

## 6. The Day of the Lord

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Date: 04 January 2009

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[ 0 : 01 ] Let's bow our heads for a word of prayer. I'll just repeat some of the words that we have just sung a moment ago. Now as once at Cana's wedding, speak and let us hear your word.

Lead us through our need or doubting, hope be born and joy restored. We ask it for your dear name's sake. Amen. Well let's turn to 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 if we may on page 987 in our Visitor's Bibles if you have one of those.

Now we've had a break from 1 Thessalonians for a few weeks so as to give us a chance to celebrate Christmas. But we'll pick up from where we left off about four weeks or a month ago with this opening section of chapter 5 about the day of the Lord verses 1 to 11.

And my plan, God willing, is to take the final part of chapter 5, verses 12 and following, for our Wednesday lunchtime services over the next three weeks. I know that many of you, for very good reasons, because you have to earn a crust, aren't able to be here on a Wednesday lunchtime.

But I guess the sermons may come out on a CD in due course for those who are real gluttons for punishment. So these first 11 verses, now they deal with a very wonderful but rather neglected subject, the day of the Lord.

[ 1 : 32 ] Not the Lord's day, which is Sunday, but the day of the Lord in the sense of the great day when the Lord Jesus will return to save and to judge. Now you may perhaps raise one eyebrow when you hear me describe the day of Christ's return as a neglected subject.

It's certainly not neglected in our great Catholic creeds of the Christian church or our confessions of faith. Nor is it neglected in the doctrinal statements of evangelical organizations such as the UCCF basis of faith.

So when I suggest that it may be neglected, I'm really talking about our own personal lives and the grip of our own thinking upon it. So let me ask this.

Hands up. If you have thought consciously about the return of the Lord Jesus in the last 48 hours.

Be honest. Hands up if you thought consciously about his return in the last 48 hours. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Thank you very much. Okay. Thank you. That's just about what I thought it might be.

[ 2 : 40 ] Six out of 100 and whatever it is. Maybe that's 4% or something like that. So if only 4% of a congregation of a church of this kind are thinking about the return of Christ in a period of 48 hours, it's probably not fanciful for me to say that this is a neglected subject.

It somehow doesn't sit with weight upon our consciousness and expectation. I guess most of us are not waking up every morning wondering if today might be the day.

So as a matter of doctrine, as a matter of faith, we don't doubt it for a moment. But in practical terms, it's a matter which has not deeply pressed itself upon our minds.

But it's clear that it was a matter of first priority to the Apostle Paul and to the other Apostles. Just compare the first paragraph of 1 Thessalonians 5 with the last paragraph of 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, which we were looking at four weeks ago.

Now that last paragraph of chapter 4 is about what happens to Christian people after we die. And Paul writes that paragraph to the Thessalonians as new teaching, at least teaching new to them.

[ 3 : 55 ] Because you see he says in chapter 4 verse 13, we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep. So clearly Paul had not yet taught the Thessalonians about that subject.

But by contrast, look at the way Paul introduces chapter 5. Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you, for you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

Now why were they fully aware of these things? Surely because Paul had taught them during his brief initial visit to them. That initial visit, you may remember, was only a few weeks, maybe four, five, six weeks, something like that.

Too short to include the teaching that Paul includes in the last paragraph of chapter 4, but not too short to teach the message of the Lord's return. Because that message was of fundamental importance to Paul.

It was one of the first things that a baby new Christian church like the one at Thessalonica needed to learn. And why was it so important a part of Paul's gospel?

[ 5 : 02 ] Because it is the great goal towards which all the history of the world is rushing. The history of nations and cultures and the history of individuals.

It's the finishing line, the finishing tape, you might say, of the world as we know it. The Lord Jesus is coming back. It may be soon, so get ready.

That's the message. Look at verse 4. Paul's message is, don't let that day surprise you like a thief. Be prepared. If you're a university student in the last year of your university studies, we probably haven't got too many students back from their Christmas holidays yet, but if you are a last year university student, I guess you're thinking about the finishing line of your university course every day, aren't you?

As you do your coursework and as you prepare yourself for the dreaded exams that you might have to go through in March or April or May or whenever they come. So it's as though in a very small way, as far as your university course is concerned, the day of judgment is approaching.

