



The Day of the Lord is Coming

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Study Helps and Application

This is a letter of exhortation written to a church that was doing very well on many accounts (note all the “you have no need of anyone to teach you ... and “keep doing so more and more ...” “... just as you are doing” type statements). Yet there is always room for exhortation and encouragement.

Here Paul was continuing his instruction about the status of those who are “asleep” (physical death of believers is temporary!) in Christ, and how those who are alive and remain will not precede those asleep.

“*Now concerning the times ...*” There is no shortage of curiosity (and an abundance of speculation) about the timing and nature of the return of Jesus Christ. It is important to discern what is revealed about that Day from what is speculation. *Some speculation taught consistently and exclusively over time can easily be mistaken for biblical doctrine. “Why do you believe that? or show me” is helpful.* Instead of critiquing one another’s eschatology (end times views), let each of us measure all them against God’s revealed word.

Discussion 1: The Day of the Lord

- *What do we know about it? (and not know ...)*

^{ESV} **Matthew 24:3** As he sat on ^athe Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him ^bprivately, saying, “Tell us, ^cwhen will these things be, and what will be the sign of your ^dcoming and of ^ethe close of the age?” ⁴ And Jesus answered them, ... ³⁶ “But concerning that day and hour ^ano one knows, not even the angels of heaven, ^bnor the Son, ¹ ^cbut the Father only. ³⁷ ^aFor as were the days of Noah, ^bso will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ ^aFor as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, ^cmarrying and giving in marriage, until ^bthe day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, ^aso will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. ⁴¹ ^aTwo women will be grinding ^bat the mill; one will be taken and one left. ⁴² Therefore, ^astay awake, for you do not know on what day ^byour Lord is coming. ⁴³ ^aBut know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night ^bthe thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ^aready, for ^bthe Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Use 1 Thes 5 and Matt 24 to answer these: (note the similarities in language)

- *How is “the Day of the Lord” related to Christ’s return?*

[Jesus spoke about “the coming of the Son of Man” in Matt. 24 and Paul uses much of the same language in his description here for “the Day of the Lord,” clearly linking the two.]

- *To whom is it unexpected? [Everyone--but that doesn't mean Christ's disciples should be unprepared...]*
- *If no one knows when, how are Christians expected to "be ready"? [topic of the next discussion--we are to walk in the light, be children of the light, living every moment with the return of Christ in view...]*
- *Extra: Will Christ's return be secret? Quiet? Or happen in such a way that some people miss it or wonder what happened? [Read Matt 24:29-31 and 1 Thes. 4:16-18--These are arguably "the loudest verses in the Bible." When the King of Kings returns in glory to bring about the fullness of His Kingdom on earth... no one will miss it!]*

Discussion 2: Staying Awake/Being Alert

^{ESV} **John 8:12** Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

- *Are you acting like a "child of the Day"? --Honestly assess your alertness*

["Asleep"--laziness, forgetfulness, drunkenness, indulgent, "doing the easiest thing" ...]

- *How are our day to day priorities (time, money, emotional energy...) influenced by our anticipation of Christ's return?*

[We'll return to this topic in the ♥ "one anothers" section below.]

Discussion 3: With Christ--In Life and in Death

^{ESV} **1 Thessalonians 5:9** For God has not destined us for ^awrath, but ^bto obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ ^awho died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.

- *Is 1 Thes 5:9 a promise of deliverance from tribulation?*

^{ESV} **1 Thessalonians 5:9** For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

*[No, but it is a reminder that we are no longer children of wrath--no longer needing to fear **God's** wrath. We, His beloved children, will still have trials, tribulations, temptations, and persecutions, but *never* incur His wrath.]*

- ♥ *Discuss specific ways we can encourage one another with respect to living as “children of the light” (in Faith, Hope, and Love)*

^{ESV} **1 Thessalonians 5:11** Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

- *Faith--a believing trust (not a blind leap into the dark)*

- *Trusting Christ with our lives*

[As people were assessing their own alertness above, let's make this about one another.]

- *Trusting Christ with our deaths*

[Death is taboo today. Address it head on with God's Word. This week's text has great comfort for believers and loved ones of believers.]

- *Hope--a confident expectation (not wishful thinking)*

[Reminding one another of God's promises and his faithfulness.]

- *Love--sacrificially esteeming another ahead of yourself*

[Love is best expressed in action rather than words.]

Memory Verse

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1. Expect the Unexpected (1-4)

- Like a thief
- Not like a thief

2. Stay Awake (5-8)

- children of the day
- be sober - watch and pray

3. We live with Christ (9-11)

- Christ died
- We'll be resurrected
- those who died are already with Christ
- Encourage each other (build up, be strategic)



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 - *Trusting Christ with our lives*
 - *Trusting Christ with our deaths*
- *Hope--a confident expectation (not wishful thinking)*
- *Love--sacrificially esteeming another ahead of yourself (not a warm fuzzy)*

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