



Sermon Growth Guide

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We Belong to the Day | 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

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Key Verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:5 - "You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness."

Big Idea: A new year invites us to live as children of the light: awake, alert, and confident in the hope we have in our salvation.

Foundations

"Yet in thy dark streets shineth the Everlasting Light." We began this series with a prophecy in Isaiah 9. His words speak of people walking in darkness who are promised to receive a sign. The sign comes in the form of a child that would not just shine, but bring to earth justice, peace, and righteousness forevermore.

As we move from Advent through Christmastide, we look toward Epiphany, knowing that Christ's Everlasting Light continues to lead us. Both Isaiah and John proclaim a light brighter than any fading light of this world, a light that exposes sin and still breaks into our darkness with love. In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, he echoes these claims, assuring us that this same light is ours as we await the Day of the Lord.

When we hear "the Day of the Lord," we tend to picture billboards, flames, or end-times films that cause us to fear the future. Paul's words serve as a reminder that we already know our secure salvation in Christ because we know Him personally. As children of the light, we display our present, active Lord and we will not be surprised or asleep when that day comes. We are to live with confidence in our salvation—awake, equipped, and encouraged while encouraging each other as we share Christ's hope with those who still walk in darkness.

Understanding God's Word

Read together 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11.

This passage continues the discussion from the previous chapter where Paul comforts the Thessalonians with hope for both the living and the dead at Christ's return. He now contrasts light and darkness, urging them to remain watchful and self-controlled. His tone resembles that of ancient teachers who affirmed that students already knew what they needed. Now a generation after the ascension, Christ's delayed return may have dulled their enthusiasm, tempting them toward complacency. So, he encourages them to stay the course with renewed zeal, calling them to live faithfully now while looking toward the Day of the Lord.

Applying God's Word

Living as children of the light is not a call to fear or frantic activity. Instead, Paul teaches us to be encouraged and to encourage one another because our salvation is secure. How might God be inviting you to encourage another believer today?

Witnessing God's Word

The hope and peace we have in Christ frees us not only to tend to our own discipleship, but also to notice those still walking in darkness. Who needs to experience the light of Christ through you this year? What simple step could you take to reflect peace or share hope with them in your words or actions?