

REASONS FOR THE RAPTURE
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; & Selected

Introduction

Two weeks ago we examined 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 in a sermon entitled *The Reality of the Rapture*. I pointed out how the doctrine of the Rapture brought comfort to the Thessalonians who were concerned about their fellow believers that were “*asleep in Jesus*.” Paul assures them that they would not miss out for when the Lord appears from heaven with a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, then the dead in Christ would be resurrected first and then those alive and remaining would be transformed to receive glorified bodies. Both groups of saints would be caught up (raptured) together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air to be with Him always. The Rapture will happen suddenly and unexpectedly.

The Rapture is a distinct separate event from the Second Coming (advent) of Christ which will be preceded by many signs on earth and in the heavens. Messiah will return from heaven in the clouds riding a horse and accompanied by angels, His holy ones and the armies of heaven. Jesus will physically touch down on the Mount of Olives which will split in two. His angels will separate the elect from the ungodly prior to the beginning of the Millennium. (LINK)

Last week I focused on the many passages that call upon believers to have an expectation that the return of Jesus for His church is imminent. That means that Jesus could return at any time but He does not have to do so. There are no prophetic events that must happen before His return though there are many things that could happen. An example of that would be the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. We know from the prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9 that in the 70th week, which is commonly referred to as the Tribulation period or time of Jacob’s trouble (Jer. 30:7), the anti-Christ will set up the Abomination of Desolation and desecrate the holy place in the middle of that week. The Temple could be rebuilt before the Rapture, but it does not have to be rebuilt before Jesus returns for His church.

The doctrine of imminence is founded on the following:

1) The expectation of the apostles that Jesus’ return for His church could happen while either they or those to whom they were writing were still alive (1 John 2:28; Revelation 2:25, 3:11; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; 1 Thessalonians 4:17, 1 Corinthians 15:52).

2) Statements that “*the Lord is near*” (Philippians 4:5), “*at hand*” and “*standing right at the door*” (James 5:7-9), all referring to being close in proximate time. That He is “*coming quickly*” referring to coming “*swiftly, all at once*” before you can be prepared (Revelation 2:16; 3:11; Revelation 22:12, 20, 27). And that He will come unexpectedly “*like a thief in the night*” (Revelation 3:3 & 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10).

3) The many verses that express an eager anticipation of the Lord’s return for His church and the changes that come with that. Three different words are used to express that eager waiting. A) First is ἀπεκδέχομαι / apekdechomai which is used to express *an anticipatory *waiting for the hope of righteousness* (Galatians 5:5), **awaiting eagerly the revelation (unveiling) of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Corinthians 1:7), **the anxious longing of the creation [which] waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God and our own waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons* (Romans 8:18-25), **eagerly wait[ing] for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven* (Philippians 3:20), and **eagerly awaiting Christ’s appearance* (Hebrews 9:26).

B) The word προσδεχόμενοι / prosdechomenoi is used by Jesus in Luke 12 to express the expectancy of His coming. In Titus 2:13 it is *looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory*

of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, and in Jude 20-21 it is *waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life*. These longings will be fulfilled at the Rapture.

C) The third word is ἀναμένω / anamenō which means to await one whose coming is known or foreseen. Paul uses it in 1 Thessalonians 1:10, “*to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, [that is] Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.*” That verse also brings up the topic of today’s sermon on *Reasons for the Rapture* which we will examine in just a few moments. (LINK)

But first a reminder that we should be gracious to one other in the debate about the timing of the Rapture since precise understanding in eschatology is difficult at best since there are still so many things that will remain unknown to us until they actually occur. However, I also believe the greatest Scriptural support is that the Rapture will occur at the beginning of the 70th week prophesied in Daniel 9. A primary reason is the doctrine of imminence which I just reviewed. The other views have great difficulty with those passages since they require other events to happen prior to Jesus’ return for His church. The second factor is that the Pre-tribulational position fits better with the reasons for the Rapture and the Tribulation period. As just stated in 1 Thessalonians 1:10, Jesus will deliver those who belong to Him from God’s wrath which will come upon the earth during that time period.

Paul transitions from his discussion in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 of the hope and comfort / encouragement (παρακαλέω / parakaleō) that the Rapture and its ramifications gives to believers to bring up the broader topic of the day of the Lord as another source of comfort / encouragement (παρακαλέω / parakaleō) in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Paul repeats in 5:9 the point he had made in 1:10 that “*God has not destined us for wrath.*”

Times & Epochs & The Day of the Lord - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2

I preached through 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 in January 2021 so I will refer you to those sermons for a detailed explanation of it. They are posted on our website or ask I will give you a copy of the notes. (LINK) There are several things I do want to highlight for you today related to the purpose of the rapture.

