

LESSON 5 – WATCH AND BE SOBER

I Thessalonians 5:1-28

Summary

In chapter 5, Paul continues his explanation of the Lord's return from the close of chapter 4; however, he focuses on the unexpected timing and suddenness of His coming, which will bring destruction to those who are unprepared. Naturally, Paul's exhortation for the Thessalonians and us is to be always prepared and spiritually vigilant. We should be comforted by the certainty of the Lord's return and reunion of His saints – both dead and alive, but we are to be edified unto sobriety and vigilance, because of the unknowable timing of these events. Closing admonitions to appropriately recognize both the strong and the weak are provided. Loosely grouped exhortations to take advantage of God's revelation, cling to it, and discard what is not good are also given. The letter closes with a prayerful blessing and benediction for the Thessalonians complete preservation and related instructions.

Bible Reading With Questions

Watching for the Lord's Return – I Thessalonians 5:1-11

1. How is the Lord's return like a thief and a pregnant woman?
2. What does it mean to be a "son of light" or "son of day"? Contrast this with being a "son of night" or "son of darkness".
3. When does the Christian take off his spiritual armor?
4. How did God "appoint us ... to obtain salvation ...not wrath"? Does this verse support Calvinism?
5. How do we "live together with Him" with those who "sleep" (verse 10)?
6. Was Paul's instruction on this point supposed to merely produce a sense of comfort and peace? Explain.

Recognize and Pursue the Appropriate Good for All – I Thessalonians 5:12-15

7. Who are "those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you"? Could this refer to evangelists?
8. Why and how do we "esteem them highly"?

9. How do we distinguish among the “*unruly, ... fainthearted, ... weak*”? How do we know who fits in what category?
10. What should be the overarching principle for all of our interactions with others? Why does revenge not comply with this principle?

Clinging to God’s Word – I Thessalonians 5:16-22

11. How would the Thessalonians have “*quenched the Spirit*” or “*despised prophecies*”? How would this apply to us today?
12. Are Christians to be simple, naïve, gullible people, who believe everyone who claims to speak for God? Explain. Providing supporting Scriptures. Is this limited to testing false prophets?
13. What is a “*form of evil*”? How do we “*abstain from it*”?

Closing Commands and Benediction – I Thessalonians 5:23-28

14. What is the distinction and significance among “*spirit, soul, and body*” (verse 23)?
15. How is God “*faithful*”? Is not faith a requirement for us to believe in Him, not the other way around?
16. Should we observe the “*holy kiss*” today? Are we inconsistent or selective in our rigid observation of New Testament commands?
17. Was this letter to be hid? How would this practice affect the Bible’s compilation?