

Not Appointed to Wrath

I Thess 5:4-11

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.

Introduction

I came upon a website that really could be a declaration on the evangelical

The Universal Church Triumphant the the Apathetic
Agnostic

“We don't know and we don't care”

Aims of the Church

Aim 1

We could be bigger than Scientology... if only we weren't so darned apathetic.

(comment deleted back in 2006[1])

Aim 2[2]

To disseminate the concept of Apathetic Agnosticism as widely as possible. Being apathetic on the question of a Supreme Being's existence does not imply being apathetic about the concept.

The Day of the Lord as depicted in the Book of Revelation starting with Revelation 6 with the commencement

Then

Trumpet Judgements

Rev. 8 and 9 11:15, 19

Bowl judgements

Rev. 15:1,7 16

Review

Lesson

I. The Context

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.

II. The Character

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.

But you - Placed first in the Greek sentence to provide strong emphasis (Paul does not want his readers to miss the striking contrast in destiny of day people versus night people). And so Paul dramatically shifts from the third person plural pronoun **they** (3 times in [1Th 5:3](#)) to the second person plural **you**. He is now

addressing the believers at Thessalonica, emphasizing the day coming like a thief cannot overtake them because they are safe in Christ.

you are (este) is in the **present tense** indicating that the believer's continual state is not like that of the unbelieving world - in mental, moral and spiritual **darkness** because they are still in Adam ([1Co 15:22](#)), in sin ([Ro 5:12-note](#), [Ep 2:1-note](#)) and in the darkness because they have not believed in the Light (See [Jn 1:5; 3:19; 8:12; 2Co 4:4, Ep 4:17, 18-note](#), speaking to believers Paul says [Ep 5:8-note; Ep 5:11-note](#)). As such they are children of Satan ([John 8:44](#)) who is called **the power of darkness** ([Lk 22:53](#)).

Not in darkness - Not is (**ou**) which is the Greek negative meaning **absolutely not**. It means as believers our position is sure in Christ, the Light of the world. Yes, we can choose to walk in the darkness, for we still have the **flesh** nature within these decaying physical bodies. The difference is that now that we are children of light, and do not have to stay in the darkness under the dominion of **Sin** ([Jn 8:36](#), [Ro 6:11-note](#), [Ro 6:14-note](#)).

Skotos as used in 1Thessalonians figuratively refers to **spiritual or moral darkness** (including a lack of understanding) as in the following examples

(Jesus declared) And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the **darkness** rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. ([John 3:19](#))

(the gospel would) to open their eyes so that they may turn from **darkness** to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' ([Acts 26:18](#)) (**Comment: Night people** have Satan as their master and father , [John 8:44](#)).

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the **darkness**, we lie and do not practice the truth (truth is not only something we should believe and teach but also something we should practice, otherwise our life is a "lie") ([1John 1:6](#))

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of **darkness**, but instead even expose them; ([Ep 5:11-note](#))

For He delivered us from the domain of **darkness**, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ([Col 1:13-note](#))
The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of **darkness** and put on the armor of light. ([Ro 13:12-note](#))

Keathley explains that...

Darkness continues the figure of night mentioned in [1Th 5:2](#) and calls to mind the darkness versus light analogy of the Bible. **Darkness** stands for the realms of:

1. Error and ignorance **versus** truth and understanding—this is the intellectual aspect of the darkness/light analogy of Scripture. In other words, the world, because of its darkened understanding, is ignorant of this impending doom that even today stands imminently ready to strike.

2. Blindness **versus** sight—the operational element of this analogy. The world is spiritually blind, it cannot see the truth of Scripture and has believed the delusions of Satan ([2Th 2:9](#), [10](#), [11](#), [12](#)).

3. Wickedness or immoral living **versus** righteousness—the moral element of this analogy.

Overtake (2638) (**katalambano** from **katá** = adds intensity [or surprise as in [1Th 5:4](#)] to the meaning of the verb + **lambáno** = take) means to take eagerly, grasp with force, lay hold of, seize with hostile intent (this literal meaning vividly depicted by the demon who seizes the son and dashed him to the ground in [Mark 9:18](#)). **Katalambano** was used in the sense of laying hold of so as to gain control of. In a secular Greek use we read "they were pursued and **overtaken**."

