

### MEMORY VERSE

***For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.***

1 Thessalonians 5:9-10

### CORE COMPETENCIES

#### Core Beliefs

- Trinity
- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

#### Core Practices

- Worship
- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

#### Core Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness

**"I am faithful to fulfill God's will for my life."**

- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

### Monday

Begin your time in prayer. Ask God to give you insight into His Word as you study this passage.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 three times, slowly. In the space below, note any key words/phrases.

What is Paul's main idea in this passage?

What was Paul's purpose for writing these verses to the Thessalonian believers?

Next to each reference below, jot down a phrase or sentence that summarizes the verse. This will help you create a summary outline of the passage.

vs. 1:

vs. 2:

vs. 3:

vs. 4:

vs. 5:

vs. 6:

vs. 7:

vs. 8:

vs. 9:

vs. 10:

vs. 11:

What is your understanding or belief about what will happen after the rapture?

Ask God to give you a fuller understanding of what His return will mean for both believers and unbelievers.

### Tuesday

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Ask God to give you insight and understanding as you study this passage.

Reread 5:1-3. Paul speaks in these verses about a time called the Day of the Lord. Read the following Old Testament passages that speak of the Day of the Lord. Next to each passage, note what that passage says about this time.

Isaiah 13:9-11:

Joel 2:28-32:

Zephaniah 1:14-18:

Zephaniah 3:14-15:

The Day of the Lord is believed by many to follow the rapture, (spoken of in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the time when all believers will be taken to heaven by Christ. All people left on earth will then experience a time of great distress when God's wrath toward sin is poured out on the earth. This time is also known as the tribulation.

What do verses 2-3 tell us about the day of the Lord?

Why is it important that Paul instruct the Thessalonian believers regarding the day of the Lord?

The analogy is used that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, illustrating that it will be a startling surprise to those who are not expecting it. As believers, we are to live lives fully aware that this day will come.

End your time in prayer. Ask God to deepen your understanding of these times that Paul writes about so that you will be expectant and informed regarding Christ's return to earth and the Day of the Lord.

### **Wednesday**

*Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going." John 13:35*

Who are several people in your life whom you would characterize as walking in darkness? Spend several moments praying that they would understand the "light" and walk in it.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; reread verses 3-7.

Who are those who are in darkness?

What do these verses say characterizes those who are in darkness?

The word asleep is used in verses 6 and 7 to describe those who are in darkness. The Greek word that is translated as asleep is *katheudōmen*, meaning spiritual lethargy or insensitivity. Note that the word asleep is used differently in verses 5-11 than it was used in verses 13-18 where the Greek word *koimaō* translated asleep meant death.

How will those in darkness respond to the coming of the Lord?

Why is it important, as believers, that we understand the experience of the coming of the Lord for those who don't believe in Christ?

How does this understanding impact how you relate to those who do not yet know Christ? (Be specific.)

Spend time praying for the people you earlier identified as "walking in darkness." Ask God to give you opportunities to speak of Jesus, the light and hope for salvation from the coming day of the Lord.

### **Thursday**

*"Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." John 12:36*

Spend a few moments thinking about how your life has been transformed from darkness to light as a result of knowing Christ.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; reread verses 6-10.

What instruction does Paul give to believers, those who belong to the light/day?

Why is it important that we are alert and self-controlled?

Paul uses the imagery of a soldier in verse 8 to tell us how we should now live in response to the coming day of the Lord. Read Ephesians 6:14-17, another image of the believer as a soldier.

*As sons of the light, we are "standing on the threshold of an event that will mean sudden translation for some and sudden destruction for others, Christians should arm themselves for action with self-control. A Roman breastplate covered a soldier from his neck to his waist and protected most of his vital organs. That is what Christian's faith and love do. Faith in God protects inwardly and love for people protects outwardly. In addition, the hope of salvation guards their hearts from attacks on their thinking. Followers of Christ have a sure hope; they are not as others who have no hope. (Taken from: The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Walvoord & Zuck, eds. Cook Communications, 1983, p. 706.)*

In what ways do you need to increase in alertness, self-control, or faith and love?

Close your time in prayer. Thank God for your assured position as a son of light because of Jesus' death on the cross.

### **Friday**

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:10. Spend a few moments thanking God for the promise of living together with Him.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, reread verse 11.

What final instruction does Paul give to the Thessalonian church in this section?

Why is it important that we, as the church, continue to encourage one another and build each other up?

We are to stand together as sons of light in full knowledge of the coming reality of the tribulation. Paul instructs the church, to infuse each other with courage and edify each other. We can find great hope in Christ's return. We must also encourage each other to live faithful lives of action in view of the tribulation, as ones who are self-controlled and understand the implications of this time for those who do not know Christ.

How can you encourage the community of believers around you regarding Paul's instruction in these verses? Be specific!

Pray that God would use you as a faithful and strong believer in community to build up others and show those in darkness the light of Jesus.