

# A Practical Study of 1 Thessalonians

## Delighting The Heart of God “Learning to Bring Pleasure to God”

### Question Number Ten – Is the Future Foggy? – 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Is the Future Foggy? Chapter 5 verses 1 to 11.

Now because, number one, the Thessalonians believed that the Lord was coming so quick they quit work.

Number two, somebody had passed a rumor that the day of the Lord was already here.

And so because they thought that the day of the Lord was already here, and they'd been fooled by it, they thought they'd missed the Rapture. So they were very, very upset.

And so now in chapter 5 he moves right into it and deals with the whole subject of the day of the Lord.

Pick up with me at verse 1 and you'll see what I mean.

What do you get? What's your first word?

“Now”—there's a new subject see.

**v. 1 Now concerning the times and the seasons,  
brethren, you are not having need that I should be  
writing to you.**

Whereas we ended chapter 4 this last time with the Rapture of the church, what happens immediately following that?

“The times and the seasons” will be that of the day of the Lord. And so these are the things that now are going to precede the Second Coming, involve the Second Coming, and also involve the kingdom that follows it.

And so the apostle says: “Now concerning the times and the seasons.”

We need to be warned. Acts chapter 1, verses 6 and 7. Right close to the end of Christ’s tenure here on earth, before He made that great statement “you shall be witnesses unto Me,” He said this:

**Acts 1:6, 7**

And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are to be restoring the kingdom to Israel?” [Now listen to the Lord.]

He said to them, “It is not for you to know the times and the epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

**Acts 1:8**

but you shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto Me...

You see, we're making a mistake in our generation to spend so much time on Bible prophecy that we're forgetting to be a witness.

Because the last words He spoke were words of witness. And we're not going to know the "times and the seasons" in the sense that we can set dates.

But we can certainly as we study truth say "Hey look, times are really HOT for the coming of the Christ."

Matthew 24:36 at the end of the Olivet Discourse Christ says:

### Matthew 24:36

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the son, but the Father alone.

And so these words in making our spiritual check-up, I've made this my KEY VERSE since it's the first one. Because he's now helping them understand what is going to happen in the future so they can be prepared for it.

Now I thought, before I went any further, many folks have differences of understanding about prophecy. And too many times we who teach it assume that everybody knows what we're talking about.

So what I want to do for just a minute, before we go any further and since this is the key verse, and your future might be foggy in the spiritual check-up, I want to give you a calendar. I want to give you 8 statements that will help you hang everything else in the Bible on these little hooks.

If you have these 8 things to hang everything else on, you really will begin to understand a little bit about Bible prophecy.

First of all is:

1. the RAPTURE of the church

We looked at this last time. That is the event that we're all looking forward to. That's the event that starts everything else. We will know that we are in the end time when the church disappears in the Rapture.

That's the dead in Christ rising first and we who are alive and remain, who know Christ, will be caught up together with Him in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

Secondly:

## 2. the TRIBULATION

I'm going to talk about that a little more in just a minute so you can just write down the Tribulation. It's a sad period of time described in Revelation 6-19. It's almost the whole book of Revelations described in the Tribulation period.

Number three, and this one is not sequential, it's simultaneous, it's:

## 3. the JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

But you need to understand that this only involves the church and Christians.

### 2 Corinthians 5:10

We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

It's a judgment in the view of rewards.

But that's going on SIMULTANEOUSLY with the Tribulation period. That's the only event that's simultaneous here.

## 4. ARMAGEDDON

This is the Battle of Armageddon and I'll say a word about that.

## 5. the SECOND COMING of Christ to set up His Kingdom

This is what the prophets look forward to. This is the coming of Christ back to earth to set up His Kingdom.

## 6. the KINGDOM

See how it just sequences through? Immediately following the Second Coming of Christ is the Kingdom.

And how does the Kingdom start? With the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

And you know one of these days when you get a little bit more into it, you'll want to hang the Marriage Supper of the Lamb there around the Kingdom so you've got that in view.

## 7. The GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

You can just put the GWT down there and you don't want to be there.

