

In the first half of Paul's final chapter to the church in Thessalonica, he continues to focus on the coming day of the Lord. Unlike chapter four where he stressed hopefulness and encouragement of Jesus' return, in chapter five his attention is given to the timing of the event, and our inability to know with certainty when it will take place. Instead of being concerned with the day and hour, Paul draws the church's attention on how they ought to live in light of Jesus' return.

1 Thessalonians

5:1-11

The Day of the Lord

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

For some, surprises can be frustrating. Having some knowledge of an intended surprise or celebration can be even more frustrating. However, there are times when not having all the details can actually be healthy, even a way of protecting us from behavior that may follow "knowing too much".

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

HOW well do you handle being in the "unknown"?

DESCRIBE a time when you only had partial information of an event and how it shaped the way you responded.

WHEN faced with unknowns, how does knowing that there *is* someone in control with your best interests in mind effect you?

WHY do you think we tend to struggle with spiritual unknowns, especially with a Good Father watching over us?

1 Thessalonians

5:1-11

The Day of the Lord

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

OBSERVATION

According to vs. 1, does Paul believe the Thessalonians need any information regarding the Lord's return?

How is the day of the Lord described in vs. 2-4?

In vs. 4-5, what does Paul say in order to build confidence in the coming day of the Lord, for those receiving this letter?

How are we to live in light of this Day's approach? (vs. 6-8)

What promise does Paul remind his readers of in vs. 9-10?

In the final verse of this section, what command does Paul give?

INTERPRETATION

What is the Day of the Lord? See Joel 2:1-2, 31-32; 1 Corinthians 1:8; Philippians 1:6; and 2 Peter 3:10 for insight.

Why would the Thessalonians not need to have anything written to them regarding the times and seasons of this particular event? (Consider Act 1:6-7 and Matthew 24:36-44)

What is Paul implying when he compares the day of the Lord to a "thief in the night" and "labor pains"?

How did Jesus describe His return in Matthew 24:43 and Revelation 3:3, 16:15?

In vs. 6, what does Paul mean when he calls the believers to keep awake and not sleep? Consider Ephesians 5:15-18.

What does it look like to put on the *breastplate of faith* and *helmet of salvation* (vs. 8), in light of this coming day?

How does the promise Paul gives in vs. 10 strengthen *you* in the reality of this coming Day?

APPLICATION

What would it look like to encourage and build one another up in this information, just as Paul calls us to do in vs. 11?