Figuratively **katalambano** is used in the **middle voice** meaning to "seize" or lay hold of with one's mind and thus to comprehend ([Jn 1:5](#), [Ep 3:18](#)) or understand ([Ac 4:13](#), [10:34](#)).

Katalambano in some contexts meant to make something one's own, to obtain (the prize = win - [1Co 9:24](#)), to attain ([Php 3:12](#), [13](#), [Ro 9:30](#)). In a similar use in the papyri, **katalambano** is used in the papyri of colonists appropriating land.

Katalambano was used in secular Greek of evils seizing with hostile intent, coming upon or overtaking someone which is somewhat of the sense Paul uses **katalambano** to describe the Day of the Lord "seizing upon" or coming suddenly upon unbelievers in the same way a thief would come into one's house and seize our possessions! The Greeks also used **katalambano** of night, evening or darkness coming upon a person. **Jesus** uses **katalambano** with this sense (speaking of spiritual darkness) declaring to the multitudes...

For a little while longer the light (He is alluding to Himself, [Jn 1:9](#), [8:12](#)) is among you. **Walk** (present imperative - as your lifestyle, your habitual practice) while you have the light, that **darkness** (skotia - absence of light, personified by John of the forces hostile to God) may not **overtake** (**katalambano** - grasp or seize) you; he who **walks** (present tense = as the habit of their life, as manifest by their lifestyle) in the **darkness** (skotia) does not know where he goes. ([John 12:35](#))

Thief (2812)(**kleptes** from **klépto** = steal; kleptomaniac) is a stealer or thief who acts with stealth or subterfuge.

and so here in Thessalonians we get a picture of the terrible bondage of being in the night and in the darkness. As an aside we should note that it is never God's desire that men and women stay in the bondage of spiritual darkness but to be set free, a desire that reverberates through the following passages...

The people who walk in darkness (here refers to Gentiles - see [Mt 4:14-16](#)) will see a great light (an allusion to the advent of the Messiah) Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them. ([Isaiah 9:2](#))

Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." ([John 8:12](#))

(Jesus sent Paul to speak the Gospel to the Gentiles) to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' ([Acts 26:18](#))

For (gar) introduces the positive reason why the Day of the Lord will not overtake believers as a thief who catches his unsuspecting victims off guard. Paul is explaining why the believers will not be taken by surprise by the Day of the Lord.

You - This pronoun is emphatic as is the word **all**. Paul's point is that his description (sons of...) applies to all the saints at Thessalonica, even those who are weak and faint-hearted. The evidence of genuine conversion described in [1Th 1:3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#), [10](#), was assurance to Paul that even this latter group was included.

You are (2075) (**este**) in the **present tense** indicates that believers are continually spiritual **light**.

Believers are habitually associated with light as illustrated by the following passages...

(Jesus told the multitudes listening to the Sermon on the Mount) You are the **light** of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. ([Mt 5:14](#), [15](#), [16-notes](#); cp [Php 2:14](#), [15-note](#))

(John writes that) he who practices (present tense = habitually) the truth (lives it out, not just professes to believe it but as one truly reborn of God puts it into practice - these "works" don't save him but demonstrate that he is genuinely saved) comes (present tense = as a lifestyle, continually) to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God. ([John 3:21](#))

(Believers) are A CHOSEN RACE, a royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you **out of darkness** into His marvelous **light** ([1Pe 2:9-note](#))

(John writes that) if we walk in the **light** as He Himself is in the **light**, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. ([1John 1:7](#))

All (pas - pantes) is the first word in this clause and means all without exception.

Sons of light - This is a Hebraism which describes one as belonging to or characterized something in this case **light** (spiritually speaking). Paul uses a similar phrase in Ephesians

describing unbelievers as **sons of disobedience** ([Ep 2:2-note](#)) or sons who are characterized by disobedience.

In **Ephesians** Paul explains that...

you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as **children of Light** ([Eph 5:8-note](#))

In **Colossians** Paul explains that...

the Father...has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in **Light** for He rescued us from the **domain of darkness**, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved ([Col 1:12](#), [13-note](#))

WE ARE NOT OF NIGHT NOR OF DARKNESS: ouk esmen (1PPAI) nuktos oude skotous:

We - Paul includes himself (Paul, Silas, Timothy) in this statement and so identifies with his readers. Notice that the use of "we" extends though [1Th 5:10](#). So after Paul reminds the saints of who they are and what God will rescue them from, he builds on this truth to calling them to live as who they are. Creed should always lead to conduct.