Number 7—the Great White Throne Judgment. That's Revelation chapter 20, verses 11-15. These are all the people who are not Christians and everybody who stands at this judgment is cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone which is the second death.

It's ultimate condemnation by Christ Himself.

## 8. the ETERNAL STATE

And that's Revelation 21 and 22—the Eternal State and what it's going to be like.

So I think if you took those 8 things and you had those in your mind and you review those, so when somebody starts saying “I want to talk to you about the Day of the Lord” or “I want to talk to you about the Tribulation” or “I want to talk to you about the Rapture,” you can say in your mind “Hey, I know where that is. I know where that fits and how the sequence takes place through the scripture.”

Now can I share one major concern I have about Bible prophecy? This comes from Martyn Lloyd-Jones and it's right on target.

*(The Sovereign Spirit: Discerning His Gifts by Martyn Lloyd-Jones)*

To begin with, always be suspicious of—indeed, I would go further and say, be ready to condemn and to reject—anything that claims to be a fresh revelation of truth.

[There is to be nothing added to it and nothing taken away from it—Revelation chapter 22—without judgment.]

I am sure you know what I mean by that. People in this

state and condition claim that something has been revealed to them. There are certain well-known movements, even at this present time, which were started by people claiming to have had a special revelation.

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And when you hear that man, your antennas ought to go up and you ought to walk out. That is not relevant to today.

God has spoken in these last times through His Son and the revelation is complete. And it's our responsibility to help people understand the revelation that's already been given, not to come around announcing new revelations.

But do you see what a new revelation does to the guy who's supposedly received it? I mean, he's an authority. You don't question him.

Now what are the signs of the times?

Signs of the times are the fact that Israel is a nation. All that's going on Europe now is an incredible happening that is helping us understand worldwide economy, monetary system, all of these things. I mean there's just scads of things that are happening that's just setting it up for a worldwide government. And all of those, only lead us faster toward what's going to happen during the Tribulation period.

I read this little piece the other day and I thought it was so good because it describes how you and I ought to be feeling.



## “SIGNS OF THE TIMES”

Speaking of the imminent return of our Lord, Gresham Guinness related that one evening he went to hear a performance of Handel's Messiah. He said that after a couple of hours someone might have asked, “How much longer will the concert last?” He said he would have answered, “Oh, about 5 minutes.” The individual might have replied, “But how can that be? It's still in full swing and has been going on for a long time. Why shouldn't it continue for 2 more hours? How do you know it will be finished in 5 minutes?” Guinness said he would have replied, “Because I have the score, and they are singing the last chorus.”

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

You know I feel that. I am a student of prophecy and I have spent many, many years in it. And I feel like we're getting ready to sing the Hallelujah chorus. I do.

There's just nothing standing in the way of these things beginning to happen.

Now because they had been so upset in Thessalonica over the fact that some people were passing the rumor around that the Day of the Lord had already come, it stirred them up pretty badly because they'd missed the Rapture.

If such were the case, Paul now addresses that subject—verse 2.

**v. 2 For you yourselves are knowing accurately that the day of the Lord is coming as a thief at night.**

There're two illustrations he's going to use. There's going to be a "thief" and there's going to be a woman who's pregnant.

Both of these describe how it's all going to take place.

Now we've come to the term "the day of the Lord." What does the "the day of the Lord" mean in the Bible?

I take it that "the day of the Lord" begins with the Rapture of the church and it ends with the 1,000 Year Reign of Christ.

So everything that happens from the Rapture of the church to the end of the 1,000 Year Reign of Christ is involved in "the day of the Lord."

Now why do I say that? The prophets call "the day of the Lord" a time of judgment but they also call it a time of blessing, so both of those things have to be here.

But Paul is only talking about the judgment aspect of it in this particular study.

So it's the judgment part of "the day of the Lord" that he's dealing with right now on this occasion.

Now let me give you a few MINOR PROPHETS to just show you how they felt about “the day of the Lord” when it came to judgment.

Listen to AMOS:

### Amos 5:18-20

Woe to you who long  
for the day of the Lord!  
Why do you long for the day of the Lord?  
That day will be darkness, not light.  
It will be as though a man fled from a lion  
only to meet a bear,  
as though he entered his house  
and rested his hand on the wall  
only to have a snake bite him.  
Will not the day of the Lord be darkness, not light—  
pitch-dark, without a ray of brightness?

