

**Title:** What Can We Expect on the Day of the Lord?

**Text:** 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

**Date:** November 5, 2017

**Background.** Whereas Paul intended to comfort the church in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, he begins chapter 5 with a sober warning about “the day of the Lord” – and the sudden destruction this day will bring upon unbelievers. There is much debate about the relationship between 4:13-18 and 5:1-11. Is the rapture a separate event from the Day of the Lord? The text does not give conclusive evidence, so we cannot be overly dogmatic. Christians hold a variety of views concerning the timing of the Rapture – be it before, during, or after the Day of the Lord.

**Main Idea.** God’s message about future events must influence how we live in our present circumstances.

**5:1-3.** God’s pending judgment is declared. Though the people are warned, the unbelievers remain calloused and indifferent. Just as a thief robs a house, or a woman cannot stop the intensity of labor pains – the coming judgment of God upon sin is inescapable.

**5:4.** God’s people (Christians) live differently as this day approaches. They are alert, self-controlled, armed with faith and love, and wear the helmet of salvation.

**5:9-10.** Christians have nothing to fear on the coming Day of the Lord. Christ has taken our punishment and the cross and we joyfully live under grace. See Romans 8:1-4.

**Group Questions:**

- 1) How are the questions and concerns that prompted Paul to write this passage for the Thessalonians similar to questions Christians have today?
- 2) What are the promises and threats implied by the Day of the Lord? Discuss the stark contrast between the believer verses the unbeliever.
- 3) Why doesn’t Paul go into details the “times and seasons” in verse 1? How do you think knowing the exact hour of Jesus’ return would affect people?
- 4) Discuss the simile Paul uses of the thief in the night. Is a thief unwelcome? Do homeowners prepare for thieves? What does this mean about Christ’s return in light of verses 2-3?
- 5) Can you explain how a firm hope in the future will enable you to live confidently today?
- 6) How does the hope of Christ’s return encourage Christians to live soberly and seriously?
- 7) How would you explain to a child that faith, love, and hope are like armor that protects her head and heart?
- 8) What does Paul mean by the statement, “God did not appoint us to wrath”? What are some ways Christians have viewed this statement?