Not of night nor of darkness - The word for **not** signifies absolutely not! Believers are absolutely not in either of these categories (of night...of darkness) which describe unbelievers (cp "the rest who have no hope" [1Th 4:13-note](#)). Here Paul drops the Hebraic phrase "sons of..." and now plainly denies that believers belong to either the domain of night or darkness. There is a similar phrase referring to believers in [Acts 9:2KJV](#) as "of the way".

John speaking of unbelievers notes that...

the one who hates (habitually) his brother is in the **darkness** and walks (as their lifestyle) in the **darkness**, and does not know where he is going because the **darkness** has blinded his eyes. ([1Jn 2:11](#), cp [1Jn 2:8](#), [9](#))

Believers don't live in the sphere of darkness any longer but instead live in the light of Christ's life, Who lives in us

III. The Concern

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.

Paul gave a similar admonitory charge to the saints in Rome to not fall asleep spiritually declaring...

And this do (love your neighbor), knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. 12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand (cp [Ep 5:16-note](#); [Col 4:5-note](#)). Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. ([Ro 13:11-note](#), [Ro 13:12-note](#), [Ro 13:13](#), [14-note](#))

Sleep (2518) (**katheudo** from **katá** = an intensifies meaning + **heúdo** = to sleep) is used literally meaning to sleep, to fall asleep or to be fast asleep. Metaphorically **katheudo** can mean to sleep the sleep of death. Metaphorically it can also mean (as used here) to be spiritually asleep with the result that one becomes secure and unconcerned in sin as well as indolent and careless in the performance of the call on their life and the work God has prepared for them to accomplish (cp [Ep 2:10-note](#))

Let us be alert (1127) (**gregoreuo** [**word study**] from **egeiro** = to arise, arouse, rouse from sleep, waken) means to be watchful or to refrain from physical sleep. Later **gregoreuo** came to be used in the moral and religious sphere and in this context was used to call

for one to **be on the alert** (quick to perceive and act) in a **constant state of readiness** (being on the lookout especially for danger or opportunity) and **vigilant** (alertly watchful especially to avoid danger this word suggesting intense, unremitting, wary watchfulness; keenly alert to or heedful of trouble or danger as others are sleeping or unsuspecting).

Gregoreuo conveys the idea of a sleeping man rousing himself, so that he is mentally alert and in a state of mind opposite to that which characterizes one's mind while in sleep.

The **present tense** calls for saints to be in a continual state of alertness in light of the imminent return of our Lord

Secular Greek used **gregoreuo** to describe people carefully crossing a river while stepping on slippery stones. If they did not pay strict attention to their steps, they would end up in the water. So the idea of vigilance is to stay alert and cautious.

Most of the NT uses are in reference to the Christians' being spiritually awake and alert, as opposed to being spiritually indifferent and listless or **asleep**.

Most of the NT uses of **gregoreuo** are in the latter part of Gospels in the context of Jesus' imminent crucifixion and departure and the exhortation to His disciples **to be on the alert** for His imminent future return.

Thus our **Lord** declared...

Therefore **be on the alert** (**gregoreuo** - **present imperative**), for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. 43 But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would **have been on the alert** (**gregoreuo**) and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ([Mt 24:42,43](#))

Jesus concluded the parable of the 10 virgins with the warning **Be on the alert** (**gregoreuo** - **present imperative**) then, for you do not know the day nor the hour. ([Mt 25:13](#))

Jesus used **gregoreuo** in His exhortation to the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane in His hour of greatest attack by the Devil gives good advice for saints of all ages...

My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and **keep watch** (gregoreuo) with Me." ([Mt 26:38](#))...And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you men could not **keep watch** (gregoreuo) with Me for one hour?" ([Mt 26:40](#)) and finally warning them to

Keep watching (gregoreuo - present imperative = continuously = make this your lifestyle) and **praying** (present imperative), that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. ([Mt 26:41](#))

Gregoreuo is used three times in Mark 13 (this should get our attention!) which closes with an exhortation to watchfulness and prayer in view of the Lord's Return. Jesus' addressing His disciples, Peter and James and John and Andrew, on the Mount of Olives tells them a parable of the doorkeeper, declaring that It is like a man, away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to **stay on the alert** (gregoreuo). Therefore, **be on the alert** (gregoreuo - present imperative)-- for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrowing, or in the morning-- lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all, '**Be on the alert** (gregoreuo - present imperative)!' ([Mk 13:34](#), [35](#), [36](#), [37](#))

As **Augustine** wisely stated

The last day is a secret, that every day may be watched (**Comment:** That we may be looking for Him every day and live accordingly).