The university in a few months' time is going to classify you. And you don't want to have to tell your grandchildren in 50 years' time that you've got a third.

[ 6 : 18 ] So you're very conscious of that kind of pressure, aren't you? But it's odd, isn't it, that the university student can have that end point pressing in upon him every day or upon her every day, and yet the Christian can become almost oblivious of the day of judgment which will end all lesser judgments.

So we need the Apostle Paul to re-educate us and to set our thinking straight. Perhaps I could put this in a rather different way. Anyway, the worldly man, the non-Christian man, will typically think of his life as having a great beginning, a hopefully useful middle section, and then a rather sad and pathetic final part.

In with a bang, out with a whimper. So if you were to think of his view of his life in terms of a graph, I guess the line of the graph rises steadily and quickly in the first part, up through childhood and adolescence and into early adult life.

Then you get to about 45. And the line of the graph seems to flatten out, and it goes on for the next 15 or 20 years until you retire. And then after that it's downhill all the way into Zimmerland, and finally the nursing home, and then the necropolis.

Now that's the way the person who is not a Christian tends to think about life. The Christian has a completely different graph. Really, nothing very significant goes on until you've been born again.

- [ 7 : 49 ] But from the moment of your conversion, you are part of the new creation. And that line keeps on rising towards the great goal. It never flattens out. Still less does it go down.
- In old age, of course the body begins to fall to pieces. But the Christian looks forward to the beginning of the really big adventure, being with the Lord. Our souls with him before his return to earth, and then our souls and bodies reunited in the resurrection after his return.
- So it's the most wonderful prospect, and yet it's rather neglected by Christians. Especially, perhaps, those who are both affluent and busy, and have therefore a lot to get their teeth into in this world.
- So let's allow Paul the Apostle to reshape our thinking. It's easy for Christians to get into the habit of thinking of the graph of our lives, just in the same way as the worldly man thinks, tapering off finally into weakness and invisibility, going out whimpering on a zimmer frame, rather than riding out gloriously on a chariot of fire.
- So if Paul is going to reshape our thinking, we must look at the text, we must see what he actually says to us. So let's turn our eyes to the passage itself, and I want to ask two questions of this passage.
- [ 9 : 09 ] First, how does Paul the Apostle describe the day of the Lord? And second, how does Paul teach us to live in the light of its approach? So first of all, something about the day of the Lord, and then how are we to live in the light of it?
- So first, how does Paul describe it? What are its features and characteristics? I want to notice three that he teaches. The first is that the day of the Lord is certain.
- It is certain to come. Look at verse 2. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come. And just how it will come, we'll look at in a moment.
- But let's notice Paul's certainty about it. It will come. Here is God's Apostle, Christ's Apostle, who's been appointed by Christ himself to be our teacher.
- And he is assuring us that the day of the Lord, the return of Jesus, will come. It's not a vague hope or longing. It's a conviction based upon what the Lord himself has revealed to the Apostle, that this great day will come.
- [ 10 : 13 ] Paul expresses just the same kind of certainty in his speech to the Athenian elders in Acts chapter 17, where he says to them, God has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed.
- So the day is fixed, and the judge, Jesus, has been appointed. It's in the Lord's calendar, you might say. Now, of course, you and I don't know the date, but God the Father does.
- The Apostle Peter speaks with just the same kind of conviction. In fact, he devotes much of the third chapter of his second letter to the certain fact of the day of the Lord's coming, and he dismisses the suggestions of those who scoff at the idea that the Lord will return.
- The Apostle John is just the same in his conviction. The book of Revelation, which I've been quoting from, it's all about the final acts of salvation and judgment. And in the penultimate verse of that book, which is the penultimate verse of the whole Bible, the Lord Jesus says, Surely I'm coming soon.
- And the Apostle replies, Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. So the Bible ends with us looking towards the great horizon, waiting for the stupendous event which will wrap up all of time and history and bring everything to its final accounting.
- [ 11 : 35 ] So it says Paul to us, The day of the Lord will come. And if that is true, it needs to be the great day in our own calendars. I know we can't date it, and various groups of religious people have tried to date it, and they've always ended up with egg on their faces.

