

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Rapture Ready, Part 2

5 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. ⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

But concerning the times and the seasons,

A) What Times and seasons is he talking about – context – Ch.4 – Rapture – that time -

B) THAT time when **Jesus Himself** comes to the clouds - Died in Christ are **with Him**

1) We who are alive and remain are **caught up** - Harpazo – Latin Raptus – English Rapture

C) **Caught up or snatched away – Meet Jesus in the clouds – those who died are WITH HIM**

1) **GLORIOUS REUNION** – high fives – hugs – He ushers us as His bride into heaven

D) **Wedding celebration** – Planet Earth endures 7 years of intense tribulation – God's Wrath –

1) Christ rejecting world

V.2 He calls it **The Day of the Lord** – time period that begins with the rapture and culminates with the 2nd coming.

A) Joel 2:31 – **A great and Terrible day** – How can it be BOTH?

B) **KNOW JESUS** – Great! – Don't – Terrible!

1) Those days shortened no one survive

C) Here he gives us some insight about the time leading up to the Rapture

Like a Thief in the night:

A) **Unexpected time** – surprise – to those who are not expecting it

B) **Thieves don't call ahead** – Mr. Salvato – Courtesy call – neighborhood burglar – Friday between 9pm -11pm – will rob you

C) They come at an unexpected time – resting – off guard – peace and safety

D) **Moved to Oregon – my wife grew up there – country – we moved to Salem 3rd biggest city – "don't need to lock our doors/cars – Oregon"**

E) **Morning** – Car Stereo was gone!

1) That is the idea: **Blind** – everything is going to be ok!

Like a woman who is going to have a baby – All of sudden – intense labor pains – IT IS TIME!

A) **MATTHEW 24 – WHEN will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age? – Labor pains** –

B) **More frequent** – more intense – closer you get

C) **Signs in the book of Joel** – warnings

1) **JOEL** – describes a plague of locust – **This is like something we have never seen before.**

D) We read about some of the cataclysmic things: Natural disasters – Social disasters – unprecedented last few years

1) Things going on in our world – **intensity** is like **NOTHING WE HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE!**

E) **Like a thief in the night** – **UNEXPECTED TIME** that catches unbelievers off guard!

1) **BUT NOT FOR BELIEVERS IN JESUS V.4**

⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

A) **Burglar analogy** – Police show up there have been a series of robberies – **be on guard** –

B) **Form a neighborhood watch** – we are **NOW**

READY – WATCHING

C)PREPARED – YOU ARE NOT CAUGHT OFF GUARD – You are sons of light – been ENLIGHTENED

1)NOT IN THE DARK – Matthew 24: **Let no one deceive you.**

Paul proceeds to give us insight on how we can make sure we are prepared! – 3 Exhortations

#1 Wake up!

⁶Therefore let us not sleep, as others do,

A)The word Sleep here spiritually speaks of having Indifference – no urgency - nap time

B)Not a care in the world – Paul is saying we should care – be concerned

Romans 13:11

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

I heard about an old farmer that had a grandfather clock that went haywire and chimed fourteen times one midnight.

He jumped up and said, **“Wake up, Nellie, it’s later than it’s ever been before.”**

PEOPLE: It’s later than it’s ever been before.
Time to wake up

Causes of Spiritual Drowsiness?

A)What causes people who were once attentive and in tune – to become indifferent & lackadaisical Spiritually ?

B)Sin/Compromise – Samson is a classic example

C)Judges 13 we read of this man Samson – blessed by God with super human strength

1)He was called to be a deliver of Israel.

Samson’s life was marked by a series of compromises

A)Thing was – with each compromise – there seemed to be no ramifications

B)God didn’t judge him – it seems that Samson began to think he was above the rules

C)Big mistake – if you are living in compromise – don’t interpret God’s silence for – acceptance
1)Just His grace giving you time to come to your senses

The thing that Samson didn’t see is his compromise was hurting his walk with God –

A)And taking him deeper into sin! – Sin is always progressive!

B)Finally – at his lowest moment – when he had been lulled to sleep

C)Samson is told – wake up the enemy is here

Judges 16:20

So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.

D)Sin and compromise – saps us of our spiritual vitality and lulls us to sleep.

Lack of Fellowship:

Hebrews 10:24-25 **And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**

A)**The word stir up = to Stimulate** – Paddles used to stimulate the heart to get it going again / Electrical currents – limbs going

B) We need Friendships that stimulate your walk with the Lord! **{Build up rather than tear down! Think about your closest relationships - what are the key ingredients? What effects does time together have on you?**

A)Idea of stirring up reminds us of what happens when coals are in a fire! Get hotter! - *On fire for Jesus!*

Pastor went to visit a personbeen in a while / chilly night / fire / big chair / greeting sat silence / fire After some minutes, he took the fire tongs, carefully picked up **a brightly burning ember** and placed it to one side of the fire place Then he sat back in his chair, still silent.

The host watched all this in quiet fascination.