Wiersbe writes that believers are to...

Live expectantly. This does not mean putting on a white sheet and sitting atop a mountain. That is the very attitude God condemned ([Acts 1:10,11](#)). But it does mean living in the light of His return, realizing that our works will be judged and that our opportunities for service on earth will end. It means to live "with eternity's values in view." Believers who live in the expectation of the Lord's return will certainly enjoy a better life than Christians who compromise with the world. At the end of each chapter in this letter, Paul pointed out the practical results of living expectantly. Take time now to review those verses and to examine your heart. (Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor or Logos)

Thus believers are to be like soldiers "in active service" (2Ti 2;4-note), like shepherds watching over their "spiritual" flock ([Acts 20:28, 31](#)) constantly vigilant and watchful ([Mt 24:42](#)).

Sober (3525)(**nepho** cp **nephaleos** = "wineless," "unmixed with wine") in the literal or physical sense was used to refer to either complete abstinence or in a relative sense to refer to temperance (drinking but not to the point of intoxication). The idea is freedom from the influence of intoxicants.

In the NT **nepho** is used only figuratively meaning to be free from every form of mental and spiritual "intoxication" or as Vine says "freedom from credulity, and from excitability" The idea is to be calm and collected in spirit, circumspect, self-controlled (as part of the fruit of walking in the Spirit - [Ga 5:16-note](#), [Ga 5:23-note](#)), well-balanced, clear headed. Be selflessly self-possessed (perhaps a more accurate description would be "Spirit" possessed, [Ep 5:18-note](#)) under all circumstances. It speaks of exercising self-restraint (again enabled by the Spirit) and being free from excess, from evil passion, from rashness, etc.

Vine comments that...

As "watch" denotes alertness, so "sober" denotes stability;

The **present tense** calls for this to be the saint's continual mindset.

Nepho is the antithesis of mental "fuzziness". The Greek culture highly valued **sober** judgment in both individual and public life.

Our English counterpart is to be levelheaded, well-balanced, and in control of one's faculties. By extension it includes the ideas of being stable, unwavering, steadfast.

To be sober-minded means to live with your eyes open and with a calm, steady state of mind that evaluates things correctly, so that it is not thrown off balance.

Soberness is an attitude of self-discipline that avoids the extremes of the 'reckless irresponsibility of self indulgence on the one hand, and of religious ecstasy on the other.'

William Hendricksen adds that

The **sober** person lives deeply. His pleasures are not primarily those of the senses, like the pleasures of the drunkard for instance, but those of the soul.

2 Timothy 4:5 (note) But you, **be sober** (present imperative) in all things, **endure** (aorist imperative) hardship, **do** (aorist imperative) the work of an evangelist, **fulfill** (aorist imperative) your ministry.

1 Peter 1:13 (note) Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep **sober** in spirit, **fix your hope** (aorist imperative) completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 4:7 (note) The end of all things is at hand; therefore, **be of sound judgment** (aorist imperative) and **sober spirit** (aorist imperative) or the purpose of prayer.

1 Peter 5:8 (note) **Be of sober spirit**, (aorist imperative) **be on the alert** (aorist imperative). Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

**FOR THOSE WHO SLEEP DO THEIR SLEEPING AT NIGHT,
AND THOSE WHO GET DRUNK GET DRUNK AT NIGHT: oi gar**

katheudontes (PAPMPN) nuktos katheudousin, (3PPAI) kai oi methuskomenoi (PPPMPN) nuktos methuousin; (3PPAI): (Job 4:13; 33:15; Luke 21:34,35; Romans 13:13; 1Corinthians 15:34; Ephesians 5:14)

Sleep (2518) (katheudo from **katá** = an intensifies meaning + **heúdo** = to sleep) in this context using the picture of physical sleep to illustrate those who are spiritually asleep, careless and unconcerned in their sin and unaware of the grave danger they are in should they die.