We can't date it, but we need to be prepared for it. And it's an odd fact, isn't it, that Christians can spend a lot of time and energy preparing for a holiday which lasts for maybe a week or perhaps a fortnight.

You've been preparing for your holidays recently. It's the time of year, isn't it, when you do that sort of thing. We can spend a lot of energy preparing for a holiday and yet not spend five minutes really preparing for the Lord's return.

Think of the hours that you can spend booking your air tickets and your accommodation. You're quite keen to know that your hotel room is going to be looking out over the sea and not the gas works. You check up on that sort of detail, don't you?

Then you have to organise your hire car and then more hours in the shops buying sun hats and sun creams and ridiculous looking bathing suits. You can spend hours and hours on all that kind of stuff for a holiday which is all over in a moment and yet not spend time preparing for the only day in the calendar that is really certain.

[ 12 : 51 ] The day of the Lord will come, says Paul. It is certain. Then second, its coming will be sudden. Verse 2, The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

I wonder if you've ever had a burglary in the night. It's a pretty unpleasant experience when it happens and it always comes unexpectedly, doesn't it? You never get a note through the post box a couple of days beforehand, a courteous note which informs you that at 3am on the 5th of January your house is going to be broken into and robbed.

Now if you did get that kind of warning, you wouldn't go to bed, would you? You'd be up and prepared. You'd be flanked by two muscular looking policemen, wouldn't you? You'd be ready. Now you'll see from verse 4 that the day of the Lord is not going to surprise the Thessalonian Christians like a thief.

Paul says to them, you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. So the suddenness and unexpectedness of it will surprise the unbeliever and catch him completely off guard.

That's Paul's point. And he describes the unbeliever's attitude in verse 3. You see, the people that he describes in verse 3 are being contrasted with the brothers, the believers, of verse 4.

[ 14 : 14 ] So look at these people in verse 3. While people are saying there is peace and security, then sudden destruction will come upon them. So these unbelieving people are simply deluding themselves.

They're congratulating themselves on reaching a point of peace and security in their lives as they see it. But they're quite unaware of the impending judgment.

It makes me think of a man who's sitting down in the jungles of India and opening his picnic basket. And he's just ready to enjoy his picnic, quite unaware of the man-eating tiger that is creeping up behind him.

You can just picture him, can't you? He opens his basket. He eyes his cheese and pickle sandwich with great pleasure. He opens his chilled can of Iron Brew, the Scotsman, and he prepares to take his first sip of the delicious liquid.

Life is delightful. The air of the Himalayan foothills is sweet in his nostrils. But he's quite unaware of what is just about to happen to him. And notice the words that the Apostle puts in the mouths of these unbelievers.

[ 15 : 25 ] There is peace and security. That's what they say. They think there is peace. They think that all is well when it's not. And there's a bit of biblical history in the idea of thinking that you have peace when there's no real peace.

Remember how Jeremiah the prophet knew that a day of the Lord, not the final day of the Lord, but a day of the Lord, a visitation of the Lord, was about to fall on Jerusalem. In the early 6th century BC, the city was about to be destroyed by the Babylonians.

And there was Jeremiah, the Lord's true prophet, and he was dogged and surrounded by false prophets who kept prophesying peace for Jerusalem. And this is what Jeremiah says in his 23rd chapter.

This is what the Lord Almighty says. Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you. They keep saying, the Lord says you will have peace. No harm will come to you.

But which of them has stood in the counsel of the Lord to see or to hear his word? See, the storm of the Lord will burst out in wrath. The anger of the Lord will not turn back until he fully accomplishes the purposes of his heart.

[ 16 : 37 ] People will always love it when a leader or a prophet or a self-styled prophet pronounces peace. Everyone wants to hear of peace. It's a bit like Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister in 1938, who returned from his conference with Adolf Hitler.

And as he stepped out of the airplane, he waved a little piece of paper in his hand, which I think bore Hitler's signature. And he said to the people of Britain, there will be peace for our time. It was 1938.

The storm broke a year later. Jesus, the Lord Jesus, understood this syndrome of self-delusion so well. He speaks of his own return in Luke chapter 17 like this.

Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying, and being given in marriage right up to the day when Noah entered the ark.

