

May 14, 2017

## “God Has Not Destined Us for Wrath”

**Focal Passage: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (ESV)**

Cross References: *Acts 1:7; Matthew 24:36; Isaiah 13:6-22; Ezekiel 30:2-19; Joel 1:15; Amos 5:18-20; Joel 2:30-32; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:1, 5; 2 Corinthians 4:6; John 8:12; Ephesians 2:4-9; Titus 3:4-7; Romans 5:8; Romans 8:13; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:10-18; Romans 3:23-25; Romans 5:9; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:1, 28-39*

**Lesson Idea:** Because of God’s grace and mercy, we need not fear his wrath, but rather hope in the life we have in Him.

### BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

|                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| May 7 1 Chron 18-21 | May 8 1 Chron 22-24         |
| May 9 1 Chron 25-27 | May 10 1 Chron 28-2 Chron 1 |
| May 11 2 Chron 2-5  | May 12 2 Chron 6-8          |
| May 13 2 Chron 9-12 | May 14 2 Chron 13-17        |

**Background:** Last week we looked at Paul’s encouragement to the Thessalonians concerning those who were “*asleep in Christ*,” and considered the hope we have in the promise of Christ’s return. In chapter 5, Paul continues on in regards to eschatology, but shifts from the topic of the rapture of Christ’s saints, to discussing “the day of the Lord.” Once again, Paul’s aim is to encourage the church in Thessalonica.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

*1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 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. 4 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. 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at*

*night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. 8 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. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*

### DISCUSSION:

- **V. 1**
  - What did Jesus say concerning the times and seasons? (*Acts 1:7; Matthew 24:36*)
  - How should the words of Jesus in *Acts 1:7* and *Matthew 24:36* affect the way we think about the end-times? How might His words be freeing to us?

### Note from Commentary on 1 and 2

**Thessalonians by John MacArthur:** “Being spiritually prepared for the return of Christ does not involve date setting, clock watching, or sign seeking. God has chosen not to reveal the specific time of end-time events so that all believers will live in constant anticipation of them.”

- **V. 2**
    - What is Paul referring to when he mentions “*the day of the Lord*”?
- Note:** The term, “*day of the Lord*” is used in both the OT and the NT. Old Testament prophets often used the term in reference to near historical judgements (*Isaiah 13:6-22; Ezekiel 30:2-19; Joel 1:15; Amos 5:18-20*), or eschatological (end-time) judgements (*Joel 2:30-32; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:1, 5*). These judgements involve the wrath of God being poured out against sin (*Zephaniah 1:15; Revelation 6:16-17*). While we do not know the time or season of the final judgement, we can know most certainly that God’s wrath will be unleashed against the wickedness of this world.
- Why do you think Paul emphasizes the sudden nature of this judgement?

- **V. 3**
  - What are some things that the world (or you) find security in that will ultimately lead to destruction? (**Proverbs 14:12; Romans 6:20-21**)
- **V. 4-5**
  - What is our hope when the day of the Lord comes?
  - What makes us “*children of light*”? (**2 Corinthians 4:6; John 8:12**)

**Note:** It is important to consider our source of light as we examine these verses. Paul tells the Thessalonians that they have hope when the day of the Lord comes because they, “*are all children of light, children of the day*” (**V. 5**). This truth is stunning in light of what the Scriptures tell us concerning our state before Christ (**Romans 3:10-18; Romans 5:10; Ephesians 2:1-3**). As we ponder such verses, it should cause us to praise and glorify God for His unfathomable grace towards us to make us “*children of light*” (**2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 2:4-9; Titus 3:4-7; Romans 5:8**).

- **V. 6-7**
  - As “*children of light*,” What does Paul call us to?
  - What does it mean to “*keep awake and be sober*”?

**Note:** Again, in light of the sudden nature of Christ’s return and the day of the Lord, Paul is urging us to live every moment with seriousness and purpose. Because we are in the light, we will not be a people who live foolish lifestyles as those who are in the darkness. Rather, we will be alert, warring against sin in our own lives by the Spirit (**Romans 8:13**), and pleading with others to be reconciled to God (**2 Corinthians 5:20**).

- **V. 8**
  - Why do you think Paul uses the imagery of armor?

**Note from Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Thessalonians:** “In verse 8 Paul suggests that the Christian faith is a battle. By employing the imagery of a soldier’s armor, he challenges the Christian to prepare for this battle. A soldier who recognizes the dangers of the battlefield would never venture into combat without being prepared. In the same way, believers who take their faith seriously understand the importance of spiritual preparation. The picture that Paul paints here is similar to the one he used to describe the nature of a Christian’s warfare in **Ephesians 6:10-18**. The fact that he instructs the Thessalonians to “put on” this armor indicates that such an act requires discipline.”

- What are some disciplines we should practice that God might use to help us grow in faith, hope and love?

- **V. 9-10**
  - What do these verses tell us about the kindness of God?
  - Why are we not destined for wrath? (**Romans 3:23-25; Romans 5:9; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21**)

**Note:** The word “propitiation” carries the idea of appeasement or satisfaction. The verses above tell us that Christ is the propitiation for our sins, meaning that Christ’s death on the cross satisfied God’s wrath against those who are in Christ. We are not destined for wrath because the King of kings took it for us.

- What does the death of Christ ensure for us?
- How might **V. 9-10** be a comfort when facing trials and tribulations? (**Romans 8:1, 28-39**)

- **V. 11**
  - Once again, these verses are meant as an encouragement to the saints. How have you been encouraged by this passage?
  - How might you encourage a brother/sister with the truths discussed today?

- **APPLICATION**

- What does this passage teach us about God?
- How will the truths about God in this passage shape your coming week?

Lesson by Steven Richardson