



Women's R&R Bible Study 2024-2025

"YOUR WORDS WERE FOUND, AND I ATE THEM, AND YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART."

JEREMIAH 15:16

LIVING IN HOPE

LESSON 5

In last week's lesson, Paul gave the Thessalonians some practical suggestions on spiritual growth. I pray that we take them to heart. He also encouraged us with some facts concerning Christ's Second Coming. This week we will begin with Paul's description of the "Day of the Lord." This is the last chapter of 1 Thessalonians -- can you believe it? Continue to pray that the Holy Spirit will give you knowledge of His Word and the wisdom to apply it.

Memory Verse of the Week: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28 through a few times. This chapter can be broken down into three sections. Observe and write the facts in each.

A. Verses 1-11:

B. Verses 12-22:

C. Verses 23-28:

2. What immediate application do you see for yourself today?

The word **“time”** in verse one denotes chronological time. The word **“seasons”** is used of the right time for a thing. In this section, these words have to do with the events happening on the earth.

3. Notice the change of pronouns in this section. Where do they change? Whom is he speaking to each time?

What is the **“Day of the Lord”**? Does it refer to a 24-hour period? Although it does mean that sometimes (Genesis 2:3), it can also mean a specific time during which God accomplishes some special purpose. One technical definition is this: “The Day of the Lord is a future period of time in which God will be at work in world affairs more directly and dramatically than He has been since the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Thomas L. Constable)

“The Day of the Lord” is a span of time that begins with the rapture of the Church and includes the Great Tribulation and the personal reign of Jesus Christ during the millennium. Another term used for this period of time is “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7). In the Old Testament, this phrase often refers to the judgment of the nations, and it seems the New Testament emphasizes the judgment of the individual.

4. Read the following Scriptures that describe the “Day of the Lord.” Write the facts you find in each.
 - A. Amos 5:18-20
 - B. Zephaniah 1:14-18
 - C. Joel 2:1-3
 - D. Isaiah 2:12-21
5. Why do you think Paul says that day comes as a “thief in the night”? What point is he trying to make?
6. Will this be a surprise to unbelievers? What will be happening in the world at the time?

“Sudden destruction” does not talk about annihilation, but “utter and hopeless ruin” and the “loss of all that gives worth to existence.” “Peace” means absence of alarm, and “safety” refers to blind security. At the very moment the world feels secure, this destruction will hit.

7. Will the unbelievers be able to escape this?
8. Paul reminds them that no one can predict when these events will happen. Why does everyone want to know “when”?
9. Notice that Paul is speaking to “they” when he says it shall come as a “thief in the night.” Why shouldn’t believers be taken by surprise? Read Jesus’ words in Matthew 24:36-44.

Paul didn’t feel like he had to say much to them concerning the Day of the Lord. He must have already taught them these truths. They still seemed to be curious about when it would all take place. Paul tells them that it is unpredictable, yet inevitable. Listen to this quote by Leith Samuel:

“If there is one thing certain about the timing of the Lord’s return it is this, that we cannot be certain of the timing.”

10. If you knew for sure that the Lord was coming back for you tomorrow, what would you change in your life today? (Why not make that change?)

I hope that we will not be taken by surprise. I pray that we all will be waiting and watching for His soon return. Even though we don’t know the day or the hour, we can be ready. Are you?

Take a look at verses 4-11. Paul goes from using “they” to “you” in verse 4. He is now talking to the believers.

- 11.** Contrast living “in darkness” to living “in the light.” What characteristics do you find in each? Use this text, along with Colossians 1:13-14, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Ephesians 5:8-20, and any others you find.

The phrase “sons of” means to be “characterized by that particular thing” (like “sons of strength, sons of thunder,” etc.). “Sons of light” would mean “people characterized by light.” Paul uses sleeping and drunkenness as a contrast to watchful and sober.

Paul said to watch and be sober. **Watch** refers to mental alertness, and Jesus uses this word also in Matthew 24:42-43, 25:13, and Mark 13:34-37. **Sober** has a moral emphasis, condemning all kinds of excess. It means to show self-control and be balanced in all areas of your life. **Sleep** in verse 6 refers to spiritual lethargy, insensibility, or callous indifference. This causes conformity to the world.

- 12.** In what ways are Christians today guilty of “sleeping”? What are some reasons for spiritual laziness? What does Paul say in Romans 13:11?

- 13.** Describe what it means to live a “Life of Watchfulness.”

- 14.** Are you “sleeping” in any area of your life? Which phrase would best describe your life: “Spiritually indifferent” or a “Life of Watchfulness”?

