**1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (ESV)**

**1** Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. **2** For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. **3** While 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. **4** But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. **5** For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. **6** So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. **7** For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. **8** But 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. **9** For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, **10**  who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. **11** Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

**“The Lights On”**

Like the servant who hid His master’s money, the Thessalonian Christians were in danger of hiding what they had received from the Gospel. Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ had died with no Last Day in sight. Excitement had kind of come to a standstill with not much having changed. The temptation was for a Roman society to consume them in darkness or to shrink away from faith in Christ’s return.

Our focus today is to consider especially those words, “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” Encourage and build one another up because whenever the Lord returns all good has come to us in Jesus.

1. **Plenty of things seek to bury the Gospel so that it is of no good use.**

* Darkness keeps any from the true faith God gives.
* “But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.” (vs. 4)
* Yet, how often does the darkness all around us seek to cast doubt and all disbelief in the face of a Christian?
* Lutheran Heritage Foundation interviewing a woman from Slovakia noted, “After the Communist regime began in [what was then called] Czechoslovakia, it was a truly atheistic pressure to finish the Church. The method was to allow old people to finish their ‘unscientific religious thinking’ behind the walls of the Church. But the young generation and children were going to build a new society, without God. When bishops and pastors fulfilled their responsibilities, especially doing the Christian education of young people, this was considered as a ‘subversion of the State.’”[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Complacency is also a false confidence from within.
* “While 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.” (vs. 3)
* It is the nature of sinners to create idols, to design substitutes, to satisfy life by our own design and demands even if only for a time.
* Jesus said, “…As it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, 29but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all— 30so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.”
* Sleepiness is finally just pure selfishness.
* “So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake andbe sober.”
* Sleeping is a life that lives in sin without repentance, has no love to what God says is good, and sees others as a commodity.
* *“*For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.” (John 3:20)

1. **Encourage and build one another up for the Gospel hides nothing, but is Christ for you.**

* The day of darkness has been undone.
* “For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.”
* It was on the night he was betrayed Jesus established His Supper promising He would cast out the darkness.
* The Day of Lord was first the Day of Judgment poured out upon the cross where God’s love was the surprise sacrificed for sinners.
* By baptism into Christ now robs a person of their sin and death so faith sees no thief but Him who truly is the faithful Savior in this dark world.

* The day of resurrection then shines as light.
* “For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.”
* Christians came to worship on Sundays because it was the day when complacency of men became shocked over what God proclaimed.
* By His resurrection, Christ brought forth justification proving His sacrifice was pleasing to His Father for He was the Son.
* In a world where idols still fail and time presses on, the risen Jesus says, “*…*whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” (John 5:24).
* The Last Day is the day of glory victorious.
* “But 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.”
* In other words, it is to ask, “What are you fighting for? Who are you fighting for? Why are you even fighting?”
* That means a Christian life is one of repentance, love to cherish all God says for it is good, and eyes able to serve Christ in our neighbor.
* Rather than figuring out times and seasons we have this, “For 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.”

Keeping the lights on is important especially when it is getting dark. Encourage and build one another up because whenever the Lord returns all good has come to us in Jesus. Amen. The peace of Christ that passes all understanding be with your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting. Amen.

1. https://www.lhfmissions.org/slovakia-church-oppression-traces-history-persecuted-pastors/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)