Then the flood came and destroyed them all. In other words, they paid no attention to Noah's preaching. When he told them that a judgment was imminent, they simply could not believe it.

[ 17 : 47 ] They believed in a peaceful, safe, continuing world of food and drink and marrying and being given in marriage. Just as our non-Christian contemporaries do today.

Won't there always be a Tesco's and always be a Sainsbury's and always be a Tenant's Brewery and a shop like Barcatex for Brides Over the Road that sells beautiful dresses for beautiful brides?

Don't eating and drinking and marrying go on forever? So look at Paul's answer in verse 3. While people are saying at the very moment when people are saying there is peace and security then sudden destruction will come upon them.

How? As labour pains upon a pregnant woman says Paul. In other words, just like that. There you are nine months pregnant sitting at your kitchen table enjoying a cup of tea and a jam donut and suddenly there it is.

Ouch! It's beginning and it's inescapable isn't it? You can't say to this baby hold your horse sunshine I'm not ready for you give me another month. It's on its way nothing you can do can stop it.

[ 18 : 56 ] So the day of Christ's return is certain sudden and then thirdly Paul says it will be a day of destruction inescapable destruction.

Do you see there in the middle of verse 3 people are saying peace and security and it's then that sudden destruction will come upon them and they will not escape. Now the Christian gospel is something which we can never feel completely comfortable with.

It is full of overwhelming comfort to the repentant sinner to the believer but it has not an ounce of comfort to those who rebel against the Lord and reject the good news.

And the New Testament is uniform in its insistence that those who refuse Christ will be destroyed by him. Not because he wants to destroy them but because he must.

They have refused him and therefore he must ultimately refuse them. It's a hard part isn't it of the Bible's teaching. I do hope that all of us will learn more and more to weep over those who refuse Christ and his forgiveness.

[ 20 : 07 ] Just turn over the page with me to 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 7 where Paul builds up a slightly clearer and bigger picture of the day of the Lord's return.

Chapter 1 verse 7 halfway through the verse when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus they will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.

So do you see there how the sudden destruction of 1 Thessalonians 5.3 is also the eternal destruction of 2 Thessalonians 1.9 Paul therefore is not talking about a momentary obliteration of unbelievers but rather an everlasting punishment a self-conscious ruination away from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his might with no road back.

That's the reality of hell. It's a horrible reality and we can never be comfortable with it. 2009 AD stretches before us 52 weeks of it in which we can either spread this gospel or abdicate our responsibilities.

Well let's pray that by the grace of God this year we'll be able to hasten many people off the broad road that leads to destruction and onto the narrow road which leads to life.

[ 21 : 44 ] So here is Paul's teaching about the day of Christ's return. It is certain and from the point of view of the unbeliever it will be sudden and it will bring inescapable destruction.

Now second how does Paul then teach us to live in the light of Christ's coming? Let's observe three things here. First we live as children of light or children of the day.

Verse 4 begins but you but you in other words Paul is contrasting you the Christian Thessalonians with the unbelievers of verse 3 who are unaware of the doom that hangs over them.

They he's saying are in darkness they can't see the truth but you Christians you're not in darkness brothers how does he put it for you are all children of light children of the day we are not of the night or of the darkness in verse 5.

Now the New Testament as you know describes Christian believers in a number of different ways as believers as brothers and sisters sometimes disciples sometimes people who are called to belong to God and then we have this lovely phrase children of light it's not often used but there it is it's a description of Christians and in Bible language to be a child of this or a son of that means that that quality sums up the heart of who you are and what your nature is so for example Barnabas the apostle is called famously in the Acts of the Apostles a son of encouragement which obviously meant that encouraging others was what he just naturally did it was at the core of his being or think of John and James the sons of Zebedee Jesus nicknamed them the sons of thunder I expect because they were a noisy pair some people are like that aren't they I can think of one or two ex-Cornhill students who deserve the name sons of thunder you always knew when they were in this building when they came in through the door the whole building began to rock and roll and dance the boogie woogie so sorry a bit off the point in verse 5 in verse 5 to be children of light or children of the day means that once we have come to Christ we are transferred from the realm of darkness to the kingdom of light in the kingdom of darkness people can't see they can't see the truth about God and they can't see how to live life in terms of moral decisions and behavior but children of the light can see by the light of Christ where they're going