Listen to:

### Zephaniah 1:14-16

The great day of the Lord is near—  
near and coming quickly.  
Listen! The cry on the day of the Lord will be bitter,  
the shouting of the warrior there.  
That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,

a day of trouble and ruin,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and blackness,  
a day of trumpet and battle cry  
against the fortified cities  
and against the corner towers.

And then Joel chapter 2. Here's just one more:

Joel 2:1, 2

Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sound the alarm on my holy hill.  
Let all who live in the land tremble,  
for the day of the Lord is coming.  
It is close at hand—  
a day of darkness and gloom, ...

And so this horrible day is yet to come. And what we're looking at here is he's telling them when that day comes, it's going to come like "a thief in the night."

Now, I need to help you a little bit. The "day of the Lord" has some other terms that are equal to it. Now, if you'll just put the "day of the Lord" on the paper and then right under it list these other three possibilities. These mean the same thing.

First of all:

1. DANIEL'S 70TH WEEK—that's Daniel 9:24-27—that's called the 70th week of Daniel or Daniel's 70th week.

Secondly it's called the:

2. THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE. It's Israel being judged for sin one final time.

And then third it's called:

3. THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

Now why's it called Daniel's 70th week? Well Daniel asked the Lord how could he know what was going to happen to Israel. And the Lord said 70 weeks of years is going to Israel before the end comes.

But he said it's divided into three parts. Seven weeks of years is going to happen and then the Temple's going to be rebuilt, 62 weeks of years is going to happen and Messiah is going to be cut off. What's 7 and 62? Sixty-nine. That leaves you one week of years and that's the years of judgment—7 years of tribulation that's yet future.

You know Sir Robert Anderson wrote a book called *The Coming Prince* and he started it with the edict of Cyrus to rebuild the temple and those guys went for 49 years and it came out exactly to the dedication of the temple. And then they went 62 more weeks of years and guess where that

ended? During Passion Week as Christ gave His life on the Cross.

So it's very accurate. It's just that the church has been a parenthesis in this whole program and the 70th week of Daniel is still future. And that 70th week of Daniel is "the day of the Lord."

That 70th week of Daniel is the time of Jacob's Trouble. That 70th week of Daniel is the Great Tribulation.

Now if you want to know about this, it's Revelation 6-19 that describes it. There are 21 JUDGMENTS in the judgment part of it. There's 7 SEALS, there are 7 TRUMPETS and there are 7 BOWL JUDGMENTS. And if you've done anything in Revelation at all, in Revelation 6-19 you see those series of judgment.

SEVEN SEALS,

SEVEN TRUMPETS,

SEVEN BOWLS—take you through this horrible, horrible period of God's judgment upon the world and upon sin.

So, it's going to be a time that comes suddenly without announcement, it's going to involve great cosmic upheaval, and it's a definite time of judgment and wrath being poured out upon sin.

That's "the day of the Lord."

One poet put it this way:

When the great plants of our cities have turned out  
their last finished work,  
When our merchants have sold their last yard of silk  
and dismissed the last tired clerk,  
When our banks have raked in their last dollar  
and paid the last dividend,  
When the judge of the earth says closed for the night  
and asks for a balance,  
What then?

When the choir has sung its last anthem  
and the preacher has made his last prayer,  
When the people have heard their last sermon  
and the sound has died out on the air.  
When the Bible lies closed on the altar  
and the pews are all empty of men  
And each one stands facing his record,  
and the great book is opened,  
What then?

When the actors have played their last drama  
and the mimic has made his last pun,  
When the film has flashed its last picture  
and the billboard has played its last run,  
When the crowd seeking pleasure has vanished,  
gone out into darkness again,

When the trumpet of ages has sounded  
and we stand before Him,  
What then?  
(source unknown)

Verse 3.

**v. 3 When they are saying, “Peace and security,” then sudden destruction is coming upon them even as birth pains upon a woman with child; and they shall by no means escape.**

“When they are saying, ‘Peace and security,’ then sudden destruction is coming upon them”—HOW? Not like a thief but—“even as birth pains upon a woman with child; and they shall by no means escape.”