Vine explains that...

in this statement of the ordinary fact of human experience the metaphorical language of the preceding verses is explained. As sleep is natural in the night, so indifference to God characterizes man in his unregenerate state. But for regenerate man to be spiritually asleep is to seem to be of the night, not of the day, of the world, not of Christ. (Ibid)

Spurgeon comments that...

There are a few who have reached to such a pitch of shameless idleness that they sleep in the day, and there are others who have come to such a state of debauchery that they are drunken in the day. But this is not the common way of things, nor even in the judgment of the most licentious of the world is this at all a proper state of things. "They that sleep sleep in the night. They that are drunken are drunken in the night." Let us who are of the day be sober, and let us of course be awake, but let us be more than awake, since watchfulness is here joined to wakefulness, and watchfulness in a soldier requires that his armor be on. So Paul pushes the parallel a little farther.

AND THOSE WHO GET DRUNK GET DRUNK AT NIGHT: kai oi methuskomenoi (PPPMPN) nuktos methuousin; (3PPAI): (1Samuel 25:36,37; Proverbs 23:29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35; Isaiah

[21:4,5](#); [Daniel 5:4,5](#); [Acts 2:15](#); [2Peter 2:13](#), cp [Acts 2:15](#), [Luke 21:34](#); [Ro 13:12](#), [13](#))

Those who get drunk - Scripture warns

Drunk (3182) (**methuo** from **méthu** = wine) means to drink to intoxication or to make drunk. They carouse in the night because their innate nature is those who are night people, people of darkness. Such behavior is natural and expected.

The tragedy is when **day people** walk in the darkness and forfeit their assurance of salvation (they don't lose salvation but they do often lose the confidence that they are saved) and they become fearful of God's judgment. John speaks to this fearfulness of judgment, exhorting believers to avoid it writing...

And now, little children (believers), abide (continually live at home) in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence (bold speech) and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. ([1John 2:28](#)).

Peter pictures the **day person** who walks in **darkness** as one who lacks these qualities ([2Pe 1:5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#)-see notes [2Pe 1:5](#); [1:6](#); [1:7](#); [1:8](#)) is blind (unable to see clearly) or short-sighted (unable to see far off), having forgotten his purification from his former sins (the fact that they have been cleansed identifies them as genuine believers and not just professors of faith in Christ). ([2Pe 1:9](#)-note)

Day people will not be caught in the **Day of the Lord**, but it is possible for day people who fall into sin to lose assurance that they will be caught up to be with Lord and to begin to fear that they might experience that horrible day of God's wrath! On the other hand when **day people** live consistent with their new nature (in Christ, indwelt by His Spirit, sons and daughters who can cry "Abba, Father") they will experience comfort, because living a righteous, godly life brings assurance of salvation. And so Peter exhorts believers to conduct themselves as day people writing...

Therefore, brethren, **be all the more diligent** (aorist imperative) - command given even with a sense of

urgency) to make certain about His calling and choosing you; (Why is it important to conduct yourselves as those who are genuinely born again?) for as long as you practice (habitually, as your way of life) these things (Virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly affection, love are the evidence that our trust in Christ is genuine, saving faith), you will never (strong double negative = absolutely not ever) stumble (aorist tense pointing to a fall that is final and from which there is no arising - he is not saying one can lose their salvation) for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. ([2Pe 1:10](#), [11-notes](#))

SLEEPY SAINTS

by A W Pink

What an anomaly! Drowsing on the verge of eternity!

A Christian is one who, in contrast to the unregenerate, has been awakened from the sleep of death in trespasses and sins, made to realize the unspeakable awfulness of endless misery in hell and the ineffable joy of everlasting bliss in heaven, and thereby brought to recognize the seriousness and solemnity of life.

