

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Red Bud, Illinois

Adult Bible Class: "What Will the End of the World Be Like?"

II. New Testament Passages

C. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 (*continued*)

Verse 8: **What is the first word in this verse?** _____ **"We" belong to what?** _____

What is the difference in the lives of Christians? _____

Believers will be constantly in control of themselves, on the watch and concerned. This verse contains echoes of the armor of God passage in Ephesians 6. But there faith is a shield, love is not included, and righteousness is the breastplate.

Faith = _____ **Love =** _____

Hope of salvation = _____

"This God-given armor supplies us with the spiritual strength we need. When we stand in the power of God and not our own, we won't fall into the spiritual sleep of the world" (David Kuske, Thessalonians, Northwestern Publishing House, page 54).

Verse 9: **What does God not want for us?** _____ (no double pre-destination)

What does God want for us? _____ **How?** _____

Verse 10: **What did Jesus do for us?** _____ **For what purpose?** _____

"Whether awake or asleep": What does this mean? Is this literal, referring to being physically awake or unconscious? Is it figurative, referring to alive or dead (but the Greek word for "sleep" here is different from the one used in chapter four where it does mean death)? Or is this spiritual, referring to belief or unbelief? (But does this then mean that unbelievers have a chance to live with Jesus?)

Verse 11: The important word "encourage" occurs again. Paul recognizes that this work of the Christian faith already is occurring among the Thessalonian believers.

How can we "encourage" and "build each other up"? _____

D. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

"This passage is probably the most obscure and difficult in the whole of the Pauline correspondence and the many gaps in our knowledge have given rise to the most extravagant speculations. It will be well for us to bear in mind that we do not possess the key to everything that is here said, and accordingly to maintain some reserve in our interpretations" (Leon Morris, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Eerdmans, 1983, page 123).

Verses 1-2: Paul now writes about matters he did not address in his first letter. Obviously some report has been spread saying that Paul had predicted, said or written that the "day of the Lord" (His end-time return) already had come. If so, then the Thessalonians would have missed it and been "left behind." Such news would have "easily unsettled or alarmed" them.

Do false reports and rumors still trouble Christian congregations? _____

“unsettled”- The Greek verb often was used of ships that were adrift from their moorings. It suggests a lack of stability. “alarmed”- Jesus uses this same verb in Mark 13:7 “When you hear of wars and rumors of war, do not be alarmed.”

Verse 3: “Paul makes it clear that that day would be marked by such outstanding happenings that there would be no danger of mistaking or disregarding its presence. Specifically he says that it will be preceded by a great rebellion of the forces of evil against God and by the appearance of a being traditionally called the ‘man of sin’” (Leon Morris, The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, NICNT, Eerdmans, 1991, page 218).

“man of lawlessness (sin)”- Elsewhere in the New Testament this one is called the _____.

The manuscript tradition is divided as to whether this is anomias “lawlessness” or hamartias “sin.” The majority of witnesses read “sin” but the earlier texts read “lawlessness.” Since this was a word rarely used by Paul, it is thought that it was changed by copyists to a word that Paul uses more often, “sin.”

“rebellion”- The Greek word for this is apostasia, from which we get the English word “apostasy.” In classical Greek it referred to a political or military rebellion. In the Old Testament Greek translation it was used for rebellion against God (Joshua 22:22). “The essence of sin on the Biblical view is not its ethical quality, but the fact that it is rebellion against God. It is the assertion of the will of man instead of submission to the will of God” (Leon Morris, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Tyndale, Eerdmans, 1983, page 127).

“destruction”- His overthrow is certain. He spreads destruction and will ultimately be destroyed himself. Jesus uses this word in His prophecy of Judas’ betrayal of Him in John 17:12 “*None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.*”

“He would be particularly responsible for the apostasy or falling away because he would be a powerful and influential leader, who would presume to take the place of Christ” (David Kuske, Thessalonians, The People’s Bible, Northwestern, 1984, page 89).

Nine Points About the “Apostasy” and the “Antichrist”