Paul tells us in verse 7 that sleeping and getting drunk at night are natural human experiences. He then contrasts that with what should be normal experiences for the children of the day. He says to be sober and get suited up like a soldier preparing for battle. We are to be ready for spiritual conflict. Paul often uses spiritual armor as an illustration (Romans 13:12-13, 2 Corinthians 6:7, 10:4, Ephesians 6:13-17). Here he describes the

famous triad of faith, hope, and love as armor that protects us in this world. This should be the ordinary “apparel” for a Christian.

- 15.** How do we practically “put on” this armor?
- 16.** Why do you think Paul put the emphasis on “HOPE”? How does it act as a helmet and protect our mind?

Paul says that we have been appointed to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ (vs 9). Here he places the initiative and responsibility on God for our salvation. Salvation is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8). Even though human responsibility is involved, our salvation begins with Him.

In verse 10, Paul says that Jesus “died for us.” Specifically, for us. It’s important to notice that it doesn’t say Jesus was killed, but that He died for us. He willingly went to the cross for our sin.

- 17.** What exciting promise and comfort do we find in verse 10? What two commands are in verse 11?

We find comfort in knowing that we are going to live forever with Jesus, no matter what! Paul saved the best for last by sharing this truth. Paul commends them for the great job they’re doing of building each other up.

- 18.** What do you think it means to “build each other up”? How can we use the truths found in this chapter to encourage and “build up” our brothers and sisters in the Lord? Give some practical ways to do this.

- 19.** In verses 12-18, Paul lays out some principles on holy and acceptable living before God. (This is gonna be good!) Why do you think Paul's statements are so abrupt?

Paul begins by exhorting the Thessalonians to listen to the rulers of the church, who were probably appointed by Paul (Acts 14:23). Most commentators believe that Paul is bringing this up because the elders most likely had already admonished those Christians who had stopped working because of their belief of the Second Coming. The Thessalonians seemed to disregard the rebuke, possibly because the leaders were converted about the same time as they were. **(The word admonish is used only by Paul and is a word designed "to correct while not provoking or embittering.")** We will discuss the qualifications for a leader later in the study of Timothy and Titus.

- 20.** How did Paul say to treat "those who are over you in the Lord"? Why? How do we do this? (Share Scriptures if possible.) How would doing this bring peace?

The word **"recognize"** or **"know"** in verse 12 means to "acknowledge, appreciate, and value." **"Esteem"** means to hold them in high regard. We are to not only respect, honor, and refrain from criticizing our leaders, but we are to share in their labor (vs 14-22).

- 21.** How do you treat those in leadership over you? Do you value them? Does that mean you always have to agree with them? How should you handle disagreement?
- 22.** What's the difference between respecting and honoring the leaders, and idolizing them?

23. What four exhortations does Paul give in verse 14?

The word **“unruly”** is better translated as idle. It is a military word that referred to a soldier who was out of step. It means “that which is out of order.” This is probably referring to the ones who had stopped working or were unwilling to submit to the elders of the church. For whatever reason they were “out of order.”

The word **“fainthearted”** or **“febleminded”** refers to those who had lost courage, or those who were falling away under the pressures of persecution, etc. They were despondent, lacking energy and boldness. W. E. Vines gives some causes from this text that produces faintness of heart: “Sensitivity to criticism (2:3-6), dread of persecution (3:3), a sense of failure to follow the Lord (1:6), and apprehensiveness concerning the future (4:13).

The **“weak”** refers to those who were spiritually and morally weak, who were having trouble standing against temptation. We are supposed to “uphold” or “help” them. This word means to hold on to something or cleave to a person.

24. Do you know anyone who is fainthearted right now? What are some ways you can encourage them? Give some practical suggestions.

25. Are you the one who is idle, fainthearted, or weak? Have you become rebellious? Lost courage? Yielded to temptation? Ask the Lord for help. He’s there for you. Can you share your burden with a friend so they might help you, too?

26. Why is it important for all the body of Christ to heed these exhortations?

- 27.** Beginning in verse 15, list all the exhortations Paul gives to the Thessalonians.
- 28.** Are we supposed to seek good only for ourselves? Was Paul including those who were persecuting them in this list of people to be kind to?
- 29.** How is it possible to rejoice no matter what the circumstance? How do rejoicing, unceasing prayer, and thankfulness work together?
- 30.** Which of Paul's exhortations specifically grabbed and spoke to your heart?

Spend some time in prayer, asking the Lord if you're falling short in obedience to any of Paul's exhortations. Abstaining from any form of evil? Holding fast to good? Not quenching the Spirit? May we all have ears to hear!