

MORE: Jesus from beginning to end.

a study of 1 Thessalonians

Series Intro God is working through the gospel of Jesus Christ for **more** in your life. **Cultivating in you and helping you long for more Jesus is the aim of this series. To know God is to long for more Jesus.**

MORE: Live Ready for MORE

1 Thes 5:1-11

MPS: Christians live ready for God's MORE by consuming life with Jesus now.

OBJ: Every Christian can live ready for God's MORE when we live by four truths.

READ 1 Thes 5:1-11

*Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. **1 The 5:1-11***

INTRO [a story of being ready] I'm going to get real personal with you right up front for a moment. As a senior in high school I made a significant decision about my life to always live ready. So, I decided to always sleep in gym shorts. That I sleep in shorts is not the important part of this story. The important part is WHY I made this decision many years ago.

As a Senior in High School, the phone rang late one night after I had come in from a night on the town. It was a friend in our small town telling me that another friend's, who I had been out with that night, house was on fire. I jumped in my car and rushed over there. Many people were already there when I arrived. I was so relieved to see my friend and all his family had safely escaped the fire. However, there he stood among many dozens of people and all he managed to escape with, his underwear. I wish I could tell you he was in boxers. He was not. Thank goodness he didn't wear bikini briefs!

That night as I saw the tragedy of my friend's family's house go up in smoke and lose everything, all I could think was, "I will be ready from now on. I will never get caught running out of a burning house from my sleep only in my underwear."

Q? How do we live for God's MORE, for faith, love and hope to grow in us for God's glory?

TRANS We have seen how Jesus is our one hope because He alone satisfies all life's demands in faith and love. He is the better anchor that holds all of life at all time, in all situations, for all eternity. **Today we consider how we live ready for Jesus.**

Christians live ready for God's MORE by consuming life with Jesus now.

OBJ **Christian live ready when we live by 4 Truths.**

TRANS Christians live ready...

1. by the Lord's revelation: Jesus will return. 5:1-3

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "There is



peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Paul comforts and instructs the Thessalonians about the Lord’s coming. He moves his focus to individuals at this hour of Christ’s return to show the shock and judgment that will occur for those who are unprepared. He emphasizes what Romans 14:12 makes clear, “*So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.*” The believers in Thessalonica needed nothing more than what they already knew about Christ’s return. The Lord’s return would be “*like a thief in the night*”, an unknown time but not something to fear. [Being ready for Jesus’ return is determined by the way we live now.](#)

For those who did not believe, the Lord’s return would also be unknown, but very different, as well, unsuspected. Because of their unbelief, the event would be traumatic and horrifying. They will be consumed with their “peace and security”, and claiming, “We have life exactly where we want it. We are comfortable and confident, stable and secure, in control of our life.”

But unbelief is more than a decision. It is a denial of reality. And these people know it deep within, though they have seared their conscience to ignore and not deal with it. And their response proves this true. While they claim to have all under control, it will come “suddenly” upon them, “*as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape*” – the one to whom it is happening will have not control over it. Helpless to stop it, they will succumb to it. [Unbelief blinds to reality of God’s Word but doesn’t remove us from suffering under the consequences of denial.](#)

Those who do not believe in Jesus do not know that He will return. And His return will be complete shock and devastation for them. With the suddenness and surprise of birth pangs, a thief will arrive and “steal” all that they have placed their comfort and security in. They will be caught completely unaware and unprepared, exposed, and completely defenseless. [Those who do not believe in Jesus will be found “without excuse” \(Rom 1:20\), for in that moment their unbelief will be immortalized.](#)

But Christians should heed Paul’s counsel too. One great point of distraction in the Christian faith is demanding more from God than He has given to us. Believing the gospel does not mean we “trust when we have enough information to satisfy our doubts or unbelief”. Believe means to trust and obey because of who we know God to be, and what He has done for us. Trust allows us to rest in the fullness of God’s revelation to us as sufficient for us. [Unbelief masquerades as faith when we demand God give us more before He should expect us to obey.](#)

All God teaches in His Word is sufficient for us, for our security and well-being, our certainty and assurance, regardless of how uncomfortable it may make us at times. When our hope is anchored in Jesus, we live ready to welcome Him when He returns. [Christians live by the Lord’s revelation, that Jesus will return.](#)

TRANS Christians live ready...

2. by our new identity in Jesus Christ. 5:4-8

⁴But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

Christians live differently because we have a distinct identity, we are children of light. Christians don’t sweat the day. We fully anticipate what we do not know when. Our expectation is peaked anticipation, not stubborn consternation.

ILLUS **Preparing for family’s arrival.** I don’t know what it is like at your house when family is coming. But at my house, family coming is a life-changing experience. Everything gets changed from “what it has been” to “what momma says it will be”. And all of life is altered in order to accommodate this change. Then, once the house is re-painted, re-decorated, re-



organized, and completely re-assembled, we can sit for a few minutes before the family arrives. But not on the furniture. We don't want the cushions all smushed before they arrive. And those last 30 minutes before they arrive seem to take forever. Then come the moment when family arrive. "They're here!" someone screams. Everyone rushes to the door. The decibel-breaking, needle-maxing energy-o-meter of their arrival is here! Those first few moments are chaos, a rush of adrenaline from the release of the anticipation and excitement! "We thought you would never get here!" But NOW they are here! [Christians know Jesus is coming because we are family. And that changes the way we live for the anticipation of His arrival.](#)

TRANS It is a life-altering anticipation that Paul has in mind here.