[ 24 : 26 ] Jesus says do you remember I'm the light of the world whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life so children of light are learning to reject the darkness and the secrecy and the shame of the old way of life and come to understand so much about the purpose of life because Christ is the one who fills our lives with light and in the context of 1 Thessalonians 5 being children of light means that Christians are not in the dark about Christ's return we know that he's coming back to bring the world to a just judgment so Paul describes Christians as children of light or children of the day as we wait for the coming of the Lord and then he unpacks the further implications of this by starting verse 6 with the phrase so then so then what does it mean to live as children of light who are waiting for the Lord's return it means and here's my second point being awake and sober awake and sober verse 6 so then let us not sleep as others do but let us keep awake and be sober for those who sleep sleep at night and those who get drunk are drunk at night but since we belong to the day let us be sober so Paul is contrasting those who belong to the night and the darkness with those who belong to the light and the day and drunkenness he is saying is part of the lifestyle of the darkness it was illuminating for me to read some years ago in one of Martin Lloyd-Jones' published sermons and you'll remember

Martin Lloyd-Jones was a highly qualified doctor as well as a preacher he makes the point in this sermon that alcohol is a depressant and he points out that people often think of alcohol as a stimulant here you are Charlie here's a glass of stimulating beverage as one gives a drink to another no says Lloyd-Jones caffeine is a stimulant that's why coffee and tea are so popular we need a pick-me-up in the morning don't we but alcohol says Lloyd-Jones is a depressant in other words it slows down your mental and physical mechanisms so if it's taken in any but very modest quantities it's going to make us less than human it will depress our humanity it will rob us of our full faculties and reduce self-control which will open the door to all manner of sinful behaviour so Paul is saying that drunkenness is part of godlessness it's part of the lifestyle of the night now by contrast

Paul is telling us that Christians who are waiting for the return of Christ are wide awake and sober we love life and we long for the author of life to return so that we can enjoy eternal life in all its glory and fullness so we're not if we're Christians we're not needing to retreat into the semi-conscious and depressed and befuddled world of drunkenness or of drug abuse where reality becomes disordered and our whole human vitality is reduced drunkenness is something that gnaws at the vitals of humanity it's anti-human and anti-god and yet it is much praised and much applauded in today's world so whenever we hear voices glorifying the effects of heavy drinking we need to recognise that they come from the darkness the Lord's people who are eagerly awaiting the Lord's return are awake and sober and then third they're dressed for battle armed for battle look at verse 8 having put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation now you'll recognise that this is a mini version of Paul's full armour of God which he describes in Ephesians chapter 6 and the letter to the Ephesians was almost certainly written some years after 1 Thessalonians and by the time

Paul had written Ephesians he'd been able to develop his imagery of the Christian soldier who is armed for conflict with the devil he'd developed it more fully but here we have the same thing in embryonic form so the sober wide awake Christian has armed himself with a breastplate and a helmet now notice what this breastplate and helmet are faith love and hope that lovely trinity of Christian qualities which often surfaces in Paul's writing indeed we've already had them in this letter at chapter 1 verse 3 now friends I want to point out that this is really very encouraging that Paul should write of the Christian as being a soldier who needs to put armour on for Paul to speak like this shows that he knows full well that the Christian life is a daily struggle against the world the flesh and the devil and I think you could put it like this that Paul would not recognise as a Christian somebody who is not struggling daily with issues of obedience and morality

I've heard Willie Philip put it like this in a sermon a couple of years ago struggle is a sign of faith not of failure that's why Paul writes these things he knows that every true Christian struggles to be obedient to Christ and struggles to kick the devil's suggestions into touch but Paul is saying it is possible to be a victorious soldier if we will exercise faith faith that Christ has won our forgiveness faith that he is able to guide us along the pathway of life and bring us to heaven if we will exercise love I think he has chiefly in mind here love for other Christians and other people but also love for the Lord and if we will exercise hope that firm expectation that he will return to take us to glory and salvation then we shall be armed properly and thus able to withstand the attacks of our enemy so Paul is acknowledging and this is the encouragement that it's hard to be a Christian it's hard to struggle with the world the flesh and the devil but at the same time he's assuring us that equipment is to hand which will enable us not to buckle and not to go belly up so Christians who are waiting for the Lord's return are children of the light and of the day awakened sober and armed for battle but why these things why this moral strenuousness this battle equipment and this sense of being awake and alive and ready for action

