

The King is Coming #12

1 Thessalonians 5: 1-7

In our last study Paul dealt with the comfort and assurance of the rapture of the church that would include all of those who have been born again, living and dead alike. Now he turns his attention to the Day of the Lord. Apparently after Paul's departure questions arose within the church concerning the Rapture and the Second Coming, the Day of the Lord. As we discovered in [Chp.3](#), Paul sent Timothy to spend some time with the church and evidently upon his return to Paul, he shared these concerns with him. We know that Paul had already addressed these issues with the church in Thessalonica because he again deals with it in the opening verses of [II Thes.2, vv.1-5](#).

The words that Paul sends to Thessalonica are not a complete theological examination of the Second Coming, but rather a pastoral address to settle them and guide them as they look toward that day. He is not dealing as much with the particular events of the Second Coming as he is the state of affairs upon the earth at that time.

(Here we find great support for the doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture. Paul had dealt with the rapture in the previous chapter and he immediately begins to deal with the Day of the Lord. The rapture of the church will precede the Tribulation and after the church is taken away, the events of the Day of the Lord, or the Great Tribulation, will begin in rapid succession, culminating with the return of Christ to judge the world and Satan, establishing His throne for the Millennial Reign.)

So, let's take a few moments to consider the [issues](#) that Paul deals with as we think on the thought: [The King is Coming](#).

I. The Return of the Savior (1-3) – In these verses Paul is dealing with the Second Coming of the Lord. This is a separate event from the rapture. During the rapture Jesus will appear in the clouds, but during the Day of the Lord, He will actually return bodily to the earth.

- The Day of the Lord is spoken of many times in Scripture. It is referenced 19 times in the Old Testament: [Is.2:12; 13:6, 9; Ezek.13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18](#) [two times], [20; Odad.15; Zeph.1:7, 14](#) [2 times]; [Zech.14:1; Mal.4:5](#). It is also referenced four times in the New Testament: [Acts 2:20; here v.2; II Thes.2:2; II Pet.3:10](#). What can we discover about His coming and how we are to anticipate it?

A. The Expectation of Jesus' Return (1) – Paul speaks of the times and seasons prior to the Lord's return. He reveals that there is no need for him to devote time to that; it has already been extensively dealt with in the Old Testament and even in the Gospels. No man knows the day or the hour anyway. It is foolish to seek signs and predictions.

- He speaks of the **times** that men look toward. This is from the Greek word *chronos* and deals with “*chronological time, clock or calendar time.*” He also deals with **seasons**, from the Greek word *kairos*, and it deals with “*events, eras, or seasons.*” Two different and distinct indicators that men look toward to estimate the Lord’s coming.
- Paul declared there was no need to invest their time in such desires, but live each day in full expectation of His coming.
- Clearly the church today ought to live in expectation and earnest anticipation of the Lord’s coming. It is not a fairy tale or myth. It isn’t something we hope will one day happen. The Lord will come for the church and rapture us out. Are we really living with that expectation? Did you wake this morning thinking this could be the day?

B. The Imminence of Jesus’ Return (2) – Paul reminds them of a fact that Jesus spoke of Himself. The Lord will come as a thief in the night, at a time when no man knows or expects His coming. It could happen at any moment. The world will not be ready or prepared for that day when it comes.

- As I looked at this I was reminded of how close we really could be to the Lord’s coming for the church and the ushering in of the Great Tribulation upon the earth. In the prophetic calendar, there isn’t one thing that needs to happen prior to our Lord’s coming. When He comes the judgment will begin.

C. The Indifference toward Jesus’ Return (3) – Here we discover the attitude of mankind in that day. Notice the use of the pronoun **they**. He speaks of those who are left upon the earth after the rapture. They are indifferent to His coming and do not look for it. Consider:

1. Man’s Delusion (3a) – Man is delusional about the return of the Lord. They do not want to accept the fact that He is coming again. They give no thought or care to any accountability to the holy God. With the return of Christ at hand, the world will continue on their delusional path, denying reality and prophesying peace on earth.

- Are we not experiencing that same delusional attitude today? The world continues to live as it pleases, believing the lie that nothing could ever prevent or hinder their prosperity. They refuse to hear the Word of God and turn from their wicked ways. We are seeing the prophecy our Lord gave fulfilled in our generation. **Mat.24:37-38 – But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. [38] For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark.**

2. Man's Destruction (3b) – Mankind may deny the Lord's return; they may continue to live as if there is no end, but one day the Lord will bring swift, unrelenting judgment upon them.

- Their destruction will be swift and **they shall not escape**. When the Lord begins to pour out His wrath and judgment upon the earth there will be no escape, no place to hide or avoid the destruction that will come. (Rev.6: 12-17)

I. The Return of the Savior (1-3)

II. The Reflection of the Saints (4-7) – In these verses Paul seeks to further encourage and enlighten the church about the coming of the Lord. These words have application for us as well. Notice:

A. Our Association (4a) – He yet again reminds them of their association with Christ. They are **brethren**, not of the world. Those who are unsaved will be left to face the wrath of God, but the church will be caught away into the presence of the Lord. They were worried much about the Day of the Lord but had failed to realize their relationship with Christ and the enormous benefit that afforded them.

- Paul also reminds them that they are not in **darkness**. They maybe didn't understand all that the Lord would do at His coming, but they were not ignorant of it either. They had the Word of God to guide them. They had the assurance that the Spirit would illuminate their minds as they studied the Scripture.

- I rejoice that we do not walk in darkness. I will be the first to admit that I can't comprehend all that God is or all that He does. I don't fully understand all that will transpire during the Tribulation. But, I have been born again; I do walk in the light. I have the assurance of eternal life and I know that my Lord loves me! He will care for me all the way.

B. Our Anticipation (4b) – Paul is not referring to the Day of the Lord overtaking them because they will be raptured prior to that, but he is revealing that their lives ought to be lived in anticipation of the Lord's coming. They should know enough Scripture to be able to see things lining up for His coming.

- I am amazed by the flurry of predictions that have been made as of late about our Lord's return. As we have said, no man knows the day or the hour. We have no way to predict His coming, but it should not come as a surprise if it were today. Actually we should live each day expecting the Lord to return for the church.

C. Our Allegiance (5) – The world around them was filled with darkness, those who lived according to the lusts of the flesh and with no reflection of the Lord or His coming. They were not of the world; they were of the light and of the day. They had been born again into the glorious light of Christ. He was their source and their strength.

- Even if others denied His coming, the church was to live a life that honored the Lord and expected His return.

D. Our Awareness (6-7) – Here is yet another reminder of our obligation to live for the Lord and look for Him. The world lives in darkness, desiring that darkness rather than light. The church was not to be consumed with the desires of the flesh. They were admonished to **watch and be sober**. That means they were to be “*alert and on guard, constantly looking for the Lord to come*”. Their lives were to be lived with a *rigid discipline, one of purity and righteousness*.

- Would you not agree that we need to be watching today? We need to live lives in light of the Lord and seek to reach others before it is too late. When the Lord returns for the church, those who are left will face the horrors of God’s judgment in Tribulation.

These verses have been somewhat challenging to comprehend, but they have stirred my soul. I am reminded that we need to be busy for the Lord. He could return at any moment and the time for our labor for Him will have ended. We need to be doing what He has called us to do. There is a world of lost people around us who would face the judgment if the Lord were to come today.

I have to ask where you stand with the Lord. Have you trusted Him in salvation? The Day of the Lord is coming, immediately following the rapture of the church. If you are unsaved, you will be left to endure the wrath of God. There is no need for that to happen. Christ died that you might be saved if you will only come to Him by faith.