The passage begins,¹ “*Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you.*”² *For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.*” Paul transitions from specific detailed teachings about the Rapture to a more general discussion concerning the “*times and epochs.*” Jesus used that same phrase in answering the disciples’ question in Acts 16, “*Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?*” That was a logical question to ask since Messiah was present and resurrected from the dead, so they concluded that Jesus would now set up His kingdom. This expectation was in keeping with Jesus’ warnings to be ready for the return of the Son of Man (Matt. 24, 25; Luke 12:35-48; 17:20-37) and specifically to “*be on the alert*” (Matthew 24:42; 25:13; Mark 13:33).

Jesus’ answer in Acts 1:7-8 is intriguing because there were so many ways He could have answered their question including “*no, not yet*” or “*no, but it is the start of the last dispensation before the kingdom is restored*” and then given some sort of explanation either brief or extensive. Jesus does not rebuke their expectation, but only their focus on the timing of it for He replied to them, “⁷*It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;*”⁸ *but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*” Jesus did not want them to be concerned about the timing of the restoration of the kingdom, for God would take care of that according to His own plan. They were to be focused on the priority at hand which was being His witnesses once they had received power when Holy Spirit would come upon them.

This is a good reminder to us to keep our priorities straight and avoid the speculation that is so common with the study of eschatology. What Paul teaches here in 1 Thessalonians 4 & 5 about the future is to have a practical effect in how we live life in the present. What we believe will happen in the future should result in living, as Paul describes in 5:5-8, as sons of the light and sons of the day who are

alert and sober. Frankly, if your beliefs about God's revelation of future events does not result in you living a more righteous life in the present, then something is seriously wrong in your understanding.

Times & Seasons: Since Paul states that there was no need for him to write to them further about this subject, we must assume they were already well taught concerning "*the times and epochs.*" While I would certainly like to know the details of what Paul had taught them prior to this, I am content that what has been revealed is sufficient for us to live life in godliness even as described in 2 Peter 1:3-4.

Time, χρόνος / Chronos, is a general reference to its course or span as demonstrated in English words derived from it such as "*chronology,*" the sequencing of events in time, and "*chronometer,*" which we usually refer to as a clock. The word translated as "*epochs*" or "*seasons,*" (καιρός / kairos), carries the idea of a decisive moment or point. It encompasses the events and characteristics of a period in which related events would occur. We use the words epoch, era or season to signify periods of time marked by certain characteristics. Summer is the season when it is hot and Winter is when it is not. The "*Victorian Era*" refers the characteristics of English society during the reign of Queen Victoria.

Joining the ideas of both χρόνος / chronos and καιρός / kairos together refers to when the events of the future will take place, what will be the characteristics of future eras, and how long those eras will last. All of these are fixed by God as stated in Acts 1:7. We do not know the specifics of what Paul taught the Thessalonians concerning the times and epoch, but what is stated here and in other Scriptures does give us a general understanding of God's plan for the future.

A quick footnote here. Notice that Paul refers to these Greeks in Thessalonica as "*brethren.*" Contrary to the ethnocentric pride and exclusiveness of both Jews and Greeks, throughout this letter Paul makes an emphasis that Jews and Greeks become one family - brothers - in Christ.

The Day of the Lord: Paul ties the "*the times and epochs*" to the "*day of the Lord*" in verse 2. I discussed the phrase, "*day of the Lord*" in some detail in my sermon last month on Daniel 11:36-12:4, *The Future Foretold*, so I will not repeat that today. There are still some copies of the comparison chart compiled by Dr. Irv Busenitz near the Faith Box that easily lets you examine the different passages that use that phrase and the distinctions between them. (LINKS)

What I do want to point out today is that while there are multiple separate events which are referred to as the "*day of the Lord,*" there is also a final "*day of the Lord*" that begins suddenly and goes into eternity which has multiple elements within it. Each prophecy about it gives us a little more understanding about the "*times and epochs*" of what is to come. That is one of the reasons eschatology is difficult because it is putting together bits and pieces from various Scripture passages to try to understand the whole.