A Christian is one who has been taught experientially the worthlessness of all mundane things and the preciousness of Divine things. He has turned his back on Vanity Fair and has started out on his journey to the Celestial City ([Php 3:20](#), [21-note](#)). He has been quickened into newness of life ([Ro 6:4-note](#)) and supplied with the most powerful incentives ([Mt 25:21](#), [23](#), [2Co 5:10](#), [1Co 3:11](#), [12](#), [13](#), [14](#), [15](#)) to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus ([Php 3:14-note](#)). Nevertheless, it is sadly possible for him to suffer a relapse, for his zeal to abate (cp [He 6:11](#), [12-note](#)), his graces to languish, for

him to leave his first love ([Re 2:4-note](#), [Re 2:5-note](#)), and become weary of well-doing ([2Th 3:13](#), [Ga 6:9](#)). Yea, unless he be very much on his guard, drowsiness will steal over him, and he will fall asleep. Corruptions still indwell in him, and sin has a stupefying effect ([He 3:13-note](#)). He is yet in this evil world ([Gal 1:4KJV](#)), and it exerts an enervating influence. Satan seeks to devour him ([1Pe 5:8-note](#)), and unless resisted steadfastly ([Jas 4:6](#), [7](#), [Ep 6:11-note](#), [Ep 6:13-note](#)) will hypnotize him. Thus, the menace of this spiritual "sleeping sickness" is very real.

Slumbering saints! Taking their ease while threatened by danger. Lazing instead of fighting the good fight of faith ([1Ti 6:12](#)). Trifling away opportunities to glorify their Saviour ([Mt 5:16-note](#), [Col 4:5-note](#)), instead of redeeming the time ([Ep 5:16-note](#)): rusting, instead of wearing out in His service (cp [Re 14:13-note](#), [Re 22:12-](#)). We speak with wonderment and horror of Nero fiddling while Rome was burning, but far more startling and reprehensible is a careless Christian who has departed from God, bewitched by a world which is doomed to eternal destruction ([1Jn 2:17](#), [2Pe 3:10-note](#), [2Pe 3:11-note](#)). Such a travesty and tragedy is far from being exceptional. Both observation and the teaching of Scripture prove it to be a common occurrence. Such passages as the following make it only too evident that the people of God are thus overcome.

"It is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" ([Romans 13:11-note](#)).

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not" ([1Corinthians 15:34](#)).

"Awake thou that sleepest" ([Ephesians 5:14-note](#)).

Each of those clamant calls is made to the saints. So, too, is that exhortation addressed to them,

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" ([1Thessalonians 5:5,6](#)).

Having put on (1746) (**enduo** from **en** = in + **dúo** = to sink, go in or under, to put on) means literally to clothe or dress someone and to put on as a garment, to cause to get into a garment (eg, [Lk 15:22](#) where the father says "quickly bring out the best robe and **put it on** him...").

Aorist tense indicates this **putting on** is a past completed action and includes the idea that this action was decisive. **When did the Thessalonians put on the breastplate?** This transpired the moment they confessed Christ as Lord and Savior ([Ro 10:9](#), [10-note](#)) and were by grace through faith born again ([Jn 3:3](#), [Titus 3:5-note](#)) as new creations in Christ ([2Co 5:17](#)) at which time they were delivered from the domain of darkness ruled by Satan ([Ac 26:18](#), [1Jn 5:19](#)) and transferred into the Kingdom of God's dear Son ([Col 1:13-note](#))

In the **middle voice** (as in Paul's description of the new man/self in [Col 3:10-note](#);cp [Ep 4:24-note](#)) it means to clothe oneself with something, in this case the clothes worn by the "new man" who is clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness

which includes **the breastplate of faith and love**. Don't pass over this truth -- because the truth is that it is your responsibility to

now live out the fact that you have put on this **breastplate**. Every believer has put on the **breastplate of faith and love** "positionally" at the moment of salvation, but now in the process of daily (even moment by moment) sanctification (growth in holiness or Christ-likeness) believers have the privileged obligation to live out experientially what is true positionally. And we can do this because God has provided everything necessary for life and godliness according to a **true knowledge** (see **epignosis**) of Him Who called us, but we have to avail ourselves of this true knowledge ([2Pe 1:3-note](#)), working it from our head (head knowledge) and into our heart (heart transformation). God's desire for us as day people is not to be "smarter sinners" but to be becoming more like the Savior.

Breastplate (2382) (**thorax [word study]**) describes either the chest area or part of the body covered by the breastplate or the protective covering of this area as utilized in combat. The breastplate was a piece of armor that covered the soldier's body from neck to waist and protected his heart, the very center of his life and the spring of his vital forces.