Now, to help you with this for just a second, do you notice any change of words between verse 2 and verse 3?

You see he has changed it to “they” because Paul has nothing to do with this.

It is “they” who are indeed going to be saying “‘Peace and safety,’ then sudden destruction is coming upon them” because Paul isn’t even going to be part of this. And “they shall by no means escape.”

The readers in Thessalonica and Paul have nothing to do with this horrible “day of the Lord.”



Now are they crying “Peace and safety” today? Boy with the tremendous increase you just see these movements flourishing for peace, peace, peace and security, security, security, “then sudden destruction is coming upon them.”

### Luke 21:34

Be on your guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day should come suddenly like a trap;

So in his second illustration it's like a woman who's having birth pains. The first is like a thief coming at night. It's the unpredictable suddenness, it's the great personal discomfort. And there you've got another DOUBLE GREEK NEGATIVE:

“they shall absolutely, positively, no, never escape.”

### Hebrews 2:3

how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? ...

There is no escape at all.

Suppose an angel told me  
At early morning light,  
“Your Lord will come this evening;  
You will go home tonight.”

Would ecstasy be clouded  
By thoughts of things undone:  
The seed I might have scattered,  
The crowns I might have won?

The soul I meant to speak to,  
The purse I meant to share,  
And, oh, the wasted moments  
I meant to spend in prayer?

The weight of unsaved millions  
Would press upon my heart,  
In their death am I certain  
That I had not a part?

Just a few short moments  
In which to set things right,  
How feverishly I'd labor  
Until the waning light!

Oh, slothful soul and careless heart,  
Oh, eyes which had no sight,  
Work, lest you reap but vain regrets;  
Your Lord may come tonight!  
(source unknown)

Now see the words “But you” in verse 4? He changes it.

Moves from “they” back to them.

**v. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should come down upon you as a thief;**

You're not going to be part of this, you who know the Christ. It won't "come down" on you like this. For your judgment has already fallen on the Lord Jesus Christ.

REASON:

**v. 5 for all of you are sons of light and sons of day. We are not of the night nor of darkness;**

We don't have anything to do with that!

**v. 6 so then, let us not go on sleeping as do the rest, but let us be awake and self-controlled.**

"so then,"—verse 6—"let us not go on sleeping as do the rest, but let us be awake and self-controlled."

You know, it is a wonderful verse because I can make a double application to it!

I can say come on, "let's not go on sleeping as do the rest, but let us be awake and let us be self-controlled."

Now in view of the "day of the Lord," he's going to give FIVE COMMANDS to end the study.

And the first command is right here:

Command #1:

“let us not go on sleeping as do the rest,”

In other words, don't become lethargic. Don't become oblivious to what's going on around you. Wake up and discern the times.

I read A. W. Tozer's little book just before I left. It's a book on revival and he says this:

We start doing things by ROTE,

then we get in a RUT,

then we start to ROT,

and then we are RUINED.

(source unknown)

And his book is *Rut, Rot or Revival* is the name of it. It's a great little book of some of his final sermons.

And that's the truth! And many are ruined as a result of it.

Mark 14 is a classic illustration, isn't it? Jesus takes those three guys into the inner part of the garden as he's there in the Garden of Gethsemane and He says “would you pray with me?” and they just fall asleep. He comes back and says “Can't you watch with me one hour?” And they go right back to sleep

again. And then finally the third time it all happens over again and He comes and wakes them and says “You know it’s time. Judas is here.” (Mark 14:32-42)

And just like they fall asleep at such a critical time, I’m afraid there is much of the church that’s asleep today. It really doesn’t believe that Jesus Christ could split the skies at this moment and make that call that would take us home.

“let us not go on sleeping as do the rest,”

Command #2:

“let us be awake and self-controlled.”

Verse 7.

**v. 7 For those who are sleeping are sleeping at night, and those who are getting drunk are getting drunk at night.**

These people are sleeping, they don’t care. And to drown their sorrows, they’re getting drunk. They’re addicted to alcoholic beverages.