To this we can add passages that speak of the same prophetic events but use a different phrase such as Paul using the phrase "*day of Christ*" in Philippians three times in reference to Jesus' return for believers (Philippians 1:6, 10; 2:15). There are also those passages such as Zechariah 14 and Daniel 7, 9, 11 & 12 which clearly speak of events of the end times but which do not use this phrase at all.

We know that 1 Thessalonians 5 deals with the imminent return of Christ due to its tie with the rapture in the previous verses. We also know it deals with the final "*day of the Lord*" of the last days because of its reference to its coming as "*a thief in the night*" and that those in it will not escape. Theologians refer to this as "*the eschaton.*"

Unexpected Coming: I spoke last week about the unexpected nature of Jesus' return for His church expressed in the phrase that "*the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.*" 2 Peter 3:10 states the same thing. It is one of the arguments for believing His return is imminent. A thief comes when you are not prepared.

There will be signs of the season, which I will get into some detail in a later sermon, but the vast majority of people will not pay any attention to the preliminary warnings that we are in "*the last days.*"

That would include difficult times as men become more evil (2 Timothy 3:1) and the mockers who reject both the promise of His coming and the evidence of God's judgment in the past by the flood in the days of Noah (2 Peter 3:3).

Sudden Destruction - 1 Thessalonians 5:3

Paul continues in verse 3 with more detail about the sudden arrival of the day of the Lord.

“Whenever they are saying, peace and safety, then suddenly they are overtaken by destruction like the birth pangs of a woman with child, they shall not escape.”

At the very time the world thinks it can achieve peace and safety, it will suddenly receive the opposite. It is a vivid description. A pregnant woman knows that she will have to go through labor pains, and as she gets into that last trimester, she can become very uncomfortable with twinges of pain hinting at what is coming. But labor pains begin suddenly whether ready or not and there is no escape from it. So it will be at the beginning of the day of the Lord. It will begin suddenly and there will be no escape from it.

It is speculative to know exactly what would cause people to say *“peace and safety”* just prior to their destruction, but the context here gives some strong hints. Paul's discussion of the rapture at the end of chapter 4 leads him to talk about the day of the Lord and the destruction of those he then describes as those who are of the night while those who are sons of light obtain salvation instead of wrath.

Those paying any attention to the leaders who advocate what is called *The Great Reset* have been saying know that they believe that those who hold Christian values are the problem. We are blocking the path to their utopian socialist dreams, so they are looking for ways to get us to either recant our beliefs and join them, or to be forced into submission to them, or to be removed. In addition, for many decades ideas have floated about among cults and within the New Age movement that some miraculous force might remove Bible believing Christians for the benefit of all people. Satan has been preparing alternative stories for the reason for the Rapture for a long time.

Imagine the reaction of people when suddenly all Christians suddenly disappear? With the opposition gone, then their dreams of utopia can be fulfilled. They will believe they are entering into an unprecedented time of peace and safety, but it will be very short lived. Nero blamed Christians for the burning of Rome, and not much has changed since then among those who evil. They have always blamed others for the trouble they cause, but it will be too late when they realize the true source of their problems. Christians are a stabilizing factor in any society because they are a restraining force on blatant sin. With the church removed and the ministry of the Holy Spirit changed, people will pursue their evil desires without restraint. Revelation 6 describes in quick succession what occurs next. A conqueror goes out to conquer. This is followed by war, then famine, then death by starvation, disease, the sword and wild beasts and then everything else that is described in Revelation.

Our enemies have depraved minds, so I do think that many of them believe that any means can be justified to achieve their goals of an elite led socialistic society that allows every form of moral perversion and opposes anything that reflects God's standards. Many believe that will be a superior society. Having no sense of history, they do not know that the leaders in such socialist movements turn on each other in the quest for power and position. They also do not know that the “equality” of socialism only makes people equally miserable without a means of improvement except becoming one of the elite. It will not be any different in the present or the future.

Salvation, not Wrath for Believers - 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11

In verses 4-11 Paul contrasts believers and unbelievers and what will happen to each. ⁴ *“But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶ so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at*

night.⁸ *But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.*⁹ *For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*¹⁰ *who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.*¹¹ *Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”*

The descriptive metaphor of “*sons of light and sons of day*” shows a complete contrast to those who are “*of night*” and “*of darkness.*” The term “*sons of*” signifies that they are characterized by these qualities and the double reference using synonyms light and day as well as night and darkness intensifies the strength of those characteristics. Believers have opposite characteristics of non-believers. Sons of light and day are alert and sober and so the coming of the day of the Lord will not overtake them like a thief. Those of night and darkness are asleep or drunk. They are characterized by ignorance or indifference to the coming day of the Lord and so will be caught unaware and unable to respond properly when it arrives and destruction comes upon them suddenly.

