

what to do WHILE WE WAIT

Part 9 – Living Ready
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

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I. INTRODUCTION

There are several reasons I hold to a Premillennial view of the Second Coming:

1. First, it is the most natural and **literal** way to read scripture. The Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah, Zachariah, Ezekiel and others spoke of an age to come in which there would be total peace on earth. “The lion will lay down beside the lamb and war would be abolished on the earth. The Lord will reign in Jerusalem.” It was never taught as figurative, but literal.
2. The Book of Revelation seems to be teaching a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth. That position is consistent with the Jewish view of end times.
3. Most of the earliest Christian leaders appear to be Premillennial in their writings. The Apostle John, who wrote the Book of Revelation, personally disciplined a man named **Polycarp**. Polycarp disciplined a man name Irenaeus, who was one of the first great apologists of the Christian faith. Both Polycarp and Irenaeus indicate in their writings they were premillennialists.

SIX MAJOR EVENTS OF THE LAST DAYS:

1. The world will grow progressively **worse** and more difficult for Christ followers. (Matthew 24)
2. The true church of Jesus Christ will be raptured away. (Matthew 24; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55)

3. There will be seven years of **tribulation** in which the world will see the emergence of a great world leader the Bible calls the Anti-Christ. 2 Thessalonians 2; Revelation 6, 8-10,13)
4. At the end of the 7 years, Christ will return, defeat the Antichrist at the Battle of Armageddon and set up a 1000 year reign on this earth called the Millennial Reign of Christ. (Revelation 19-20)
5. At the end of the thousand years, there will be the Great White Throne Judgment where everyone who does not know Christ will be **judged**. (Revelation 20)
6. There will be a New Heaven and a New Earth and time shall be no more. (Revelation 21-22)

I. WE SHOULD NOT BE **SURPRISED**.

- A. *1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ² for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³ While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴ But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. (NIV)*
- B. *Mark 13:32 **No one** knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. (NIV)*
- C. *Acts 1:7 Jesus said to them: "It is **not** for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority." (NIV)*
- D. *Romans 13:12 The night is nearly over and the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.*
- E. Why will we not be surprised? Because we live in the **light**.

II. WE SHOULD **STAY AWAKE**.

- A. *1 Thessalonians 5:5-6 You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. ⁶ So then, let us not be like others, who are **asleep**, but let us be alert and self-controlled.*
- B. Don't drift to sleep **spiritually**.

III. WE SHOULD BE **SELF-CONTROLLED**.

- A. *1 Thessalonians 5:8 But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.*

- B. Self-controlled means to let God give us the willingness and power to say yes to the **right** things and to say no to the wrong things.
- C. *1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action. Be self-controlled. Set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.*
- D. Focus always changes how we **live**. Paul connects the idea of self-control and focus to three words: faith, love and hope.
 - 1. Faith and love is the breastplate that protects our **heart**.
 - 2. Hope of salvation as a helmet to protect our **mind**.

IV. WE SHOULD LIVE CONFIDENT OF GOD'S **PROTECTION**. (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11)

- A. *1 Thessalonians 5:9-11 For God did not appoint us to suffer **wrath** but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (NIV)*
- B. *1 Thessalonians 5:9-11 For God chose to save us through our Lord Jesus Christ, not to pour out his anger on us. ¹⁰ Christ died for us so that, whether we are dead or alive when he returns, we can live with Him forever. ¹¹ So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing. (NLT)*
- C. He died for us so that whether we are still alive when He comes or have already died and gone to be with Him, we will live together with Him **safe** from the wrath to come.

Action Steps I will take this week...

- 1. I acknowledge that Jesus is coming back and want to be ready when I see Him.
- 2. This week I will ask God to help me grow to the next level of self-control – the willingness and ability to do the right things at the right times.
- 3. I put my full trust in God's protection as we approach the Second Coming.

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Notes:
