

The Unstoppable Return of Jesus

1 Thess 5:2 "For you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night."

Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

Topics: Rapture, Death, Day of the Lord

Series: Unstoppable

South Orlando Baptist Church

September 20, 2015

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To properly seek the return of Christ...

- 1) Study the _____ of deceased Christians (vs. 4:13-18)
 - A. Many of the epitaphs from the first century Greek culture indicated a very pessimistic view of death. Archeology has revealed an insightful inscription from the city of Thessalonica that dates to the time when Paul penned these words, it reads: "After death no reviving; After the grave, no meeting again."
 - B. As we grieve the loss of our Christian loved ones, we are not to grieve as those "who have no hope." (vs. 13)
 - C. We must encourage one another with the immanent return of Jesus Christ!

- 2) Stay in a spirit of _____ (5:1-5)
 - A. The phrase **day of the Lord** is common in the OT Prophets (see note on Amos 5:18–20). It refers to the great and terrible day when Yahweh will intervene to punish the disobedient (e.g., Isa. 13:6–16; Joel 1:13–15; 2:1–11; Obad. 15–20; Mal. 4:5) and to save the faithful (e.g., Isa. 27:2–13; Jer. 30:8–9; Joel 2:31–32; Obad. 21). In Paul's letters it is equated with the second coming. (ESV Study Bible)
 - B. We are not to live in darkness so that this day would surprise us, but rather, as we live in the light we are to be ready for His return.

- 3) _____ up! (5:6-11)
 - A. There is much to get "drunk" on in this world, but followers of Jesus are to "put the armor of faith and love on our chests, and put on a helmet of the hope of salvation." (vs. 8)
 - B. We must spend our time encouraging one another and building each other up. (vs. 11)

Questions for Application

- 1) How can the death of a loved one change a person's life?
- 2) How do you react when you hear predictions about the end of the world?
- 3) What concern was Paul addressing? (4:13-14)
- 4) How is a Christian's grief over the loss of a loved one different from a non-Christian's grief? (4:13-14)
- 5) What was the source of Paul's teaching about what happens to those who die? (4:15)
- 6) What sequence of events will signal the Lord's return? (4:16-17)
- 7) What effect did Paul believe this teaching about the Lord's return would have on his listeners? (4:18)
- 8) When will the Lord return? (5:1-2)
- 9) How will the Lord return? (5:1-3)
- 10) What contrast is there between believers and non-believers? (5:4-8)
- 11) What should we do to get ready for the Lord's return? (5:6-8)
- 12) What roles should faith, hope, and love play in our lives? (5:8)
- 13) To what does God appoint believers? (5:9-10)
- 14) For what reason can we be assured of our salvation? (5:9-10)
- 15) How should a believer use this information to help others? (5:11)
- 16) How should a Christian mourn the death of a fellow believer?
- 17) Who has no hope when they die?
- 18) What hope do Christians have in death?
- 19) How can these words help a person who is grieving over loved ones who have died?
- 20) Why is the date and time of Christ's Second Coming of such interest to many people?
- 21) What influence should the promise of Christ's Second Coming have on how a person lives day to day?
- 22) How are faith and love like a breastplate?
- 23) How is salvation like a helmet?
- 24) How can talking about God's promises for our future encourage us in our daily lives?
- 25) What can you do to make sure you are ready for Christ's return each day?
- 26) What hope can you share with someone who is convinced that death is the end of our existence?