

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

First RPC Durham

I. The Return of Christ Will Come at an Unknown Time (vv 1-3)**A.** Christ will come again at an unknown time.**1)** *As a thief in the night*

- a)** What this does not mean: not secretly. (4:16)
- b)** What this does mean: unexpected and unwanted (v 3)

2) *You have no need*

- a)** The example of Christ's incarnation (Gal 4:4-5).
- b)** The teaching of Scripture that the judgement of God comes on a day unknown (Isa 13:8-9; Mt 24:42-44; 2 Pt 3:10)

B. Yet there are times and seasons before Christ's coming

- 1)** As with the incarnation of Christ (Dan 2:44, 9:24)
- 2)** So with Christ's coming, there are times and seasons:
 - a)** The Destruction of the Temple in AD 70 (Mk 13:1-2)
 - b)** The revealing of the Man of Sin (2 Thes 2:3)
 - c)** The destruction of all of Christ's enemies (Rev 16:19)
 - d)** Great Gospel expansion throughout the nations, so that the number of all who are elected for salvation is fulfilled (Isa 2:2; Psa 72:8).
 - e)** Satan's final defeat at Christ's return (Rev 20:7, 9)

C. Yet for many, they will not be looking for His coming

- 1)** Being content in themselves (Heb 9:27; Psa 115:8 Jer 8:11)
- 2)** Yet once destruction comes, it is inescapable (Lk 16:23-24)

D. Uses from the Text

- 1)** We are not to seek to know the day of Christ's coming.
- 2)** We are to be humble, recognizing we are not guaranteed tomorrow. (Jms 4:14-15)
- 3)** We are to have our hope in Christ alone for our salvation.
- 4)** We are to be discerning of the times in which we live.
- 5)** The Church is to have a different understanding of peace and safety than the world (Psa 122:7)

II. The Church is to be Watchful for Christ's Return (vv 4-5)**A.** Christians are not to be caught off-guard at Christ's return, as the wicked will be.

- 1)** Because we are neither in darkness nor in the night, as those outside the Church
 - a)** We are not to be in the darkness of ignorance (1 Cor 2:14).
 - b)** We are not caught up in the darkness of sin (Eph 5:8)
 - c)** We are not asleep in the dark of night (Jn 11:11-14, 39-44)
- 2)** Because we are of the light and of the day
 - a)** We are to have remembrance of these things (Psa 119:130; Dt 6:7)
 - b)** We are to be walking in righteousness, with clear conscience before the Lord (1 Jn 2:8, 10)
 - c)** We are to be awake, vigilant (Jdg 7:5-6).

B. Uses from the Text

- 1)** Self-Examination
- 2)** Walk in the light as children of the light (1 Jn 1:5-7)

III. Applications for the Church's Watchfulness (vv 6-11)

- A.** Be awake, not asleep (vv 6-8a; Eph 5:14-16)
- B.** Be filled with the Spirit, not wine (vv 6-8a; Eph 5:18)
- C.** Put on the armor of God (v 8b)
 - 1)** We are in a fight (Eph 6:11-12)
 - 2)** We need the right armor (1 Sam 17:39; Isa 59:16-17)
 - 3)** The Breastplate of Faith and Love (Psa 2:12)
 - 4)** The Helmet of the Hope of Salvation
 - a)** The hope of salvation guards our thoughts from despair (Phil 1:21)
 - b)** The hope of salvation guards our eyes from covetousness (Jb 31:1-2)
 - c)** The hope of salvation guards our ears from falsehood (Pr 17:3-4, ESV).
- D.** Cling to the hope of the Gospel (vv 9-10; Rom 8:29-30)
- E.** Comfort one another with the reminder of Christ's return (v 11a)
- F.** Edify one another with the hope of Christ's return (v 11a)
- G.** We are to grow in the graces already given us (v 11b)
 - 1)** For some, this is a needed instruction
 - 2)** For some, this is a needed exhortation (Mt 25:1-13)
 - 3)** For some, this is an encouragement (Lk 2:25; Song of Songs 8:14).