
The Thessalonian Epistles 13

We are the Children of the Day

1 Thessalonians 5:4-11

Previously, we contrasted the difference between the Day of the Lord and the Rapture, followed by a more detailed treatment on the Day of the Lord. This time we shall special consideration of God's people being the Children of the Day. As such, we are encouraged to let our light so shine that we would glorify our Father in Heaven. This light characterizes a true believer, though at times we may hide such under a bushel basket, as it were.

Thomas Edison invented the electric light bulb in 1879. Twenty-two years later, in 1901, one of the newfangled gadgets was hung and turned on in the Livermore, Calif., Fire Department. It's still there, and still on. The old bulb has almost never been turned off in 113 years.

By today's standards it should have burned out 852 times by now. The bulb, hand-blown, with a thick carbon filament, was made, it is said, by the Shelby Electric Company, which did not become one of the giants of the nation, for an obvious reason. The Shelby Company made light bulbs to last, and nobody ever reordered.

The bulb is accorded an awesome respect by Fire Captain Kirby Slate and his men. In a time of planted and planned obsolescence, when gadgets are forever falling apart or burning out or breaking up, it's reassuring to watch a dusty 113-year-old light bulb shine on and on and on.

Because God never fails to be the Light, and we being children of the light, we should be faithful to shine the Light as children of the day.

When we consider the end times whether it be the end of our life here on earth or the end of this world, it becomes more and more vital to the thinking man, to be ready to meet our Maker. We ask the question Who is our Maker and what does He require of us? What does it mean to be ready in His Judgment? How can I know that I am His child, a part of

His Family, a citizen of His Kingdom, a person accepted in the beloved?

We have before us marks of a true believer and marks of the unbeliever. Of all the different kindreds, nations, tongues, and races, there are but two kinds of people, believers or non-believers, saved or unsaved, Christians or non-Christians, heavenbound or hellbound.

Christ is the Light of the world, the true Light, the Morning Star, and Satan is the ruler of darkness. We are either followers of Christ or followers of Satan. Remember Satan can transform himself into an angel of light and look quite innocent along with his followers, even as wolves in sheep's clothing.

We will first examine The Temperament of the Children of the Day; second, The Department of the Children of the Day, and third, The Appointment of the Children of the Day.

I. The Temperament of the Children of the Day

A. When we say, 'temperament', we mean, the nature of the children of the day. What is it that characterizes and distinguishes the children of the day?

B. ***4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.*** This is a connection with ***1 Thessalonians 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.***

1. ***But ye, brethren, are not in darkness,*** the church at Thessalonica was assured by the apostle that they were brethren, and not in the dark, intellectually, morally, or spiritually.

2. ***that that day should overtake you as a thief.*** There would be no calamity of the Day of the Lord, the day of

darkness, that would suddenly overcome them.



5 *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.* Here Paul clarifies with points to the positive and the negative. The positive in speaking in the second person plural (ye) and the negative in the first person plural (we). There is no in between or twilight people who ride the fence. As one put it, *you are either a saint, or an ain't*. Or as another put it, as to who is or is not saved from sin, *if you is, what you wuz, you ain't*. He continues to bring comfort to this church with these inspired affirmations.

1. ***Ye are all the children of light,*** the phrase, ***children of,*** denotes something that is the nature of something, ***light,*** in this case.

a) It is part of our nature as Christians because the Light of the world is within us.

b) The Father of lights is our Heavenly Father.

2. ***and the children of the day:*** we are not of the night who are destined for the day of darkness, the day of the Lord, in all its fury. We belong to the family of light, we have been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

3. ***we are not of the night, nor of darkness.*** Therefore, we cannot be of the night, nor of the darkness.

a) It is not our nature anymore, for we have a new nature in our souls and in our hearts, in the very core of our being.

- b) We are as different as night is from day, and darkness is from light.
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II. The Deportment of the Children of the Day

A. By deportment, we mean the conduct of the children of the day. So, we move from the temperament to the deportment, from the nature of the children of the day and the corresponding acts of the children of the day.

B. **6 ¶ Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.** Paul, now, moves from words of consolation to words of inspiration to encourage them to live up to their family name. All believers will exhibit the brightness of their character, but have sin in the way to block the shining of it from time to time, though it does not characterize their overall demeanor.

1. **Therefore let us not sleep,** because we are children of the day, we should not sleep. Here is the negative.

a) Sleep is something done typically at night. A sleeping person is insensitive and oblivious to their surroundings.

b) Notice that from here on, Paul includes himself as he exhorts the church at Thessalonica to let their light so shine.

2. **as do others;** the others are the children of the night, the children of darkness, or believers who stray momentarily.

3. **but let us watch and be sober.** The positive action is also expressed in the first person to include Paul and his

companions. This is not something just for preachers and apostles.

a) We are to **watch**, be watchful and alert like someone on guard duty ever listening to the slightest noise, the snapping of a twig, which would indicate the ambush of the enemy.

b) We must **be sober**, clear thinking, level-headed, and calm, while on our watch, responding not merely reacting to, or panicking at, the enemy's tactical maneuvers and attacks.

c) **7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.** The, **they**, the children of the night, are characterized here. Paul now speaks in the third person (they, them, she, he, it). Sleep refers to that passive indifference to the things of Christ while drunkenness refers to active sin against Christ.

1. **For they that sleep sleep in the night;** you sleep at night, especially back then.