There is a Bible called *The Life Recovery Bible*. Now maybe you have seen *The Life Application Bible*. It’s been a wonderful experience reading all those notes and things that go with it.

But now they're coming with a Bible that is going to deal with addictive behavior. And it was assignment to write all the notes—142 notes—on 1 and 2 Samuel.

And of course I had a heyday with Saul who didn't recover and David who did. And the principles are just incredible. And Jane wrote some assignments on Abraham and Sarah in the book of Genesis as her contribution to the thing.

You know it's an incredible thing when you get into addictive behavior and you see how powerful it becomes in destroying people's lives.

Up to this particular point you only had the twelve steps to help people along this line.

One guy said:

*(Counseling for Substance Abuse and Addiction* by Stephen Van Cleave, M.D., Walter Byrd, M.D. and Kathy Revell, R.N.)

... "The Twelve Steps." ... "Alcoholics Anonymous won't get you to heaven, and it can't keep you out of hell, but it can keep you sober long enough to make up your own mind."  
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You know that's really the problem a lot of people have today. They've gotten addicted into all kinds of behavior and it's a miracle that they can be recovered.

And to be able now to take some biblical principles that are put together in this Bible, hopefully we're going to see some recovery of people who are lost because they're "sleeping at night" and they're "getting drunk" and they're drowning their sorrows, and they're unaware of how horrible a future lies before them in "the day of the Lord."

Verse 8.

**v. 8 But we who are of the day, let us be self-controlled, having clothed ourselves with a breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.**

Ok what was Command #1 in verse 6?

1. "let us not go on sleeping as do the rest,"
2. "let us be awake and self-controlled,"
3. "let us be self-controlled, having clothed ourselves with the breastplate of faith, love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation."

What do you got there? You've got that lovely little trio again:

"FAITH,"

"HOPE," and

"LOVE" that we had in chapter 1.

It is in 1 Corinthians chapter 13:

### 1 Corinthians 13:13

Now abides faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

And he's also talking about the ARMOR. Have you put your armor on? And are you fighting a good fight of faith?—  
Ephesians 6:10-18

### 1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith; ...

### 2 Timothy 2:3, 4

Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus ...

### 2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, ...

So get on your breastplate, and get on your helmet and be ready to do battle in these final days.

I found this little piece:

“I had a battle fierce today



Within my place of prayer;  
 I went to meet and talk with God,  
 But I found Satan there.  
 He whispered, 'You can't really pray,  
 You lost out long ago;  
 You might say words while on your knees,  
 But you can't pray, you know.'  
 So then I pulled my helmet down,  
 Way down upon my ears,  
 And found it helped to still his voice  
 And helped allay my fears.  
 I checked my other armor o'er;  
 My feet in peace were shod;  
 My loins with truth were girded 'round;  
 My sword the Word of God.  
 My righteous breastplate still was on,  
 My heart's love to protect.  
 My shield of faith was all intact—  
 His fiery darts bounced back.  
 I called on God in Jesus' name,  
 I pled the precious blood—  
 While Satan sneaked away in shame,  
 I met and talked with God!" —John Dorsey

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

That's what he's saying in view of "day of the Lord," you've got to have your armor on. You ought to be ready so you don't get snagged by some of these things that are addicting others and causing them to destroy their very lives.

Verse 9.

**v. 9 Because God did not appoint us to wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

Now there are a number of folks who think that we who are Pre-Tribulation Rapurists and we just don't want to go through the horrible period of Tribulation.

But you know, I can't read a verse like this and come up with any other conclusion but that we're not appointed to this and God is sovereign.

And in His sovereign choice, He chose to let my wrath fall on my substitute, the Lord Jesus when He died on the cross for my sins. And God doesn't make us accountable twice for sin. And the wrath of God is falling on those who know Him not during the Day of the Lord.

Listen friend, we are out of here. And it's only because of Biblical truth.

Revelation 3:10 says exactly the same thing:

Revelation 3:10

...we are kept from the hour of this wrath...

And here it agrees with it.

Paul says:

“God did not appoint us to wrath, BUT to obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,”

The vengeance fell on Him and not on me. He bore my sin.