As the lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow, but then its fire was no more and **it was cold and dead.** Not a word had been spoken since the initial greetings. But as the minister rose to leave, the host said,

"Thank you so much for your visit—and especially for your fiery sermon. I shall be at church next Sunday."

In activity: It is hard to fall asleep when you are working –

If I rest, I rust. - Martin Luther

It is better to wear out than to rust out. – Whitefield

"Exercise yourself toward godliness. ⁸ For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." 1 Timothy 4:7,8

The Word – Serving – Steps of Faith

Prayerlessness: Jesus told his disciples to pray – instead they were sleeping

A)Result Peter reacts in the flesh – Put away your sword.

B)Prayer keeps us sharp

C)So the First thing Paul tells us to do is to Wake up – Stop sleeping !

#2 Watch:

A) Watching – It is the opposite of indifference. It involves alertness!

It was Lee and Karen's first date: After an hour she assumed **she was being stood** up – put on PJ's raided the pantry for her favorite snacks – snuggled on the couch with her dog – to watch TV.

After about an hour she hears a knock on the door – she goes to answer it – **It is Lee** – He takes one look at her and says:

I am two hours late – and you are still not ready!

Fear that is the sad case with some believers today: **Jesus is not late – but He has delayed his coming**

A) People who were once fervent in their faith have put on their PJ's and fallen asleep

B)Don't know the day or the hour – but we should know the **times and the seasons.**

**C)You look to the sky and can tell when a storm is coming – you should be able to look at signs
1)Know that we are getting closer to His coming!**

Kids waiting for Dad to come home/ Dog

A)Car in the driveway - Kids running out – Dog barking –

B)Kids today – too busy on video games - distracted

Bud Wood, founded Shepherds Home in Wisconsin a Christian home for boys and girls with developmental disabilities.

Mr. Wood – says the biggest maintenance problem at Shepherds Home is DIRTY WINDOWS

Our kids press their hands and faces against the windows because they're looking to the sky to see if today might be the day that Jesus will return for them and take them to His home where they will be healed and complete."

People who don't realize they're not whole – don't live with that type of anticipation!

#1 Wake up – # 2 Watch – #3 Be Sober

A)As "watch" denotes alertness, so "sober" denotes stability;

B)Sober doesn't mean Somber – Christians should be all serious!

C)V.16 Rejoice always – V.18 Everything give thanks

Ephesians 5:18 Don't be drunk with Wine.... Be continuing being filled with the Holy Spirit

A)Describes it as singing – rejoicing – giving thanks encouraging – each other.

B) Idea is don't let your life be marked by any outside stimulants – Booze – Drugs – Pleasure – Possessions

1) That is the mindset of the world – get drunk

C) **The stimulation for our** lives – should be God's spirit

D) Results in a stability and an alertness – Joyful in the Lord

1) Mindful of the time that we are living in!

E) **Not of the dark – Sleep night – drunk at night**

1) We are of the Light – the Day

To further this idea of being alert and watchful Paul uses the image of a Solider. – Armor on.

V. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation

A) Solider who has his armor on is aware that he is in a battle. – **Always on alert** – not off guard!

B) A soldier's **breastplate protected his vital organs**, the area where he was most vulnerable.

1) It was the ancient equivalent of a bulletproof vest.

C) Interesting that this Breastplate is Characterized by **Faith and Love**

1) Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God!

D) Faith comes through the word – grows through the word

1) Knowledge of the Word grows – so does our Love for Jesus

E) More we grow in the word – the more we come to understand – how much He loves us – RESPOND

THE Helmet – protects the head – the mind!

A) The Helmet is the Hope or the assurance of our Salvation – Knowing – Jesus has SAVED US!

B) ULTIMATE RESCUER

For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

A) Not appointed unto Wrath – context is the last days – the Day of the Lord

B) Why are we not appointed unto Wrath ? Jesus paid it all !

C) Some argue: Believers throughout the centuries of the Church have suffered tribulation.

1) Jesus said – in this world you will have Tribulation

D) True – Tribulation and persecution are from the Devil – results of Sin

The Great Tribulation is FROM GOD – HIS wrath is being poured out!

A) Paul says – Christ Follower – Cheer up – NOT APPOINTED UNTO WRATH

B) Right now you have an appointment, either to wrath or to salvation.

1) TOTALLY DEPENDS ON your relationship to Jesus!

C) Unbeliever - Wrath – Tribulation time – Hell

1) Believer – appointment to Salvation – delivered

Joel 3:14 “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is **near in the valley of decision.”**

V.11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

A) Note : Paul again tells us not to take comfort, but to give **comfort**.

B) Comfort one another - times like this we need to be reminding each other – this is not our Home!

1) Comfort = to encourage – keep going !

C) Edify = Build up

1) **Don't grow weary in well doing – in due season reap**

Jesus is Coming - Know that

Wake up –

Watch –

Sober – filled by the Spirit

Ready?