2. **and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.** Drunkenness describes the normal behavior of the lost, stumbling and groping in the darkness of night.

d) **8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.** Again, let all of us actively engage as soldiers of the day in the conflict, but not without this triad of defense armor.

1. **But let us, who are of the day,** contrasting the previous verse, **but**, we are different, so will our actions be,

where the heart is, our actions shall proceed therefrom.

2) **be sober**, here once more, this emphasizing, the need to be deliberate and clear-headed in our actions in the present or continuous sense.

3) **putting on the breastplate of faith and love**; the **putting on**, of this triad of defense armor is an action which is done and it is to stay on.

a) **The Breastplate** covered the area from the neck down to the waist. It protected the exposed and unprotected vitals, such as the heart, lungs, stomach, liver, etc...it was unified in one piece to show the inseparable nature of faith and love.

b) **Faith**—the first layer of this breastplate was that of faith without which we cannot quench the fiery darts of the wicked, nor please God.

(1) May the look of faith towards the Captain of our salvation inspire us to war a good warfare.

(2) Faith in Christ's redemptive work, Christ's glorious Person, Christ's immutable promises, and Christ's sovereign power and plan.

c) **Love**—is the innermost layer next to the heart.

(1) All we do, all the faith we exercise, and all the hope we envision ought to be done out of love to God and love one towards another.

(2) Faith and hope shall be no longer needed, but love will continue on throughout all eternity.

(3) Let this spur us on to be watchful and sober in the battle with an eye of love to God because He first loved us, and out of love to our brothers and sisters in this love of Christ.

(4) May the love of Christ constrain us, motivate us, to conduct ourselves as children of the day.

 **and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.** This helmet completes the triad of armor we should put on. The helmet covered the head, the headquarters, where the prince and power of air seeks to infiltrate, as he cannot enter into the heart, for there we are sealed until the day of redemption.

 Our hope of our consummate salvation brought to fruition at the coming of Christ, should ever be in our thoughts.

 This emboldens and encourages us in the fight and in the struggle.

 ***1 Corinthians 13:13*** mentions this triad, ***And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*** Putting on no body armor, when it is available for you, epitomizes the sleepy-headed and the drunk.

 So, the ***breastplate of faith and love***, and the ***helmet, the hope of salvation***, are inseparably working together and if we lack in one the other suffers.

- a) Little faith makes for little love and little hope.
 - b) Little love makes for little faith and little hope.
 - c) Little hope makes for little faith and little love.
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III. The Appointment of the Children of the Day

A. **9** *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*, our temperament and our deportment indicate our appointment as children of the day. This is our comfort and consolation in the midst of our troubles and trials.

1. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath*, God's children, the children of the day are not destined for wrath, certainly not for eternal wrath, but the wrath of the Great Tribulation is the context of their fears; so, we are not appointed, as churches, or as Christians in this age, to the Great Tribulation wrath.

2. *but to obtain salvation*, rather, we are appointed or predestinated to receive and obtain salvation and deliverance from so great a wrath.

3. *by our Lord Jesus Christ*, this *obtaining* is not of our own doing, but, instead it is by *our Lord Jesus Christ*. His full title is embraced by all His children.

B. **10** *Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.* How? Through the death of Christ our salvation is wrought.

1. **Who died for us**, the death of Christ means little to nothing if you don't realize Christ died for you.

a) His love was shown by giving His life. Greater love hath no man than he lay down his life for his friends.

b) This love constrains us to fight for the cause of Christ.

2. **that, whether we wake or sleep**, this has reference to whether we are alive or dead at Christ's coming.

3. **we should live together with him**. No matter whether we are dead or alive when Christ returns, we shall eternally live together as brothers and sisters in Christ, with Christ forever.

11 ¶ **Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do**. These words are both consoling to the afflicted and encouraging to the restored.

1. **Wherefore comfort yourselves together**, now Paul goes again from the speaking in the first person (I, me, we, us) to the second person (ye, you thou) to address them.

a) We are commanded to comfort one another.

b) It is one of the God-ordained means by which God comforts His children, through the members of the church.

c) This is yet another blessing of church membership.

2. **and edify one another**, moreover, we are to build each other up, not tear each other down.

- a) This cannot be flattery or bragging on each other for we must boast of Christ in us.
- b) Granted, we must repair and even take away any damaged bricks, but with the idea of restoration, not destruction.
- c) This is also part of the blessing of church membership.

3 **even as also ye do.** Paul doesn't just command them to obey God's Word and threaten them with chastisement if they don't, though it is appropriate, but he recognizes the good they are doing.

- a) How often we must do the same with one another!
- b) Paul recognized the evidences of the fruit of the Spirit in them, but as a good pastor would have it, encouraged them to do so even more, for God's glory and for their own benefit corporately and individually.

Can you join in unison with us and say in truth and by faith, ***We are the Children of the Day?*** Do you have the temperament, the deportment, and the appointment of the children of the day?

The Scriptures declare plainly that there is a place prepared and appointed for the children of the night called outer darkness where there shall be eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth, those who reject the light of the gospel and the Light of the world shall go to this place called hell, in which nightmares come true.

Some people change their ways when they see the light, others only when they feel the heat. But, by the time people go to hell, change is out of the question.

Those of us who are the children of the day let us put on the armor spoken of in our text and in ***Romans 13:11-14***

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

May we look forward to that eternal day as children of the day as recorded in ***Revelation***, about the New Jerusalem in which the Bride shall abide and the saints shall walk upon the golden streets thereof. ***Revelation 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.***
