings us to the next point. Two contrasting people have two contrasting lifestyles. We see this is in verse 6 and 8.

[19:09] And the principle is this. Who you are determines how you live. And we have two different lifestyles. We have the day life, children of the day.

And we've got the night life, those in darkness. The day life, you can see in verse 6, are those who are to keep awake and be sober.

And the night life, in verse 7, are those who are asleep and drunk. Children of the day have a lifestyle of wakefulness and sobriety.

And those of darkness, of the night, have a lifestyle of sleeping and of drunkenness. Let's look at the night life. Notice in verse 7 that both activities of sleeping and getting drunk happen at night. For those who sleep, sleep at night. And those who get drunk are drunk at night. Now, I hope you can tell that Paul is using this sleep and getting drunk, he's using these things metaphorically.

[20:21] He's describing a way of being. So what does this being asleep mean? Well, you know what it's like to be asleep. You become unconscious of the things around you.

You're unaware of reality. Unless you're like my dad who doesn't sleep that well. And when I was a boy and I'd come into his room, he'd like, pop out of bed! You get the point.

Being asleep means being unawares. The description of a non-Christian's posture towards God. Unawares of God. Doesn't care. Doesn't care about God. Doesn't care about what God has accomplished through Christ in our salvation.

And specifically, they are asleep with regard to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the sleep metaphor. What's the getting drunk metaphor?

[21:26] Well, let me just state this to just state the obvious. When it comes to literally drinking, the Bible permits drinking alcohol, but it forbids drunkenness.

Because when you get drunk, you're no longer thinking clearly. You know what a DWI is? Driving while intoxicated. There is an LWI.

Living while intoxicated. What Paul is raising here is living under the influence of sinful intoxicants of the world that just take over.

In 1 John 2.16, John describes the lifestyle of the darkness. Of the desires of the flesh.

Desires of the eyes. In the prideful way of life. Pride of life. These are the anti-virtues of darkness.

[22:30] And those who are living in the darkness are living while intoxicated, are being ruled by these things. darkness. And we all once lived there, didn't we?

Who you are determines how you live. And so if you're of the darkness, you're going to be living these virtues of darkness.

Anti-virtues, better said. Contrast these things to the day life in 5.6. So then let us not sleep, as others do, non-Christians.

But let us keep awake and be sober. Keep awake is to be conscious of God. You're living in reality. It's what the Proverbs talk about as living in the fear of the Lord.

Where you take God seriously in every area of your life. You are aware of Him. You are seeking to live with Him as the controlling center of your life.

[ 23 : 36 ] your one consuming passion. You're all governing reality. When Jesus becomes the controlling treasure of your life. That's the day life.

That's being awake. It's living in light of the salvation that as a God has accomplished in Christ. And it means keeping a clear head to that day that is one day closer.

We live this day in light light of that day. And that's what it means to be sober. Not just living, being awake, but being sober means being clear headed.

Not being distracted or disabled by the intoxicating desires of the world. old. I doubt anybody's heard this phrase before.

Have you ever heard the phrase beer goggle? It's when someone gets drunk on beer and their vision is distorted and they see people in a distorted way.

[ 24 : 45 ] those who are in the night life have a distorted view of all things. But those who are living in the day life who are sober, we word goggle.

We see with eyes of faith. We see clearly. We keep our minds sober, self-controlled.

it's how we live in the light. What's interesting here is that Paul in verse 8 then mixes his metaphors. He's talking about sobriety in verse 8. He reiterates what he's just said. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober. Okay, got it, clear headed. But then he mixes his metaphors. Having put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

salvation. You might think immediately of Ephesians chapter 6 of the armor of God, of standing firm. But this is not the breastplate of righteousness.

[ 25 : 55 ] What he's talking about is the breastplate of faith and love. And then he talks about putting on the helmet. We're to be military ready. We're to gear up with gospel armor.

We're to put on the helmet the hope of salvation. And that hope of salvation is the anticipation of the coming of the Lord Jesus who will bring a full and final salvation with him.

What you have here is a triad. Faith, love, and hope. Maybe that rings a bell from 1 Corinthians 13. Faith, hope, and love, the greatest of which is love. He's writing to the Corinthians. You guys need to love each other. Let me emphasize love. Here, he's emphasizing hope.

Put on the breastplate of faith and love. Faith in God's word, love for the brothers, and put on the helmet the hope of salvation. Be controlled.

[ 27 : 01 ] Live in light of the coming of Jesus because we're one day closer. You're to gear up that way. That is a way by which we are to be sober-minded. What's interesting here is Paul, what he prescribes in light of the coming of Jesus is not necessarily to open up your newspaper and open up your Bible.

He's telling us to prep a different way. He's saying prep by storing up faith and hope and love. That's how we live ready for the coming of Jesus.

let me ask you a question. The night life and the day life. Of those two, which characterizes your life right now?

Who you are determines how you live. If you are living awake and you are living sober, you are geared up with gospel armor, you don't need to fear that day because how you are living reveals who you are.

You can be assured. But if you're trying to live the night life while being a child of the light, do you know what that's going to result in?

[ 28 : 27 ] You're going to be miserable. What does light have common with darkness? this? You're going to be miserable. I lived that way for a long time and I was miserable.

God be praised. Here's the question I have for you. Do you want to walk in the light?

Do you want to live by faith? Do you want to love your brothers and sisters? sisters, do you want Jesus to come back?