Isaiah 53:4-6—now because time is running out, I won't go into those verses but I want you to note that the Word “appoint” points to God's sovereignty.

He is the One who made these choices. He's the One who put this plan together—and we'll wrap it up.

**v. 10 who died for us, in order that whether we are awake or sleeping, we might live together with Him.**

Isn't that wonderful?

You can be sleeping when the Day of the Lord comes and knowing Christ and He's going to be faithful to you—even to the lukewarm—those who are sleeping.

And to the believers that are awake and really alert and know that He's coming, He's going to be faithful to them too! Because God's faithfulness is not affected by our unfaithfulness! And the promises of God are still intact!

What a wonderful verse for us!

No matter what our condition is as believers, God is going to remain faithful.

Verse 11.

**v. 11 Therefore be encouraging one another, and be building one another up, one the other even as also you are doing.**

“Therefore”—here are the last two COMMANDS—“be encouraging one another,”—that’s COMMAND #4—“and”—#5—be building one another up,”—you could use that by saying “encouraging and edifying.”

You’re trying to encourage others and edify them in view of the fact that the Lord’s coming again.”

Do you notice that verse 11 is like chapter 4 verse 18? When he got through talking about the Rapture, what did he say?

1 Thessalonians 4:18

So be encouraging one another with these things.

Now he turns around at the end of the Day of the Lord here, at verse 11, and he says “I want to tell you something. Y’all encourage each other, build one another up in view of these things.”

Now let me review the FIVE COMMANDS and I'll give the lessons. Command:

#1: "let us not go on sleeping as do the rest."

#2: "let us be awake and self-controlled."

#3: "let us be self-controlled, having clothed ourselves with a breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation."

#4: "be encouraging one another."

#5: "be building one another up."

Can I give you one little word from a Minor Prophet?

Amos 4:12

"prepare to meet your God..."

Because you're going to.

Now there are TEN LESSONS:

Lesson #1: "The day of the Lord" described here in this passage follows the Rapture of the church.

Lesson #2: "The day of the Lord" involves both judgment and blessing.

Lesson #3: “The day of the Lord” involves the tribulation period as well as the millennial kingdom.

Lesson #4: It is possible to be asleep spiritually and miss so much of what God has for us.

Lesson #5: To be “self-controlled” is to live in the light of our future.

Lesson #6: We are commanded not to go on sleeping but to be awake and self-controlled.

Lesson #7: We are to put on the “breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.”

Lesson #8: God did not appoint us to wrath but to obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lesson #9: Jesus died for us on the cross of Calvary.

Lesson #10: We are to be encouraging and edifying one another.

Now do you believe that? Christ is soon coming.

I want to end with a story.

*(Topical Memory System: Life Issues by The Navigators)*

I rolled in, armed my rockets, and laid down a barrage that ignited the jungle around the heavy Viet Cong gun emplacement that had been mercilessly firing on rescue forces for days. I banked to the left to get a better look at the smoke-obscured target. Satisfied with the first run, I gave the orders that I had given a hundred times before. “You’re cleared hot...Hit the smoke!” All we needed were just a few seconds. Just a few seconds more and we could go home. Just one [run]...

The lead aircraft rolled in, his wing man staying high to cover him. As “lead” stabilized the dive to concentrate on his target, what came up at him looked like the spray of a firehose filled with red-hot lead. The rounds glowed in the twilight sky as they sailed past his cockpit, wings, and fuselage at supersonic speed, missing him by just a few yards. He timed his release and a string of five or six bombs disappeared into the dense foliage below.

A second later, the jungle erupted in a red-hot, smoke-filled fireball, as the shock waves of the blast silenced the gun. But while lead began pulling out of his dive, he caught the last rounds the enemy gun had fired just before bombs hit. He was unable to avoid the dense, dark wall of exploding antiaircraft fire that surrounded him. The deadly shrapnel riddled his plane. A telltale tail of gray-white smoke behind his aircraft immediately impelled me deep into rescue operations and emergency procedures.

“Mayday! Mayday! Olds lead, you’ve taken a hit! You’re on fire!”

There was no answer.

