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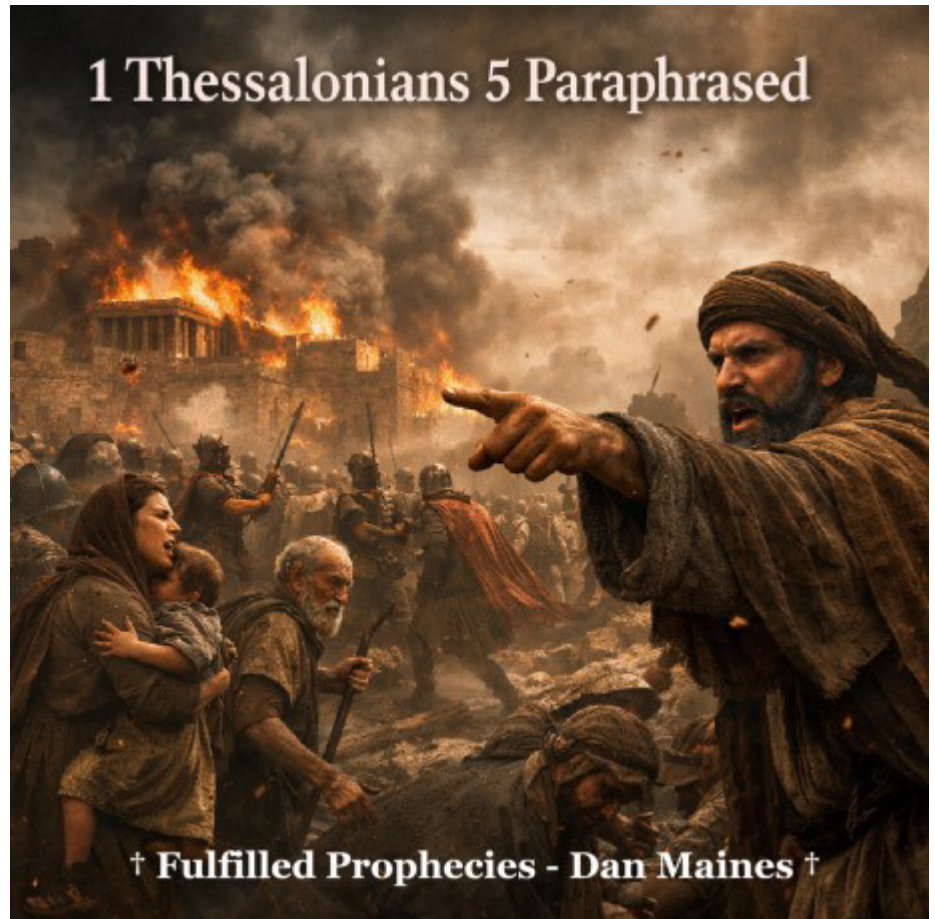
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## 1 Thessalonians 5 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## 1 Thessalonians 5 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† Paul closes this letter by reminding believers that the coming judgment that Jesus warned about would arrive suddenly for those who were not watching.

† The Thessalonian church already understood the timing Jesus taught, that these events were approaching in their generation (Matthew 24:34).

† This chapter encourages believers to stay alert, live upright lives, and strengthen one another as the old covenant age was

coming to its end.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:1**

Now about the times and seasons of these events, brothers and sisters, you don't need me to write anything more to you about it.

† Paul had already explained the timing in person, and the Thessalonians understood it clearly (Acts 17:1-4).

† Jesus had already revealed that the generation living then would see these things happen (Matthew 24:32-34).

† The church was not waiting for a distant future, they were living in the final days of that covenant age (Hebrews 1:1-2).

### **1 Thessalonians 5:2**

You yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come suddenly, like a thief in the night.

† Jesus used the same language about the coming destruction that would fall on Jerusalem (Matthew 24:42-44).

† The point is suddenness, not secrecy, the judgment would arrive quickly and unexpectedly for the unprepared (Luke 21:34-36).

† Peter later described the same day of covenant judgment that was approaching their world (2 Peter 3:10).

### **1 Thessalonians 5:3**

While people are saying everything is peaceful and secure, sudden destruction will fall on them like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they won't escape it.