The sons of light and day will be prepared for that day for God has already provided what is needed in the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet of the hope of salvation. Paul had commended the Thessalonian believers in chapter 1 for their reception of the gospel and proclaiming it themselves in Macedonia and Achaia and beyond. In 1:9-10 Paul specifically states that these believers had “*turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,*¹⁰ *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.*” Here in 5:9-11 Paul specifically states concerning them,⁹ “*For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*¹⁰ *who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.*¹¹ *Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”*

Please note that “*awake or asleep*” and “*live together with Him*” in 5:10 is a direct reference back to 4:13-18 about those who were “*asleep in Jesus*” and those who were alive and remaining being raptured together to ever be with the Lord. Also note that the command in 5:11 is the same as in 4:18 to comfort / encourage (παράκαλέω / parakaleō) one another with the truth of this doctrine. What Paul teaches about the Rapture certainly is a comfort since it includes the fact that “*God has not destined us for wrath*” (5:9) and that “*Jesus rescues us from the wrath to come.*” What is this wrath?

The Wrath to Come

The word translated as wrath (ὀργή / orgā) in this context refers to God’s coming angry judgment and punishment against sinners. Those who have obtained salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will not experience this wrath because God has not destined or appointed (τίθημι / tithāmi) us for it and Jesus’ rescues (ῥύομαι / rhuomai) us from it. Those chosen by God (1:4) are destined for salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus rescues those who place their faith in Him through His own sacrifice of His life for sin that propitiates or appeases God’s wrath by taking it on Himself and redeems us so that we can be forgiven and made righteous in Him.

While Romans 1:18 states that at present “*the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*” the specific wrath in view here in 1 Thessalonians is wrath that is to come. It is future. The context in 1 Thessalonians 5 is clear that this is the wrath that comes when the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night and brings sudden destruction on sinners which they will not escape (5:3).

Paul writes 2 Thessalonians to clear up a confusion that had developed because someone was claiming that they were already in the day of the Lord (2:2). Paul points out in chapter 1 that though they were currently afflicted, God would bring them relief “*when the Lord Jesus will be revealed* (ἀποκάλυψις / apokalupsis) *from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus*” (1:7-9). This is a reminder to them that Jesus’ appearing because He comes from heaven and is no longer hidden will

bring relief for them and punishment for the unsaved. This is the Rapture as clearly indicated by the reference in 2:1 to *“the coming (παρουσία / parousia - presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him.”* Paul then continues to explain to them that they cannot be standing in the day of the Lord because two events that would prove it had come had not yet happened.

The first is that the day of the Lord is not present *“unless the apostasy comes first”* and that had not yet happened. In my exposition of 2 Thessalonians in 2021 I argue strongly *“the apostasy”* is a reference to the rapture. The word apostasy has a root meaning of “stand separate from,” and it is context that determines if this standing separate from is a “defection, revolt” or a “departure, disappearance.” The context here is departure. This is *“the apostasy”* not “an apostasy,” and it occurs *“first.”* It is the starting point of a sequence of events. This apostasy is a particular event that Paul could point out to the Thessalonians that they would recognize as marking whether they were in the day of the Lord or not. Every reference to an apostasy of a defection or revolt against sound Biblical doctrine (1 Timothy 4:1-5; Matthew 24; etc.) is an ambiguous increase in aberrant or heretical theology and not something definitive that would distinguish being in the day of the Lord. This apostasy would have to be something that fits being sudden and unexpected like a thief in the night as described in 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

The context here better supports *“the apostasy”* here being the departure of the saints in the rapture when Jesus appears and believers are gathered to Him. That fits the meaning of the word, the context of the παρουσία / parousia - appearing - of the Lord for His church in verse 1, and is a specific definitive event the Thessalonians could recognize in determining whether they were or were not in the day of the Lord since this is the first event of a sequence of events in it. (LINK)