“Two,” I said, addressing his wing-man, “you got him in

sight?”

“Roger.”

“See any chutes?”

“No chutes in sight.”

“Olds lead,” I said, “it looks bad. ... You’re trailing smoke.”

But, there was still no answer. So I shouted, “Lead, you’re in trouble. ... Get out! Bail out! Lead ... do you read me? Lead ... lead ... Olds lead, come in. ... How [do you] copy?”

The silence that followed seemed to push reality into the surrealistic, as time and the war stood still. Once again, I was powerless. Though wanting to do so much more, all I could do was watch in the hope of seeing the parachute that would trigger yet another set of trained responses in me. But there was none.

I called again, “Olds, do you read me? How copy?”

Clearly on fire, the plane continued to climb in a right-hand turn. Then, as though the plane were flying in slow motion, gradually that climbing turn lost its initial impetus and the nose began to sink heavily into the horizon. Again and again I cried out to them, “Bail out! Bail out!” But still no one answered—still no chutes. ... There was just silence, smoke, and a spiral whose tightening turns bored through what little altitude was left ... and they augered in.

pp. 55-56

You know a lot of people are augering in and just won’t listen. We’ve got the responsibility to love them, to live before them and to earn the right to speak with our lips that Jesus Christ is coming again.



Father, we thank You for the Day of the Lord. We thank You that that's going to be time when Your justice is going to be fully satisfied. Thank You that it was already satisfied on Calvary but man in his stubborn rebellion has refused to respond. May Your Holy Spirit convict our own hearts. And if the future is foggy, and as we've made our spiritual checkup this has been the case, may Your help clarify some of the prophetic issues and we have a sense of urgency in living in these days in view of that time. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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## A Practical Study of 1 THESSALONIANS: Your Spiritual Checkup

### “Victory in Areas of Vulnerability”

Key verse 3:10 — *“night and day praying as earnestly as possible that we might see your face and complete what is lacking in your faith”*

#### **QUESTION NUMBER TEN – IS THE FUTURE FOGGY? – 1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-11**

##### **KEY VERSE 5:1**

v. 1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you are not having need that I should be writing to you.

v. 2 For you yourselves are knowing accurately that the day of the Lord is coming as a thief at night.

v. 3 When they are saying, “Peace and security,” then sudden destruction is coming upon them even as birth pains upon a woman with child; and they shall by no means escape.

v. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should come down upon you as a thief;

v. 5 for all of you are sons of light and sons of day. We are not of the night nor of darkness;

v. 6 so then, let us not go on sleeping as do the rest, but let us be awake and self-controlled.

v. 7 For those who are sleeping are sleeping at night, and those who are getting drunk are getting drunk at night.

v. 8 But we who are of the day, let us be self-controlled, having clothed ourselves with a breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

v. 9 Because God did not appoint us to wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

v. 10 who died for us, in order that whether we are awake or sleeping, we might live together with Him.

v. 11 Therefore be encouraging one another, and be building one another up, one the other even as also you are doing.

##### **NOTES**

##### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. How is the “day of the Lord” going to come, according to verse 2?

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3. What are people going to be saying when this time comes, according to verse 3?

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4. In verses 4 & 5 Paul divides mankind into two classes. Please describe these two classes.

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5. What does Paul tell us to do in verse 6?

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6. What are we supposed to do, according to verse 8?

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7. Why do we need not fear the “day of the Lord” if we are Christians, according to verse 9?

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8. What does Paul tell us to do in verse 11?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: “The day of the Lord” described here in this passage follows the rapture of the church.

LESSON #2: “The day of the Lord” involves both judgment and blessing.

LESSON #3: “The day of the Lord” involves the tribulation period as well as the millennial kingdom.

LESSON #4: It is possible to be asleep spiritually and miss so much of what God has for us.

LESSON #5: To be “self-controlled” is to live in light of our future.

LESSON #6: We are commanded not to go on sleeping but to be awake and self-controlled.

LESSON #7: We are to put on the “breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.”

LESSON #8: God did not appoint us to wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

LESSON #9: Jesus died for us on the cross of Calvary.

LESSON #10: We are to be encouraging and edifying one another.