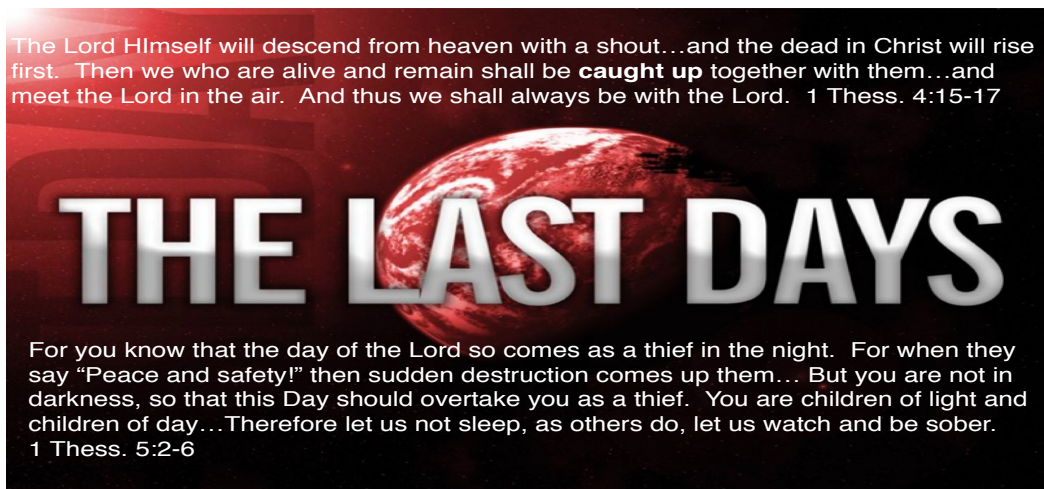


LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS – 1 THESSALONIANS CHAPTER 5



As Paul writes about living in the last days and preparing for what is to come, he is echoing the words of Jesus found in Matthew 24:36-44 and in Luke 17:20-30. In 1st Thessalonians, chapter 5 verses 6 and 8 Paul reiterates the words: "Watch and be sober." The following is the Greek translation for the word **sober**: "To be free from illusions and from the intoxicating influences of sin."

In Luke 17 Jesus makes references to those who were unprepared for the changes that suddenly came upon them. First he mentions Noah and the flood where people were eating and drinking only to face sudden destruction because they were not on the arch of safety. The second mention of sudden destruction, tells the story of Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah. People were also eating, drinking, buying and selling when suddenly the city was destroyed (See Revelation Chapter 18).

Paul reminds the Thessalonians of 9 steps to take to be fully prepared for the return of Christ:

1. **Bless your leaders and those who labor among you.** God uses leader to warn people and prepare them for the "sudden events."
2. **Warn the unruly and comfort the weak.** Those in darkness think that they can continue to say and do as they please without considering the consequences.
3. **Let your good works replace evil deeds.** Remind people that their works will be judged when Jesus comes.
4. **Re-joyce always!** In a world that is filled with sadness, learn how to re-new your joy. When life becomes difficult re-hearse and re-member the goodness of the Lord.

5. **Pray without ceasing.** This means to have a continuous conversation with God. Have prayer-talks about everything and then allow Him to speak to you during your day.
6. **In everything give thanks.** This is your antidote for the absence of world peace and the stress and depression that is a mark of the last days.
7. **Do not quench the Spirit.** In the last days we will be in serious need of the power and direction that can only come from the Holy Spirit. Live your life in such a way that the Holy Spirit will have free reign in your life.
8. **Do not despise prophecies. Test all things.** In the last days those who are true followers of Christ will move more and more into the realm of supernatural revelations from the Lord. Those who are mature in the faith are called upon to “test all things” and discern whether the prophecies are truly from God.
9. **Abstain from every form of evil.** The only way to keep Satan’s evil attacks from prospering in our lives is to “abstain from evil.” As long as we remain in the will of God, we are covered by the protection of God.