



Sermon Series: Being An Authentic Church

To be used with Session: Doing Life Together in Christ

Sermon Title Possibilities: Awake, Aware, and Active, The Builders Blueprint

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:4-15

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study “Being an Authentic Church,” this sermon gives you the opportunity to challenge the members of your church to live with purpose as a church community by intentionally engaging with Christ’s power over their own. We can, when we will.

Introduction: In 1 Thessalonians 5, Paul paints a portrait of an authentic church—believers sharing and experiencing life in Christ together. In the first section, he highlights our identity as "children of the light" (vs 4-6), akin to a lighthouse guiding ships through darkness. The second point calls us to be "awake and sober" (vs 7-11), vigilant like night security guards, fostering an atmosphere of mutual encouragement. Finally, Paul provides "practical instructions to build up one another" (vs 11-15), creating a resilient community through mutual edification. Together, we embody a living symphony of faith and fellowship.

1. Children of the Light (v 4-6).

Paul reminds us that, as believers, we are not in darkness but are children of the light and day. To be an authentic church, we must live in the awareness of Christ's imminent return. The only way is to embrace our identity as children of the light. Those living with a sense of purpose and readiness. In so doing, we reject the darkness that seeks to separate and isolate us from each other. Consider a lighthouse whose job is to guide ships through the darkness. That’s us! We are like that lighthouse, showing the light of Christ in a world shrouded in darkness.

2. Awake and Sober (v. 7-11).

Night security guards have a hard job. No matter what, they are supposed to stay alert and aware all night, even when we are asleep. This is exactly what God is challenging us as a church to do. We must remain spiritually awake and sober minded in a world that often succumbs to spiritual slumber. Through prayer, encouragement, and active engagement with the transformative power of Christ, we stand guard over the well-being of our community. Paul urges us to be alert, reinforcing the call to an authentic Christian life. We build a community that doesn't succumb to the spiritual sleep of the world but actively engages in the transformative power of Christ, fostering an atmosphere of mutual encouragement and growth.

3. Build Up One Another (v. 11-15).

Paul provides practical instructions for building up one another within the community. An authentic church is marked by believers who encourage, support, and care for each other. Let us be a community that rejoices together, prays without ceasing, and gives thanks in all circumstances. This mutual edification creates a strong foundation, reflecting the love and grace of Christ. Believers are like skilled builders, working together to construct a community founded on encouragement, prayer, and thanksgiving. The edification process is ongoing, creating a resilient foundation that reflects the love and grace of Christ.

Conclusion:

We are not merely a gathering of individuals but a vibrant community of believers who share and experience life in Christ together. We are children of the light so we must live with purpose and readiness. We are awake and sober-minded, so we refuse spiritual slumber. We build up one another through encouragement, prayer, and thanksgiving, so we create a community that authentically Christ. I love watching seamstresses weave fabric together, just as I love our church working to weave our gifts, possibility, and futures together. Together, we create a masterpiece that testifies to the love and grace of our Lord—a living symphony of faith and fellowship.

Author Bio

Dr. Justin R. Lester is the Pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Vallejo, California. He is the Author of, “Necessary Endings” and other works to enrich the local Church.