The second event Paul points out that will mark being in the day of the Lord is *“the man of lawlessness, the son of the destruction, being revealed - ἀποκαλύφθῆ / apokalupthā (APSub3S).* Verses 4-12 continues on to give further description of what he will do and the future events that will take place in relationship to him. Without getting into all detail which I have in other sermons, this is *“the prince to come”* that makes *“a firm covenant with the many for one week”* in Daniel 9:26-27. *“The many”* are identified in verse 24 as Daniel’s people, the Jews. Whatever else this covenant entails, it will include a guarantee of protection to the Jews enabling them to resume sacrifices in the Temple since the abomination of desolation which occurs later cannot happen without it. This covenant is what marks the beginning of the seventieth week of the Daniel’s prophecy. Whoever does that will be easily identified. Since that has not happened either, then the day of the Lord was not present. (LINK)

The various passages that reveal the events that occur during the seventieth week, the Tribulation period, describe “sudden destruction” as God’s wrath is poured out. 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and 5:9 are clear that believers are not destined for this wrath to come for Jesus rescues us from it. That also matches Revelation 3:10 and Jesus’ promise to the church at Philadelphia that He *“will keep [them] from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”* The church, the body of Christ, is not referenced in any form from Revelation 6-19.

In addition, the prophecy in Daniel 9 is about Daniel’s people, the Jews, and the holy city, Jerusalem. Verse 24 states, *“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.”* The rest of the passage is about the fulfillment of this prophecy, and the references in it to Gentiles is as oppressors of the Jews. God’s wrath that comes in the tribulation period, the seventieth week of Daniel’s prophecy, is about unregenerate Gentiles and God fulfilling His promises to the Jews which includes both purging and a final restoration of the remnant. (LINK)

It should also be noted that God’s wrath pertains to the whole period of the seventieth week and not just those portions that occur after the sixth seal is broken in Revelation 6:12. Not only is the verb tense connected with wrath in Revelation 6:12 an aorist indicative which shows past action, but Luke 21:23 even refers to events that occur prior to the breaking of the sixth seal as *“wrath to this people.”*

Conclusions

In the future I will be giving great detail about the general points I have made today that I have not already done so in our past studies in 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 Peter, Daniel and specific passages in the last two years. That will include the more controversial passages in the study of eschatology. While the subject is difficult, it is not impossible to understand.

The doctrine of imminence and the rapture that accompanies Jesus' return for His disciples is a comfort to Christians for it assures us of God's promises that transcends this life regardless of our current circumstances. Our future home will be a glorified body living in heaven with Jesus dwelling in the Father's house.

Contrary to the accusations, the Rapture is not a doctrine of escape from trouble for Jesus and Paul have made it clear that those who strive to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, yet we will be blessed in the midst of it for our reward in heaven will be great and the prophets who were before us were persecuted by evil people in the same way (2 Timothy 3:12; Matt. 5:10-12). We can take courage for Jesus has overcome the world and is with us always, and He will use the trials of life to mature us.

However, the Rapture does assure us that Jesus will rescue us from God's wrath that will come in the Tribulation period. That would have no purpose for us and would be contrary to the promise that God has appointed us for salvation, not His wrath.

The day of the Lord which follows the Rapture will bring sudden destruction as God's wrath is poured out on the unregenerate and Israel is purged to be reduced down to a remnant. If you do not know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, then you will be left behind at the Rapture to face God's wrath that will come upon the world. And while there will be people saved during the tribulation, for most of them, that will come at the cost of martyrdom as described in Revelation 6. Today is the day of salvation for you do not know if you will have tomorrow.

To all who are believers, the unregenerate are oblivious to reality. Their only hope is repentance and faith in person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have the gospel message of hope they need to hear and Jesus has already given us a commission to proclaim it to them. God has given a job to do, let us be sure we are doing it.

Sermon Notes - 12/10/2023

REASONS FOR THE RAPTURE - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 & Selected

Introduction

The doctrine of the Rapture brought _____ to the Thessalonian believers

The Rapture is a _____ event from the Second Coming (Advent) of Christ

Many scriptures call on believers to have an _____ of an imminent of Jesus & the Rapture

The doctrine of imminence is founded on:

1) Expectation that those alive at time of writing could be _____ at Jesus' return

2) Statements the Lord is _____, at hand, standing at the door, coming quickly, like a thief

3) Words expressing _____, longing for the Lord's return & events associated with it:

Be _____ in the debate about the timing of the Rapture because eschatology is difficult

The Pre-tribulational position is _____ due to imminence and the reasons for the Rapture

Paul transitions from a message of _____ in the Rapture to one in the broader topic of the day of the Lord

Times & Epochs & The Day of the Lord - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2

Acts 1:6 - The disciples wondered if Jesus was going to set up His _____ now that He was resurrected

Jesus' answer was that it was not for them to _____ the *times or epochs* - they were to be His witnesses