† Jerusalem believed it was secure even while rebellion and corruption filled the city (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6).

† Jesus warned that people would be living normally right up until the judgment came (Matthew 24:37-39).

† The imagery of labor pains shows that the coming crisis could not be stopped once it began (Isaiah 13:6-8).

### **1 Thessalonians 5:4**

But you, brothers and sisters, aren't living in darkness so that

this day would surprise you like a thief.

† Believers were warned ahead of time so they could recognize the signs (Luke 21:28-31).

† The church had prophetic instruction from Christ and the apostles so they wouldn't be caught unaware (John 16:13).

† The light of the gospel revealed what was happening in their generation (Ephesians 5:8).

### **1 Thessalonians 5:5**

You are all children of the light and children of the day, we don't belong to the night or to darkness.

† Light represents truth and revelation through Christ (John 8:12).

† Those who followed Christ were walking in the light of the new covenant (1 John 1:7).

† The contrast shows the difference between the faithful church and those still in spiritual blindness.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:6**

So then let's not sleep like others do, but let's stay awake and keep our minds clear.

† Jesus repeatedly commanded His followers to stay alert because the crisis was approaching quickly (Mark 13:33-37).

† Spiritual sleep represents indifference and unpreparedness (Romans 13:11).

† The church was to remain sober and attentive to what God was doing in that time.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:7**

Those who sleep do it at night, and those who get drunk do it at night.

† Paul uses everyday imagery to show how darkness hides careless living.

† Night represents spiritual ignorance and moral compromise (John 3:19).

† The church was called to live differently from the surrounding

world.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:8**

But since we belong to the day, let's keep our minds clear, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

† Paul uses the imagery of spiritual armor to describe a faithful life (Ephesians 6:11-17).

† Faith, love, and hope were the defining marks of the early church (1 Thessalonians 1:3).

† These virtues protected believers as they endured persecution and hardship.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:9**

God didn't appoint us for wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

† The wrath being discussed is the judgment that fell on the unbelieving generation (Matthew 23:36).

† Believers were rescued from that coming judgment through Christ (Luke 21:20-22).

† Paul already told them they were delivered from the coming wrath (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

### **1 Thessalonians 5:10**

He died for us so that whether we're awake or asleep we may live together with Him.

† Christ's death united believers with Him both in life and in death (Romans 14:8-9).

† The point is that believers remain secure in Christ regardless of circumstance.

† Life with Christ is the hope that sustains the church.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:11**

So encourage one another and build each other up, just as you're already doing.

† The early church depended heavily on mutual encouragement during times of persecution (Hebrews 10:24-25).

† Spiritual growth happens when believers strengthen one another in faith.

† Paul commends them because they were already practicing this.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:12**

Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who work hard among you, who lead you in the Lord and instruct you.

† Church leaders were responsible for guiding believers through difficult times (Acts 20:28).

† Teaching and shepherding were essential roles in the early congregations.

† Respect for faithful leadership helped maintain unity in the church.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:13**

Show them great respect and love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

† Unity was critical as believers faced external pressure and persecution (John 17:21).

† Love within the church testified to the truth of the gospel (John 13:34-35).

† Peaceful relationships reflect the character of Christ.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:14**

We urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle, encourage those who are discouraged, help the weak, and be patient with everyone.

† The church was responsible for caring for its members spiritually and practically (Galatians 6:1-2).

† Patience reflects God's own character toward His people (2 Peter 3:9).

† These instructions show the everyday life of a healthy congregation.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:15**

Make sure no one repays evil for evil, but always pursue what is good for one another and for everyone.

† Jesus taught that believers should respond to wrongdoing with grace rather than revenge (Matthew 5:38-44).

† Doing good even toward enemies demonstrates the power of Christ's teaching.

† The church was to model a completely different way of living.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:16**

Always rejoice.

† Joy was rooted in the believer's relationship with Christ, not circumstances (Philippians 4:4).

† Even persecution could not take away the hope the church possessed.

† Rejoicing expresses confidence in God's promises.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:17**

Pray continually.

† Prayer kept believers connected to God during difficult times (Luke 18:1).

† The early church relied on prayer for guidance and strength (Acts 2:42).

