

# 1 Thessalonians 5

Verse by Verse

## We Belong to the Day

Introduction

The Day  
of the Lord  
5:1-11

Final  
Instructions  
5:12-22

Blessing and  
Closing Words  
5:23-28

Conclusions



<https://www.urbangreenup.eu/cities/urban-greenup-network-of-cities/thessaloniki.kl>

# Introduction

## Previously in 1 Thessalonians

- **Chapter 4** began by focusing on a life pleasing to God.
- Paul emphasized both **sexual purity** and **brotherly love**, both of which the Thessalonians were practicing.
- He also briefly touched on a Christian **work ethic**.
- The chapter ended with Paul encouraging the Thessalonians regarding **the coming of the Lord**.
- This will involve the resurrection of believers and the transformation of those who are alive at that time.
- Sometimes we call this event the **Rapture of the Church**.

What's in  
1 Thess 5?

Key Verses

From John  
Walwood

## What's in 1 Thessalonians 5?

- This chapter begins with Paul reminding the Thessalonians of the **unexpected timing** of the Day of the Lord.
- It will come suddenly and bring judgment upon those who are not prepared.
- He ends the letter with some **final instructions**.
- These are good principles for godly living and for the proper functioning of church life.

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John Walvoord  
(1910 - 2002), Dallas  
Theological Seminary

The day of the Lord is a period of time in which God will deal with evil people directly and dramatically in fearful judgment. A person may be a blasphemer of God, an angry atheist, or one who openly denounces God and teaches bad doctrine. Seemingly God does nothing about it. But the day designated in Scripture as "the day of the Lord" is coming when God will punish human sin, and He will deal directly and dramatically in wrath and in judgment with a Christ-rejecting world.

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Acts 1:6-8

The Day of  
the Lord in  
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From David  
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## Acts 1:6-8

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know **times or seasons** that the Father has fixed by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."



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## The Day of the Lord in the Old Testament

- The Old Testament refers to "**the day of the Lord**," "**the day**" or "**in that day**" in a future prophetic sense dozens of time.
- Often it depicts God intervening in **judgment**.
- At other times it seems to indicate a day of **extraordinary supernatural blessing**.
- For this reason, *premillennial* Bible teachers conclude that these references point to **two successive time periods**.
  - The ***Tribulation*** and the ***Millennium***

The  
Tribulation

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# The Tribulation

- First, there will be a time of judgment, darkness and wrath, **lasting 7 years.**
- The length of time comes from **Daniel 9.**
- That seven-year time stretch begins when the "prince who is to come" enters into a seven-year covenant with the nation of Israel.

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# The Millennium

- The **Tribulation** ends with the glorious return of Jesus Christ (See Zechariah 14 and Revelation 19.)
- This will be followed by a time of peace and blessing, characterized by Christ's personal rule on earth.
- This kingdom age will last **1000 years**.
- The length of time comes from **Revelation 20**.

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David Guzik, Calvary  
Chapel pastor and  
Bible teacher

This sudden coming, in a time when many say “Peace and safety!” must be distinct from the coming of Jesus described in Matthew 24 ... that happens at a time of great global catastrophe, when no one could possibly say “peace and safety!” Comparing passages like this shows us that there must be, in some way, two aspects to Jesus’ Second Coming.

- One aspect of His coming is at an unexpected hour, the other is positively predicted.
- One coming is to a “business as usual” world, the other to a world in cataclysm.
- One coming is meeting Him in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17), the other is Him coming with the saints (Zechariah 14:5).



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Not ... for  
Wrath

Awake or  
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# God has not destined us for wrath

- The **wrath of God** can certainly refer to the final judgment of eternal punishment.
- And yet, in **Revelation**, the judgments coming upon the earth are called **God's wrath, the wrath of the Lamb**, or something similar **11x**.
- Only one of those comes at the end, at Christ's return.
- If we are "**not destined for wrath**," it's not silly to believe that we will not face the judgments of that time.
- And we certainly shall not face eternal punishment.

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# Awake or Asleep

- Paul has used the idea of sleep in **two different ways** in 1 Thessalonians.
- It is not obvious which way he means to use it here.
- In **4:13-14**, Paul uses it about **believers who have died**.
- In **5:6-7**, he uses it about a **lack of spiritual awareness**.
- Both shades of meaning seem to fit here in **5:10**.
- I personally think the first one fits better.
- Whether we are still alive or not at Christ's coming we will, in either case, **"live with him."**

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## Final Instructions 5:12-22

- **5:12-13** These verses remind us how we should treat our spiritual leaders.
- **5:14-15** These verses remind us how to address those who are weak faltering in their faith.
- **5:16-18** Our **Key Verses** give us good general instruction for the life of faith.
- **5:19-21** Here Paul gives instructions regarding the work of the Holy Spirit.
- This includes the operation of the more supernatural spiritual gifts.

**5:22** (Mounce) **abstain from evil of every kind.**

(NIV) **reject every kind of evil.**

(ESV and NKJV) **every form** (KJV) **all appearance**

Key Verses

From  
John Stott

# 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

## God's Will for Us

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing,  
18 give thanks in all circumstances; for **this is the will of God** in Christ Jesus for you.

See also **1 Thessalonians 4:3**  
For **this is the will of God**, your sanctification:  
that you abstain from sexual immorality.

Bible Trivia

Rejoicing in  
Trials

Praying  
Constantly

# Bible Trivia

- **What's the shortest verse in the Bible?**
- Most of us would probably say, **John 11:35 "Jesus wept."**
- That's correct as far as the English Bible goes.
- But how about in the Greek original?
- **John 11:35** ἐδάκρυσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς. 16 letters, 3 words
- **1 Thess 5:16** πάντοτε χαίρετε, 14 letters, 2 words
- The Hebrew OT has shorter yet, but Hebrew lacks vowels.

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# Rejoicing in Trials

- The Thessalonian church, as we've said, was undergoing severe trials and frequent persecution.
- Yet Paul give them these instructions to help them stand firm in their faith. In doing so, he follows the pattern of Jesus, who said something similar in the Beatitudes.

- **Matthew 5:10-12**

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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# Praying Constantly

- Paul obviously did not spend all 24 hours of every day on his knees. But we can focus on several things in order to "**pray without ceasing.**"
- Like **Daniel**, we can maintain regular times of prayer.
- Like **Nehemiah**, we can offer up frequent, spontaneous prayers.
- Like **the persistent widow** in Christ's parable, we can be tenacious and persevering in prayer.

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Key Verses

From  
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John Stott (1921 - 2011)

[O]nce the uniqueness of the biblical prophets (and apostles) has been conceded, we should be ready to add that there are today secondary and subsidiary kinds of prophetic gift and ministry. For God undoubtedly gives to some a remarkable degree of insight either into Scripture itself and its meaning, or into its application to the contemporary world, or into his particular will for particular people in particular situations. It seems to be quite legitimate to call this insight 'prophetic' insight and this gift a 'prophetic' gift.



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## Blessing and Closing Words 5:23-28

2 Corinthians  
7:1

- **5:23-24 spirit, soul and body** There is some disagreement among Bible teachers as to whether human nature consists of two or three parts.
- See **2 Corinthians 7:1** for a contrasting idea.
- **5:25** Paul had a large and active prayer team behind him in his ministry.
- **5:26** I wouldn't force the "**kiss**" issue, but Paul does tell the churches to do this at the end of **Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians**, and again here.
- **5:27** Paul intended everyone to know what he said.

## 2 Corinthians 7:1

*Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of **body and spirit**, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.*

- Some say that soul and spirit are used interchangeably in the Bible. They may be right.
- In any case, both in **1 Thessalonians** and in **2 Corinthians**, the point is that God is at work to make us holy through and through.
- And ultimately, when we see him, he will fully and finally complete that sanctifying work.



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- He included instructions on how to treat various people within the church.
- He also mentioned how we should respond to supernatural manifestation, such as prophetic gifts.

From Chuck  
Smith

From Tony  
Evans

Key Verses

A Final  
Prayer



Chuck Smith (1927-2013),  
founding pastor of the  
Calvary Chapel Movement

When judgment proceeds from God, the righteous are spared because God's judgment is against sin. But, thank God through Jesus Christ, our sins have been forgiven! Thus, when the judgment of God comes on this earth, His people [aka "the church"] will not be here. This is the blessed hope of every believer. Well, not every believer, because some believe they are going to go through the Great Tribulation. But it is the blessed hope for those who believe in a pretribulation Rapture.

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[Many people] want to hear about the times and the seasons—that is, they want a timeline for Jesus's return. But the illustrations Paul uses here remind us that we will not get one. After all, if we're busily looking at dates on the calendar we'll fail to look for the Lord. Jesus's second coming is imminent—that is, we should expect him to return at any time. It could be tomorrow or it could be in a hundred years. One thing is certain: It will be a surprise for people who do not expect it.



Tony Evans, Bible Teacher  
and Commentator

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From Chuck  
Smith

From Tony  
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Key Verses

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# A Final Prayer

Heavenly Father,

- We know that you control the times and the season, that is, you alone decide the timeline for Christ's return.
- Help us to be ready, alert and to live in such a way as to always be looking forward to that day.
- Help us also to be a rejoicing, praying and always thankful people, so as to more completely live out your will for our lives.
- And then Father, we ask you to sanctify us completely,
- Make us a holy people. Cleanse us from all that is unclean in your eyes.
- In Christ,
- Amen.

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