Polybius tells us that the **breastplate** was known as a heart-protector. Usually it was made of bronze but the more affluent officers wore a coat of chain mail. The front piece was strictly the breastplate, but a back piece was commonly worn as well.

Faith (4102) (**pistis [word study]**) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in context speaks of the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things well as the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As faith relates to Christ it represents a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through Whom we obtain eternal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Stated another way, eternal salvation comes **only** through belief in Jesus Christ and no other way.

Faith is an essential protection against temptations to doubt God's promise that they would not experience the Day of the Lord's wrath. **Faith** in God's promise is tantamount to putting on a breastplate to cover one's vital organs, especially our heart (cp [Ep 6:16-note](#)).

And what is ultimate manifestation of faith that protects like a breastplate? It is obedience. When I obey what God has commanded and instructed, for example, putting to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within my physical body ([Col 3:5NLT-note](#)), I am showing that I believe God by my choice to mortify ([Col 3:5KJV](#)) my members and this Spirit motivated and enabled obedience ([Php 2:13NLT](#)) functions like a "breastplate" to deflect doubt concerning the certainty of God's promise that He "has not destined us for wrath".

Richison explains that **faith**...

protects the affections or heart. Unbelief strikes hardest at the heart, so Paul mentions it first. The downfall of those without Christ is that they "believed not the truth" ([2Th 2:12](#)). If we live by faith ([2Co 5:7](#), cp [Col 2:6-note](#)), this will keep us **sober** — spiritually stable in spiritual war. **Faith** will enable us to stand against those who would undermine what we believe (cp [Ro 10:17-note](#)). A heart full of love ([Ro 5:5-note](#)) will arm us against broken relationships. It will stabilize relationships and promote accountability, thus reducing the chances that people will steer into apostasy ([Col 1:23NLT-note](#)). (Reference)

Love (26)(**agape [word study]**) refers to unconditional, sacrificial love that God is ([1Jn 4:8,16](#)) and that God demonstrates ([Jn 3:16](#), [1Jn 4:9](#), [Ro 5:8-note](#)). **Agape love** is the love of choice. It is a Christ-like love manifest by selflessly serving others with humility ([Php 2:5-note](#), [Php 2:8-note](#)). It is not motivated by the recipient's superficial appearance, by an emotional attraction, by one's sentiments. **Agape** chooses as an act of self-sacrifice to serve the recipient. See Paul's definition of this Christ-like love - ([1Co 13:4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7-note](#)).

AND THE HELMET OF SALVATION: kai perikephalaian elpida soterias:

Helmet (4030) (**perikephalaia** from **peri** = around + **kephale** = head) means literally around the head or encirclement of the head and thus a helmet.

A Roman soldier who had lost his helmet was in danger of receiving severe head wounds which would (at the very least) disorient him and render him ineffective and in danger of further injury. Similarly, a Christian who has no assurance of salvation (or has "lost his hope") cannot be bold in resisting Satan.

Roman military helmets were of two types: the galea (made of leather) or the cassis (metal). The helmet had a band to protect the forehead and plates for the cheeks, and extended down in back to protect the neck. When the helmet was strapped in place, it exposed little besides the eyes, nose, and mouth. The metal helmets, due to their weight, were lined with sponge or felt. Virtually the only weapons which could penetrate a metal helmet were hammers or axes. No soldier's uniform was complete without a proper helmet. A helmet, being hot and uncomfortable, would be put on by a soldier only when he faced impending danger.

A Roman soldier would be foolish to enter a battle without his helmet. He knew that the helmet would protect his head from arrows, but that it's primary function was to ward off blows from the enemy's broadsword (not the small dagger, the machaira, mentioned in [Ep 6:17 - note](#)) but the broadsword, which was from three to four-feet long with a massive handle that was held with both hands like a baseball bat. The soldier lifted it over his head and brought it down on his opponent's head. The broadsword was a vicious weapon that could deal a crushing blow to the skull. The helmet on one's head was the only way to deflect it. An archaeological dig discovered a skeleton with a cleavage right through the skull. Although it is only conjecture, it is quite likely that this fatal wound was made by someone who attacked the person with a broadsword. Beloved, please do not leave home today without putting on the **helmet of salvation**. In fact, don't

ever take it off. Not even when you go to sleep (it's a good thing we are speaking in spiritual terms!).

