



STANDING FAST IN THE LORD

Encourage One Another Today

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Because of our salvation in Jesus, we must encourage and build one another up to live for Jesus today (1-11).

- *The return of Jesus won't be announced or expected (1-2).*
- *The return of Jesus will bring God's wrath on all who reject Jesus (3).*
- *The return of Jesus is not a surprise to be feared by all who trust Jesus (4-5).*
- *Stay awake for the return of Jesus (6-7).*
- *Dress in faith, love, and the hope of our salvation (8).*
- *God has destined us for salvation and not wrath (9).*
 - *Jesus died so that whether in life or death we will live in him (10)!*

The Thessalonians needed what the church needs today: Encouragement and building up. Where does that come from? It comes from the Lord, but his work of encouragement and building up is also designed to often come through his church!

The apostle Paul was encouraging and building up the Thessalonians, and he was also exhorting them to encourage and build up one another in the faith. They needed it. They lived in a tough time and in a tough place. Thessalonica was an ancient city that lies underneath the modern city of Thessaloniki, Greece. It was a part of the Roman empire, and the early Christians in this area experienced persecution from all directions, including the Jews as well as the Romans in Thessalonica. They needed to know the true and unshaking hope that Christians have in the face of death, and they needed to be focused on the hope and expectation that Christians should have every day, which is the return of Jesus Christ that will bring the final judgment against Satan and sin and the consummation of God's Kingdom in heaven and on earth.

Paul's final exhortation on this issue was a simple command: Because of our salvation in Jesus, we must encourage and build one another up to live for Jesus today! Paul then went on to remind the believers in Thessalonica of some important truths that give us what we need to know to encourage and to build up the church.

While the return of Jesus won't be expected or announced, it will bring God's wrath on all who reject Jesus. The return of Jesus will be like the thief at night for those in the darkness, and there will be no defending and defeating the judgment of God when it comes at the arrival of the Son of God. However, for the believer, this isn't a surprise to be feared. Instead, it will be an event that will bring great joy and praise! Believers will see and know exactly what's happening when their Lord and Savior comes in all his might and power. God hasn't destined his children to wrath; rather, his will for those in Christ is salvation. In Jesus, whether we live or die, we live!

So, stay awake for the return of Jesus. In other words, don't forget that he's coming again, and live each day as you are awake and as you sleep with the hope of his return. Also, dress faith, love, and the hope of our salvation. As we wait for his return, the key to strength in waiting is faith, love, and hope as it's only found in Jesus!

Paul wanted to encourage the church to encourage and build up one another in these truths. God still wants his church to do the same today! Encourage and build up one another to live for Jesus today because of the certainty of our tomorrow – eternity – by God's grace in Jesus Christ.

1. In verses 1-2, do you know this? Many try to calculate the return of Jesus by numbers and dates in the Bible. Many have claimed to know by revelation what that season or date will be,



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but what does this verse say about that? What did Jesus himself say about that as recorded in the Gospels? Why doesn't God want us to know the season and day of the return of Jesus? How should "not knowing" impact the way we live today?

2. In verse 3, how is the return of Jesus described in relation to those who live in the darkness: Those who reject Christ and are still in their sin? What's their mind-set when it comes to the return of Jesus and the judgment of God against sin? How do you see the reality of this in the world today, especially among those who are vocal and active unbelievers?
3. In verses 4-5, who are those in the light? Why isn't the return of Jesus something to be feared by those in the light? Can you imagine what it will be like when you see the Son of God descending from heaven in all his glory and with the hosts of heaven? How will you feel? What will you want to do? Why is a vision of this promise important for the encouragement of believers today?
4. In verses 6-8, what are the exhortations for the church as we wait for the return of Jesus? Talk through each of these. Use the BlueLetterBible app if needed to study the words and understand clearly what God's Word means. Do you have these things in your heart? Are you doing these things in the faith and strength of the Spirit each day? How? What does that look like in practical ways every day?
5. In verses 9-10, what is the good news for those in Christ? Is this good news a reality in your life? Are you looking in fear or expecting in hope the return of Jesus? If you don't have new life in Christ, today is the day! Take time to talk through the gospel, and invite anyone in your group who hasn't surrendered in faith to Jesus to do so today!