Christians are children of light.(.5) We know Jesus is coming because we are part of his family. He's told us He is coming. And what He has said directs the way we live to be ready for Him. [When Christians live by our identity in Christ, we walk by faith in the light of the truth of His Word.](#)

TRANS Our preparedness for Jesus' return also directs us in what we do not do.

Christians live prepared by a life that is poised on Jesus. Paul describes a Christian's posture as "*awake and sober*". The attention, energy, intellect and activity of our life is focused on Jesus. We do not engage our life, neither intentionally nor passively, in the things that thrive in the dark because that is counter to who we are. The practices of our life, the patterns of our life and the proclamation of our life all points to Jesus at all times. [Awake means that our attention to Jesus' return produces a sober conviction of how we live in order to be ready for Him.](#)

Christians do not live as those of the night or darkness, neither "*asleep*" nor "*drunk*". Whether one lives in darkness regarding Jesus' return by unintentional disinterest (asleep) or intentional disregard (drunk), both produce the same unpreparedness, and represent the darkness. When a Christian participates in the activities and ways of the darkness, they live counter to their identity. When a Christian remains in sin by practice and participation, and even by the patterns of thinking, they shape their life by the dark, by a lie and deceit. Christians are not disinterested, unconcerned, neglectful nor rebellious regarding Jesus' return, but attentive and intentional in the way we live. [Christians live as children of light because we have been rescued from the kingdom of darkness.](#)(Col 1:13-14)

*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **Colossians 1:13-14***

Christians live as children of the light by putting on the truth of God's Word. Faith in Jesus and the love of God armor us for living. We live by residing in Jesus' love for peace and courage of heart, and by trusting in Jesus' Word for clarity of direction and action. Then, the hope of our salvation is the helmet that guards our mind and directs our thinking by the truth of God's Word, Jesus Christ. The way you live now reveals what you believe about Jesus, God's love for you by His sacrifice for you, and how He alone is worthy of all your hope. Christians consume our life by our identity in Christ, to live from this identity by faith. [Christians live prepared to welcome Jesus at His return by the way we walk with Him, awake and sober, fully clothed with Him.](#)

[Christians walk in the light of God to live by our new identity in Jesus.](#)

TRANS Christians live ready

3. by remembering the destiny Jesus obtained for us, our salvation. 5:9-10

⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.

Christians live by this deep assurance, that we need not demand to know all because we reside in the One who IS our all in all. This is not a concession, but a deep conviction that holds us when any part of us seems insufficient. By faith IN Jesus, our life is certain and sure, not maybe or uncertain. We know we are God's chosen because of the power of His Word and



Holy Spirit alive in us. Our salvation is sure in Jesus Christ. And because our salvation is sure, our life is secure in Him. [The certainty and assurance of our salvation is not found in performance success but in Christ's faithfulness.](#)

Eternal security for the Christian life is as sure as Jesus' resurrection that conquered death to give us life. We don't get overwhelmed in fear or crushed in spirit by the lies and schemes of the Evil One because our hope is set fully and our faith established firmly in the One who conquered. Christians are overcomers in this life because the One in whom our life is hidden, Jesus Christ, has conquered and overcome. Christ died once for all (Rom 6:10; Heb 7:27; 9:27), and your salvation will only be once for all time. There is no second or multiple salvations. (Heb 6:4-6). [Christian destiny is set when our justification is decided and our new creation has come.](#)

Make sure, friend, that you know you are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ that you might remember the destiny God has appointed for you. **Have you believed in Jesus, placed your faith in Him for salvation and set your hope fully upon Him, trusting in Him alone?**

[Christians live by remembering the destiny that Jesus has already obtained for us, our salvation.](#)

TRANS Christians live ready

4. by the courage and strength Jesus gives now. 5:11

¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Again, Paul reminds us of where Christian courage comes from in this life, a sure and certain understanding of the Lord's return, how time will end, and eternity will be ushered in.

WHAT you believe about Jesus WILL always determine how you live here and how. The best way to live fully assured and secure in your salvation in Jesus is to walk daily with Him. You will always take greatest comfort in, find your deepest hope in and draw regular strength from that which you are most familiar with. [Walking daily with Jesus strengthens us in our relationship with Him.](#)

When you walk daily with Jesus, you walk daily together with other Christ-followers. *Together* is as critical a practice for the believer as any because other Christ-follower become a regular source through which Christ's strength and courage to follow Him flows to you. While our destiny is secure, the reality of the here and now can be difficult and challenging. It is God's will for you to walk with other Christ-followers to depend on one another for the courage and strength only Jesus gives to come through only those who know Him. [When you are weak in Jesus' courage and strength it is likely because you've been distant from His people.](#)

[Christians live by the courage and strength Jesus gives now when we walk with other Christ-followers for daily courage and strength.](#)

[Christians live ready for God's MORE by consuming life with Jesus now.](#)

CLOSE Live ready, by all that God has said to you, by all that God has made you, by all that God has done for you, and all that Christ is in you. **Are YOU living in light of eternity, READY in the here and now for the glory of eternity with Him?**

