

1st & 2nd

THESSALONIANS

Knowing Jesus is coming back, live a life filled with purpose.

THIS MONTH'S THEME:

Knowing Jesus is coming back, live a life filled with purpose.

FEBRUARY MEMORY VERSE

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

• 2 Timothy 1:7 NIV

FEBRUARY 23 - LIFE APPLICATION

Encourage each other and live as children of the light.

NOTE TO PARENTS

From January to Easter, we are studying **1st and 2nd Thessalonians**, Paul's letters to the church in Thessalonica. In the first two weeks of February, we learned that Paul wrote to the believers about how they could live a life that pleases God. Last week, in **1 Thessalonians 4:1-13**, Paul taught the believers about the rapture of the church. This week, we are learning about how we should live with hope, as children of the light, until the day that Jesus returns.

Discuss 1st Thessalonians 5:1-11

1. Read **verses 1 and 2**. **What were the believers in Thessalonica worried about?** (*Times and seasons: When will Jesus come back? When will the day of the Lord come?*) Paul told them that they were already aware - because he had taught them - of how this would happen. **What did he teach them?** (*That the Day of the Lord - the return of Jesus and the wrath of God after the church is raptured - would come like a thief in the night.*) **What do you think this means?** (*That we don't know when this will happen - it will happen suddenly, without warning.*) And remember: the Day of the Lord is addressed throughout the Old and New Testaments. It's different from the Rapture. It happens after the Rapture during the 7 years of the Tribulation.
2. Before reading **verse 3**, ask your family what the word "wrath" means. Let them guess, then explain: In the Bible, wrath is an "intense feeling of anger or resentment that can lead to a desire for vengeance."
 - God's wrath is a response to sin, wickedness, and disobedience.
 - God's wrath is holy and justified because God is holy and just.
 - God's wrath is directed at those who do not follow God's will.
 - God is slow to anger and abounding in love.
 - God provides a way to gain divine favor through repentance of our sins.
 - God's wrath is revealed from heaven against wickedness and godlessness.
3. So, when people (sinners who are left in the world after the rapture) feel at peace and secure, and they least expect it, the wrath of God will come upon the world. **What does God compare this to in verse 3?** (*To a woman who suddenly goes into labor before giving birth to a child. The Day of the Lord comes unexpectedly, and it will be a dark day of God's wrath and judgment upon this world.*)
4. Read **verses 4 and 5** to your family. **Of what does Paul remind the believers in Thessalonica?** (*That they are not in the dark, because they are children of the light. They will not be surprised by the day of the Lord, because Jesus has already saved them from God's wrath. They will be raptured before this*

happens!)

5. Read **verses 6 and 7**. **Does this mean that we should never go to sleep?** *(No, it means we need to “stay awake,” or be alert, so that we can serve God and do His will in our lives before the Rapture occurs. We need to stay sober - avoid alcohol, drugs, and other things that would keep us “in darkness” - and from being alert and living our lives for the Lord.)*
6. Read **verse 8**. **What does Paul tell believers to do?** *(We are to put on the breastplate, which is like a bulletproof vest, of faith and love. We’re also told to put on the helmet of hope, which means we control every wrong thought and replace them with thoughts of hope.)* Always trust God. Always love one another. Always have hope that God is in control of everything and has a perfect plan he is working out.
7. **How can we have hope?** *(See **verses 9 and 10**: We can have hope because we are not destined for the wrath of God, but we are destined for salvation. Jesus has already saved us! He died so that we could always be with Him, even after we “sleep.” This means we will never die but have eternal life with Jesus.)*
8. Finally, Paul reminds us again in **verse 11** how we should treat each other. *(Read together: “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”)* This must have been pretty important to Paul. He knew that believers need to encourage each other and give each other hope, because they (we) will never have to face the day of the Lord, God’s wrath. He did not want us to live in fear, but in hope.

A word from our pastor, David Chadwick:

John 3:36 says that God’s wrath was poured out on his son, and not on those of us who accept Jesus’ gift of salvation. It’s the most important decision we can ever make. When we do so, we never have to worry about death or anything else in this world. Jesus enters our hearts and he will be with us forever. When we die, it’s like going to sleep and then waking up in Jesus’ presence. He loves us so much! His love is eternal and beyond compare.

FAMILY CHALLENGE

How can we use encouraging words to build each other up and give each other hope? Complete these phrases that could encourage others to live as children of the light, not darkness! On pieces of paper, write these incomplete phrases and put them in a bowl in front of everyone. Have family members draw a phrase and then say one of the phrases to another family member:

- God made you in such a special way! I love ____ about you!

- You give others hope when you _____.
- Remember that Jesus _____.
- I have noticed that you are great at _____.
- I know you can do big things for God, because _____.
- I am so thankful for the way you _____.
- When you are kind, you make others feel _____.
- You show the love of Jesus when you _____.

PRAYER

Jesus, Thank You for reminding us that we can always have hope because You came to save us from our sins and from God's wrath. We know You are always with us. Help us to live as children of the light and to encourage each other to have hope. In Your Name we pray, Amen.