

WORSHIP

Suggested Worship Songs:

Praise Him Forever, Hosanna Praise is Rising, God the Son, Turn Your Eyes, So Faithful

WELCOME

How would you live your life if you knew you only have a week until Jesus Christ returns?

WORD

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. ³ While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5 teaches us how to live in the last days:

1. ALERT AS GOD'S WARRIORS (1 Thessalonians 5:1-7)

Paul is saying to the Thessalonian believers as a reminder that Jesus is coming back, and He will come just like a thief in the night when we are not expecting Him (vv.1-2). If we don't have Christ, we will really not be ready. Christ's coming is also likened to a woman giving birth—there's no turning back (v.3). When the labor pain is there, the inevitable is going to happen.

The good news is that in our relationship with the Lord, He doesn't just tell us how to live our lives. He actually transforms us and enables us to live out this life. He is reminding us that we are not the sons of darkness, but the sons of light (vv.4-5). We need to be alert (vv.6-7). Being alert is translated from the Greek word *grēgoreō* which means to stay awake, be watchful, be vigilant, or be on the lookout. It is an imperative command, urging believers to maintain a state of spiritual awareness and preparedness. It is talking about being spiritually awake, not just coasting through life.

If Jesus is not in you, you are not a child of God, and you are not in the light. When the "Day of the Lord" comes, the children of darkness are going to face destruction, will be asleep spiritually, and are not controlled by the Holy Spirit. The children of light will experience salvation, be alert spiritually, and be sober (controlled

by the Holy Spirit). Because Jesus is in you, you're a warrior of God. You can and should be alert!

2. ARMED WITH GOD'S WEAPONS (1 Thessalonians 5:8)

We need to arm ourselves with God's weapons because we are fighting a real battle (v.8).

The heart is important in our walk with the Lord because we make decisions from it either out of faith or out of fear (**Proverbs 4:23**). We need to protect and guard it. We need to walk by faith and not by sight. We are going to face trials and struggles. That is why we need faith in God's Word (**1 John 5:4**); it is He who helps us to overcome. We are going to experience inner battles and may want to give up but we have to hold on to God's promises.

Difficult times will come in the last days (**2 Timothy 3:1-2**). God made pleasure, so pleasure in itself is not wrong. But it's a misdirected love when we love ourselves, money, and pleasure more than we love God. God made us to love, so we have the capacity to love. God said He wants us to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. When we love God, our other loves fall into place in the right order. When we don't love God, we spiral into destruction. Always check your heart. Love God first and foremost!

WORD (cont'd)

The helmet protects the head. We make decisions from the head. We need to think clearly so we can make good decisions. The head and the heart are connected. Satan's playground is our mind. He gets into our minds, and he gives us wrong thoughts. We start getting deceived, and then we start believing a lie. If we don't have God's Word, we really get lost and struggle. That is why we need the helmet of salvation. Salvation is faith in Jesus Christ alone, and it is going to be under attack. Our minds will be under attack. It can be a fortress of lies. Our mind is powerful, but God is more powerful (**2 Corinthians 10:4-5**). When a thought enters our mind, we have to take it captive: what is the thought telling me, and what is the Bible telling me?

We need the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God (**Ephesians 6:17**). The Bible is a unique book and has one unifying message (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**)—it is about Jesus Christ. It is God's Word. It has the power to change lives. We need the sword because it is what gives us assurance.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Are you spiritually alert or asleep? Why do you say so?
2. What armor do you need to appropriate in your life as we live in these last days?
3. What is your view of the Bible? How do you plan to study, apply, and teach God's word this week?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for the salvation of loved ones who are not in Christ yet. Spend time with them and take the time to listen to their concerns. Connect them to God's Word and share the good news of salvation through Christ--- Who is returning soon!

MEMORY VERSE

1 Thessalonians 5:9-10

⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
¹⁰ who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.

3. ASSURED BY GOD'S WORD (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11)

We need to be assured by God's Word. The Bible is so reliable you can build your life on it. We need to know God's Word so we can have faith in His promises. Read, study, memorize, and teach God's Word. We should be in God's Word and live our lives based on God's Word.

God gives us the assurance that if we're in Christ, whether awake (alive) or asleep (dead), we will live together with Him (vv.9-10). The assurance we have in Christ is that we are not children of wrath because He himself bore our sins. He experienced the most excruciating kind of pain so that we may have life. The assurance that we have in Christ is a glorious future. That is our great comfort. Therefore, we must encourage one another (v.11).

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; tension in the West Philippine Sea to be peacefully resolved.
- Continue to pray for the rest of Israeli hostages to be restored to their families safely. Pray for Israel and the war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- For the civil war in Syria to end peacefully, protection for Christians and other minorities; that there will be freedom from oppression for Syrians. Pray for the gospel to spread rapidly throughout the country.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

WORD (cont'd)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.