**1 Thessalonians 4-5**

Today’s Summary: Paul had taught the Church in Thessalonica that Jesus could come at any time to take them home. This gave them endurance and courage during severe persecution. It also made them ask and be concerned with those believers who died before He came. It was also what Jesus Himself taught – this is known as the Doctrine of Imminency, that He can come at any time and so we need to be prepared – holy and blameless and ready with our oil which is the power of the Holy Spirit just like the Virgins with their lamps filled with oil when the Bridegroom comes. So Paul writes back to answer their question about what happens to those who have died before Jesus comes back and when is he coming?

**Living to Please God**

**4**As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. **2**For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

**3**It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; **4**that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, **5**not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; **6**and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. **7**For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. **8**Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

**9**Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. **10**And in fact, you do love all of God’s family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, **11and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, 12so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.**

**Believers Who Have Died**

**13**Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. **14**For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. **15**According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16**For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. **17**After that, **we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.** **18**Therefore encourage one another with these words.

**The Day of the Lord**

**5**Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, **2for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3While 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 and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. **5**You are all children of the light and children 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 awake and sober. **7**For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. **8**But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. **9For 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.

**Final Instructions**

**12**Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. **13**Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. **14**And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. **15**Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

**16Rejoice always, 17pray continually, 18give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.**

**19Do not quench the Spirit. 20Do not treat prophecies with contempt 21but test them all; hold on to what is good, 22reject every kind of evil.**

**23**May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**. 24The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.**

**25**Brothers and sisters, pray for us. **26**Greet all God’s people with a holy kiss. **27**I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters.

**28**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.