



I THESSALONIANS

“STAND FIRM IN THE LORD”

LESSON #5 - I THESSALONIANS 4:13 – 5:11

REVIEW

Recap the situation in Thessalonica to explain why it was important for Paul to phrase his sanctification instruction as a way to encourage them to do more of what they were already doing.

INTRODUCTION

Christ's return must have been a confusing biblical teaching to the Thessalonians.

Describe how combatting this variety of spiritual ignorance will impact a Christian's perseverance in the face of persecution and life of sanctification.

I THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

God never forbids his people from grieving. Compare the way Christians with “hope” grieve compared to the way those with “no hope” grieve because they don't know Christ.

For help look up John 14:19; Philippians 1:21,22; 1 Corinthians 15:55-57

Use these verses to make a case for the Bible's teaching of Amillennialism (rather than Millennialism).

Millennialists think that Revelation 20 foretells a golden age of peace and prosperity.

Premillennialists believe that Jesus will return and set in motion a millennial age.

Postmillennialists believe that he will return at the end of the thousand years. Before Jesus returns the church will transform society. War, poverty, and disease will be eradicated. The church will enjoy unparalleled success. Christ will then come at the end of the Millennium, raise the dead, and preside at the final judgment.

(Lange, p. 615, 616)

Come up with improved options for encouraging survivors after a loved one's death than the following:

- She's in a better place.
- At least he isn't in pain any longer.
- I'm sorry for your loss.

In a culture where death is something fearful and the afterlife unknowable, describe how a Christian outlook on the end of the world can be refreshing.

I THESSALONIANS 5:1-11

The Bible tells us Jesus will come "like a thief." Pick one of the options below that best reflects your feelings about the coming of Jesus "like a thief." Come up with your own if none of these fit. Then explain why you feel that way. (cf Luke 12:39,40; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 3:3; 16:15)

- "I'm frightened."
- "I'm not worried, I'm ready."
- "I feel uneasy."

Look up the following verses to help you define watchfulness and readiness for Christ's return:

- Matthew 24:36-41
- Matthew 24:42-44
- Mark 13:32-37

Finish this sentence as many ways as you can:

"One very real danger of putting so much emphasis on a Millennial rule of Christ is..."

List some habits you could develop to help show you are a child of the light:

Sanctification means cooperation. Putting on the breastplate and helmet require effort. Show that we need to work, but the harder work is done by the Holy Spirit.

Compare I Thessalonians 5:9-11 with I Corinthians 15:17-19. Explain what it means to live with hope.

Read through one or more of the quotes by or about Luther. Share some ways that quote helps you put effort and attention into your life of sanctification even as we are confident of what Christ did for us.

Hence, as our heavenly Father has in Christ freely come to our aid, we also ought freely to help our neighbor through our body and its works, and each one should become as it were a Christ to the other that we may be Christs to one another and Christ may be the same in all, that is, that we may be truly Christians.

Martin Luther, The Freedom of a Christian

The following statements are therefore true: “Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works; evil works do not make a wicked man, but a wicked man does evil works.” Consequently it is always necessary that the substance or person himself be good before there can be any good works, and that good works follow and proceed from the good person,

Martin Luther, The Freedom of a Christian

Therefore this alien righteousness, instilled in us without our works by grace alone—while the Father, to be sure, inwardly draws us to Christ—is set opposite original sin, likewise alien, which we acquire without our works by birth alone. Christ daily drives out the old Adam more and more in accordance with the extent to which faith and knowledge of Christ grow. For alien righteousness is not instilled all at once, but it begins, makes progress, and is finally perfected at the end through death.

Martin Luther, Two Kinds of Righteousness.

In heaven, before God, vocation has as little to contribute as do good works. Good works and vocation (love) exist for the earth and one’s neighbor, not for eternity and God. God does not need our good works, but our neighbor does. It is faith that God wants. Faith ascends to heaven. Faith enters a different kingdom, the eternal, divine kingdom, which Luther considers just as evident as the earthly realm, with its offices and occupations through which God carries on his creative work.

Gustaf Wingren, Luther on Vocation.

Explain how 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10 are comforting and encouraging for you. Explain how you could encourage someone in the following situations:

- Family is struggling to get along after pressures put on them during the pandemic.
- Feeling forced to stifle faith at work/school.
- Can’t give all the aid and assistance to loved ones that they require.
- Prayers for health and healing seem to go unanswered.

CONCLUSION

Christians have a refreshing approach to sexual morality and end of life issues. How do we want to be known in our culture?

What 3 steps can you take to be known for these refreshing Christian truths?

I THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. **14** For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. **15** According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. **18** Therefore encourage one another with these words.

I THESSALONIANS 5:1-11

Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, **2** for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. **3** While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. **5** You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. **6** So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. **7** For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. **8** But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. **9** For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. **10** He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. **11** Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.