In Y2K, people were prepping by putting all sorts of food in their basements. We prep by putting on the armor of God, faith, love, hope.

That's how we get ready. We've seen two contrasting people. We've seen two contrasting lifestyles. Who you are determines how you live and it also determines your destiny.

[ 29 : 37 ] Two contrasting destinies. They're so contrasting, they are as different as day and night. The first destiny is that of those who belong to the night.

These are the people who are dead to God. They're oblivious to him. They don't take him seriously. They don't really care about the salvation that he's accomplished in Christ.

Christ's return is just maybe an interest, but they really don't care much more about it than that, if anything. They are drunk on worldly toxins. Their destiny is clear, verse 3 of chapter 5, while they're saying, peace, insecurity, sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains, and they will not escape.

Inescapable destruction, an endless pouring out of the wrath of God. Do you know what Revelation 1-7 says? That when Jesus comes back, all of the non-Christians on the planet will wail, they'll wail, because when Jesus comes back, it will be obvious there's no escaping the destruction he brings with him.

He is going to tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. Now, you may be in your seat saying, wait, wait, wait, time out.

[ 31 : 18 ] I thought God was a God of love. what's all this wrathful stuff? Fury winepress, violent treading business. You might be thinking, what's God's problem?

Let me just humbly say this. That's the wrong question. The real question has to do with us. the everlasting fury of God's wrath points to our problem. The sinfulness of our sin against a holy, just, eternal God who is bound by his righteous character to execute holy, just, and eternal judgment on our sin.

He is bound to it. You don't want an unjust God. God, the destiny of those who belong to the night, apart from Christ, unexpected, inescapable, eternal wrath of God poured out, and I just need to add one more thing.

God will be glorified in that. God will be glorified in that. It's the destiny of those who do not repent, but for those who by God's grace do repent and believe in Christ, their destiny, our destiny, is as different as the day is from the night.

[ 32 : 59 ] In verse 9, we read, for God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. That is our destiny.

salvation through Jesus Christ. Wait a second, you say? Aren't Christians sinners too?

Yes, Christians are sinners saved by grace. Why isn't God's wrath our destiny? What's the difference?

What's the difference between the two? We see in verse 10. But to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us.

Who died for us? Christ died as a substitute for all who would believe in him. For us, he died in our place. Christ's finished work on the cross has secured our salvation, past, present, future.

[ 34 : 05 ] Past, we've been justified, we've been adopted. Present, we are being sanctified, we are being conformed into the image of Christ. And for the future, we will one day be glorified.

That is coming. When we will experience, we will be in God's presence, with God's people, in God's place, experiencing God's everlasting peace.

You see, what the cross has done, it has secured our destiny. If Christ died for you, instead of a destiny of just wrath of God, we await a destiny of God's good presence.

Christian, you don't need to fear that day. It's not who you are. It's not how you're living. It's not your destiny.

destiny. In fact, our destiny, did you see that? Whether we are awake or asleep, that goes back to the last week's passage.

[ 35 : 16 ] If you are awake, if you're alive when Jesus returns, or if you've fallen asleep, if you've died before Christ's return, whether you're awake or asleep, we might live with him. The end of this obtaining of salvation, and when Christ comes back, we will all be united, and from that point on, we will live with him in his presence.

Two very different destinies. 1 Thessalonians 5, 1 through 11 is in your Bible, Christian, to assure you, you need not fear that day.

but you do need to be ready for it. That day of the Lord is one day closer. Okay, everybody, get your watch out, synchronize your watches, mark one day closer.

And of those two contrasting people, if you're a Christian, you're a child of the day. You have been blood bought. And brought into God's family, so you stand assured.

And of those two different lifestyles, the lifestyles, night life, and the day life, if you are awake and sober, if you are growing in those things, if you're gearing up with gospel armor, and you are saying, I want to walk by faith, I want to love the brothers, I want to keep on hoping in that coming day, be assured.

[ 36 : 54 ] Lord, and of these two different destinies, one of God's everlasting judgment and one of God's everlasting peace, for those of us who belong to the day, Christ's death has also secured our future.

we don't need to fear that day. What we have is to anticipate eternity in his presence, with his people, in his place, experiencing his peace.

So if you are in the room this morning, and you're fearing the day of Christ's coming, because you know you are not a Christian, today is the day of salvation.

put your trust in Christ alone. Romans 10 says, if we confess Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved, you will be delivered from the domain of darkness, transferred into the kingdom of the beloved son, and on that day you can be assured of welcome.

come. And if you are looking forward to that day, if you long for the day, if you're saying, come Lord Jesus, you don't need to fear knock, knock, knock at the door.

[ 38 : 33 ] You don't need to fear the glorious return of Jesus when he comes back on a white horse. You look forward to that. You long for that.

And what we're being called to do here in verse 11 is to encourage one another in light of that. And this is how you can do it. I'm going to have the congregation on my left.

You say this. Child of the day, say it. And the people on my right, you say, we're one day closer. child of the day, we're one day closer.

You ready? I'm going to point to you and now you say it. So when you bump into a fellow brother or sister this week, you know what you can say to them?

Christian, don't fear that day. Be ready for it. We just sang it. Fear is gone and hope is sure.

[ 39 : 45 ] Christ is mine forever more. Will you pray with me? Three times in Revelation 22, the Lord Jesus, you say, behold, I'm coming soon.

to which we say to you now, come Lord Jesus. Come. We long for you.

We're ready for you. God, would you bless us, your people, and would you help us to live ready for that day?

In your name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.