

Worksheet #6: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11 (NKJV)

¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

⁵ But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. ⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Interpretation: *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. Who is Paul describing when he speaks of “those who have fallen asleep” (4:13)? What clues in the context help us to understand his meaning?

2. What event does Paul refer to as the ground for his conclusion that God will “bring with him those who sleep in Jesus” (4:14)? What does Paul say about this claim in 1 Cor. 15:1–11?

3. What does Paul likely mean when he says that the living “will by no means precede”¹ those who are asleep (4:15)?

4. In what sense is the return of Christ (described in 4:16–17) a source of comfort (4:18) for believers?

5. What does Paul mean when he says that the Thessalonian believers “are not in darkness” and thus the Day of the Lord will not “overtake you as a thief” (5:4)?

6. What does it mean for those who are “of the day” (5:5) to “watch and be sober” (5:6, *cf.* 5:8)?

7. What does it mean when Paul states that “God did not appoint us to wrath” (5:9)?

8. Why is it significant that Christ died “for us” (5:10)?

Application: *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?

10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?

¹ The KJV rendering “prevent” here reflects an archaic meaning. In the past, the word “prevent” could mean “to go before someone,” though today the word “prevent” usually means “to keep something from happening.”