A reminder to keep our _____ correct and not be side tracked by endless speculation on eschatology

Times & Seasons - Paul had already _____ them well about this topic though we do not have the detail

Time, χρόνος / Chronos, is a general reference to its course or _____ - chronology, chronometer

Epochs / seasons, καιρός / kairos, events & _____ of a time period: Summer, Victorian era

Together they refer to when events of the future will take place, _____ will characterize it & how long it lasts

The Day of the Lord: Paul _____ the "*the times and epochs*" to the "*day of the Lord*" in verse 2

While *day of the Lord* can refer to many events, there is a _____ "*the day of the Lord*" that comes suddenly

The context of *the day of the Lord* in 1 Thessalonians 5 is the _____ & coming like a thief in the night

Unexpected Coming - A thief comes when you are _____.

Most people _____ pay any attention to the preliminary warnings that we are in "*the last days*"

Sudden Destruction - 1 Thessalonians 5:3

At the very time the _____ thinks it can achieve peace and safety, it will suddenly receive the opposite

Paul's previous discussion of the _____ is a strong hint at why the world might be saying "peace & safety"

The world views Christians as holding it back from _____ - so the removal of Christians allows its pursuit

The removal of Christians _____ the world & Revelation 6 describes a quick succession of disasters

Evil people have _____ minds, so they will oppose anything reflecting God's standard despite the results

Salvation, not Wrath for Believers - 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11

Sons of light & sons of day is a complete _____ to those who are *of night and of darkness*

Those of night & darkness are characterized by ignorance or indifference & so will be caught _____
Sons of light & day are alert & sober and are _____ with faith, love & the hope of salvation
“*awake or asleep*” and “*live together with Him*” in 5:10 is a direct _____ back to 4:13-18
Paul’s teaching about both the Rapture & the day of the Lord bring _____ / encouragement

The Wrath to Come

Wrath (ὀργή / orgā) in this context refers to God’s coming angry judgment & _____ against sinners
Believers will _____ this wrath for God has not appointed us to it and Jesus rescues us from it
Though God’s wrath currently abide on evil people (Romans 1:18f), this is a _____ wrath to come
2 Thess. 1:7-9 - The Lord’s revealing from heaven will be _____ to believers & retribution on the ungodly
2 Thess. 2:1 -Jesus’ presence & our gathering together to Him is a clear reference to the _____
The day of the Lord is _____ unless the apostasy (stand separate from) has come first
The context of 2 Thessalonians better fits the apostasy referring to a departure of the _____ at the Rapture
The *man of lawlessness* is revealed when the *prince who is to come* makes a _____ with the many
The passages that reveal the events of the Tribulation period, describe _____ *destruction & God’s wrath*
The prophecy of Daniel 9 is about Daniel’s people, _____, and the holy city, Jerusalem
God’s wrath pertains to the _____ 70th week and not just portions after the 6th seal is broken (Rev. 6:12)

Conclusions

The doctrine of imminence & the Rapture that accompanies it is a _____ to Christians
The Rapture is not “a doctrine of _____” for Christians will have tribulation & persecution in this life
The Rapture does _____ Christians from the wrath of God that will come during the Tribulation period
The unsaved will face the _____ that is part of the day of the Lord
The unregenerate are oblivious to the danger they face - we need to proclaim to them the hope of the _____

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help. **Young Children**
- draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch.
Older Children - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down the scripture references and look them up later 2) Count how many times the terms “Rapture” and “wrath” are mentioned 3) Discuss with your parents the relationship of the Rapture to the wrath of God for the believer and the unbeliever.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is the doctrine of imminence and what are its foundations? What is your attitude about Jesus’ return for His church? Why? To what do *times and epochs* refer? What is their relationship to *the day of the Lord*? What are some of the characteristics of the final *day of the Lord*? What is the relationship between *the day of the Lord* in 1 Thessalonians and the Rapture? What are some reasons the world might be saying “*peace and safety*” when it is actually facing sudden destruction? To what are believers destined? From what does Jesus rescue believers? Contrast the characteristics of the *sons of light and sons of day* with those who are *of night and of day*? How does the Rapture and *the day of the Lord* bring comfort / encouragement to believers? Why do they bring sudden destruction on unbelievers? What does *wrath* refer to in 1 & 2 Thessalonians? What is the relationship between this wrath and *the day of the Lord*? According to 2 Thessalonians, what two events confirm the *day of the Lord* is present? How are they related?