

What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

Word

Scripture Reference

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Discussion Questions

1. What are some things that may hurt you if you knew about it, but you would nonetheless like to know about because of how it may affect you? Share with the group.
2. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. The book of Acts tells us that Paul stayed in Thessalonica for “three Sabbaths.” (Acts 17:2). On his second missionary journey (A.D. 50-52), he established a church there. Our passage was taken from one of Paul’s letters to that church. This early epistle focused on the Lord’s return, notably seen in Paul’s references about it in every chapter (1:9-10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23). Chapter 4:1-5:22 talks about how the Lord’s return serves as proper motivation for personal living. Share with the group how you await Christ’s return. Do you look forward to it? How do you expect it to happen?
3. The passage gives three important points about the Lord’s return:
 - a. *What we don’t know* (v. 1-3). What is it that no one knows about the Lord’s return? Why was His return compared to a thief in the night? Despite not really knowing if a thief will break into your home or not, what measures do you have in place in case to be ready for it? What other comparisons were mentioned in these verses regarding the Lord’s return?
 - b. *What we do know* (v. 5:4-5). As children of light, Christians are no longer in darkness (i.e. ignorance, unbelief, sin). You do not know when the Lord will return, but you do know it will happen, and so you have reason to prepare so it doesn’t come as

a surprise. As a Christian, who knows for certain that the Lord will return, how can you prepare for His second coming? What influence should the promise of His return have on how you should live day to day? How should others perceive your identity as a Christian?

- c. *What we should do* (v. 6-10).
 - Be alert and self-controlled (v. 6-7). Are you indifferent or unaware of Christ’s return? How are you different in attitude from the people you know who don’t have Christ in their lives?
 - Be dressed for battle (v. 8-10). What roles should faith (Godward), love (manward), and hope (of salvation) play in your life? How can you be assured of your salvation?
 - Be encouraging and edifying (v. 11). How should the Lord’s return build up brothers and sisters in the faith? How do you edify others in their walk with the Lord?

Walk

What you don’t know can hurt you. You know the Lord is coming back to judge this world. You don’t know when, but you must be prepared. Are you ready for Christ’s return? How can you give hope to someone who is convinced that death is the end of his/her existence?

Worship & Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ. Thank you that through Your Son I have the assurance that I will be with You in heaven. May that knowledge be an encouragement that drives me to live for your glory here on earth. May that truth be the hope I can bring to those who do not know of You. And may that fact be the one thing I look forward to the most for the rest of my life. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.