[ 31 : 17 ] Paul tells us why in the very next verse verse 9 for God has not destined us for wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him in other words the lifestyle that Paul is describing in verses 4 to 8 is not fitting for people who are destined for wrath and condemnation but it's wonderfully fitting for those who are bound for the kingdom of heaven and verse 10 in particular drives this point home and I'd like you to notice verse 10 because it gives us a slightly unusual angle on the meaning of the cross if somebody were to ask you why did Christ die on the cross how would you reply I guess you would say and I think I'd probably say this myself that he died on the cross in our place to bear the punishment for our sins so that we should be set free from condemnation and given full forgiveness you might add one or two other things that he was obeying the father and glorifying the father and fulfilling the function of the old testament sacrifices and so on all that would be true and of central importance but you see verse 10 here adds a different element he died for us so that dot dot dot we might live with him not for him though that is also true but with him so he didn't only die to bring us forgiveness and to clear our moral debt and to release us from condemnation but also so that we should live with him forever in other words friends he earnestly desires our company because he wants to enjoy our company forever and so earnestly has he desired our company that he was prepared to die so as to have the joy of living with you and me forever don't you think that's remarkable that he wants to enjoy your company and mine forever when we think of the sort of people that we are

I sometimes imagine this is a bit of a nightmare scenario but I sometimes imagine what I would say to the queen if I should ever meet her I would feel such an outstanding twerp what would I say to the queen your majesty do you really like brown windsor soup for example or perhaps I'd say how many corgis do you actually have ma'am now I'm sure she would graciously put me at my ease because she's had to deal with so many prize charlies in her time but surely after that meeting with me was over she would say to the duke of Edinburgh I'm so grateful Philip that Mr.

Lobb isn't staying with us for a fortnight aren't you that's quite different with the king of heaven one of the reasons he went to the cross was so that we might live permanently with him he desires our company there won't be any embarrassment or stuttering questions when he welcomes us into the kingdom of heaven it will be pure pleasure and unadulterated joy and that's why Paul is able to finish this section in verse 11 by saying therefore encourage one another he doesn't just mean encourage each other in general in all sorts of ways he means encourage one another with this message about Christ's return it's a message that is designed to build us up and give us fresh heart why because it teaches us the real final goal of our existence it shows us the finishing tape of our life and if we're Christians the finishing tape of our life is not the southern necropolis if you were to encourage me friends think of me the younger ones here think of coming to see me in the final stage of my life you older ones will have gone on by then but the younger ones think of coming to see me and there

I am very old looking very droopy sitting in a big arm chair looking thoroughly vacant and you come to me and you say to me Edward how are you and I say well I'm a bit wretched and depressed I've got backache neckache earache and belly ache and you say to me but have you forgotten what lies ahead of you brother whether you die first or not the Lord Jesus is going to return and all of us who belong to him are going to be with him forever remember your 1 Thessalonians 5:10 you silly old sausage I give you permission to say that he died for us so that whether we're still alive at his coming or already dead we might live with him forever that's your future and then a little smile will steal over my face as I think about everything I've learnt from the scriptures and you will have done me the priceless service of reminding me of the great truth about the great future you will have encouraged me and built me up with the message of

Christ's return he's coming so friends let's live in a verse 4 to verse 8 fashion as children of light awake and sober armed for the battle which we face day by day for God has not destined us for wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him let's bow our heads and we'll pray our dear Lord Jesus it seems to us almost incredible but we do believe it that you were prepared to go to the cross not only to bring forgiveness and to clear our debt but also so as to open the pathway open the doorway into your kingdom so that we should live with you forever we pray that this song of joy might steal over our hearts again and again as we look forward to your return and we pray indeed that you will help us to live the lifestyle that is worthy of all that you have done for us we ask it for your dear name's sake

[ 37 : 48 ]    Amen