† Constant prayer reflects a life centered on God.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:18**

Give thanks in everything, because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

† Gratitude acknowledges God's sovereignty in every circumstance.

† Thanksgiving was a consistent practice in apostolic teaching (Colossians 3:17).

† A thankful heart reflects trust in God's purposes.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:19**

Don't suppress the work of the Spirit.

† The Spirit guided the early church in truth and direction (John

16:13).

† Ignoring the Spirit's work would hinder the church's growth.

† Believers were called to remain receptive to God's leading.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:20**

Don't treat prophecies with contempt.

† Prophetic messages helped guide the church before the New Testament writings were complete.

† These messages were to be respected but also tested carefully.

† God used prophecy to strengthen and warn the early church.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:21**

Examine everything carefully and hold on to what is good.

† Discernment was essential because false teachings also circulated (1 John 4:1).

† Believers were expected to evaluate teachings carefully.

† Truth must be preserved and protected.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:22**

Stay away from every form of evil.

† The church was called to live holy lives that reflected Christ's character (1 Peter 1:15-16).

† Avoiding evil protected the witness of the gospel.

† Holiness distinguished believers from the surrounding culture.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

Now may the God of peace Himself make you completely holy, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

† Paul's prayer shows that sanctification is God's work in believers (Philippians 1:6).

† The coming of Christ referenced here connects with the same approaching judgment spoken of throughout the letter.

† Believers trusted God to complete His work in them.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:24**

The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.

† God's faithfulness guarantees the fulfillment of His promises (Numbers 23:19).

† The confidence of the church rests in God's character.

† What God begins He completes.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:25**

Brothers and sisters, pray for us.

† Even apostles asked the church for prayer support (Ephesians 6:19).

† This shows the humility and dependence of the early leaders.

† Prayer united the entire church.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:26**

Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss.

† This was a common greeting expressing unity and affection in the early church (Romans 16:16).

† It symbolized fellowship and mutual love.

† The church functioned as a close spiritual family.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:27**

I charge you before the Lord that this letter be read to all the brothers and sisters.

† Apostolic letters were intended to be shared among all believers (Colossians 4:16).

† Public reading ensured everyone received the same instruction.

† These writings became foundational teaching for the church.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:28**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

† Paul commonly ended his letters with a blessing centered on grace.

† Grace summarizes the entire message of the gospel.

† The church lived daily under the grace of Christ.

## Historical References

† Josephus describes the sudden destruction that fell upon Jerusalem in AD 70 and how the people were caught off guard even while claiming peace and security (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6).

† Irenaeus wrote that the apostles warned the early churches about the approaching trials and the end of the old order (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

† Eusebius recorded that Christians in Judea fled Jerusalem before the Roman siege because they recognized the warnings Jesus had given (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History).

† Clement of Alexandria emphasized the moral instructions of the apostles as guidance for believers living through difficult times (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

## How It Applies To Us Today

† This chapter reminds us that believers are called to live alert and faithful lives, not spiritually asleep.

† Encouraging one another remains essential for the health of the church.

† Faith, love, and hope are still the foundation of Christian living.

† Prayer, gratitude, and discernment continue to guide believers today.

† The church must pursue holiness and reject evil in every form.

## Q & A Appendix

**Q:** What does the day of the Lord refer to in this chapter?

**A:** It refers to the covenant judgment that fell on Jerusalem in that generation (Matthew 24:34; Luke 21:20-22).

**Q:** Why does Paul say the day comes like a thief?

**A:** Because it would arrive suddenly and unexpectedly for those who ignored the warnings (Matthew 24:42-44).

**Q:** What does it mean to stay awake and sober?

**A:** It means living spiritually alert and morally disciplined while watching for the fulfillment of Christ's warnings (Romans 13:11-12).

**Q:** Why were believers told to encourage one another?

**A:** Because they were living through persecution and approaching upheaval, and the church needed constant support (Hebrews 10:24-25).

**Q:** What are the key attitudes believers should have according to this chapter?

**A:** Joy, prayer, gratitude, discernment, and holiness (Philippians 4:4; Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 1:15-16).

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## **Source Index**

† 1 Thessalonians 5

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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