Hope of salvation - Refers to “the hope that salvation gives to us.” The hope that is directed toward salvation. Ultimately this **hope** culminates in the return of our Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus, to Rapture His Bride, the church, out of evil age ([1Th 4:13](#), [14](#), [15](#), [16](#), [17](#), [18](#)-see **notes** [1Th 4:13](#); [14](#); [15](#); [16](#); [17](#); [18](#)), rescuing us from the terrible, righteous wrath of God that is coming upon the whole world. ([1Th 1:10-note](#), [Re 3:10-note](#); [Titus 2:11](#), [12](#), [13](#), [14](#)-**notes** [Ti2:11](#); [12](#); [13](#); [14](#)).

The Comfort

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.

For (3754)(**hoti**) means since, because, for (this reason) here introduces the reason that as believers, we must put on our armor, especially the helmet, the **hope of salvation**.

Destined (5087) (**tithemi**) means first to set, to place or to put. Here it is used figuratively to mean **appoint**. Our salvation proceeds from God's appointment and is connected with the past act ([Ep 1:4-note](#)) and with deliberate purpose of an infinitely merciful, gracious God. The use of the **middle voice** indicates that that God thus acted in His own interest, while the **aorist tense** indicates this event occurred in the past and was a completed event. God, Who acted according to His own will and good pleasure ([Ep 1:11-note](#)), has **destined** believers to salvation

as His gracious intention for us. This is a cause for rejoicing for believers do not have an "appointment" with God's wrath!

Wrath (3709) (**orge** from **orgaô** = to teem, to swell) from the idea of a swelling which eventually bursts, **orge** then applies more to an anger that proceeds from one's settled nature. In context this wrath speak of God's just condemnation our intractable rebellion and hatred of God ([Ro 1:30-note](#)) deserves.

Arthur Pink defined God's wrath as...

His eternal detestation of all unrighteousness. It is the displeasure and indignation of Divine equity against evil. It is the holiness of God stirred into activity against sin" (Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*, p83).

BUT FOR OBTAINING SALVATION THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: ([Romans 11:7,30](#); [2Th 2:13,14](#); [1Ti 1:13,16](#); [2Ti 2:10](#); [1Pe 2:10](#); [2Pe 1:1](#))

But for obtaining - This strong contrast introduces the positive aspect of God's intention for believers - **for obtaining salvation**. This could be rendered *but for the purpose of experiencing salvation*. Note that he does not say "attain" but "obtain" for we can do nothing to attain salvation.

Obtaining (4047) (**peripoiesis** [word study] from **perí** = acquisition + **poiéo** = make) means literally to make around and the idea is the obtaining of something in its completeness. It describes the act of obtaining something or the experience of acquiring something for oneself. The idea in [1Thes 5:9](#) is of the possessing of salvation as our present property! It refers to the experience of an event or state which has been acquired.

For (5228) (**huper**) in this context means on our behalf, in our place, as our substitute. It refers to truth of the vicarious death of Christ and His substitutionary atonement. His substitutionary death was foreshadowed in the OT where sin was pictured as a

burden to be placed upon the head of an animal prior to sacrificing, the animal's death representing the just penalty for sin. In other words, the animal died in place of the sinner who confessed his sins by placing his hands on the animal's head, which symbolized the transfer of his sin to the substitute. (Cp [Lv 4:4](#), [15](#), [Col 2:17-note](#), [He 10:1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)) The sprinkling of the blood of the sacrificed animal on the altar depicted atonement indicating that the penalty of sin had been paid - [Lv 17:11,12](#), [13](#), [14](#), [Ge 9:4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [Dt 12:23](#)). Christ died the death we should have died, paying the penalty we should have paid that we might in Him live the life He lives. As Irenaeus said "Christ became what we are, in order that we might become what He is".

So that (2443) (**hina**) is a conjunction introducing a purpose clause, in this case explaining the purpose of His death - that believers might live in Him (see [in Christ](#) and [in Christ Jesus](#) and [in Christ](#))!

Awake (1127) (**gregoreuo** [word study] from **egeiro** = to waken, to raise up, to rouse from sleep) means to arouse from sleep and in context refers to those who are still alive at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Asleep (1127) (**katheudo** from **katá** = an intensifies meaning + **heúdo** = to sleep) to sleep, fall asleep, be fast asleep and here is a figurative reference to death.

Paul's point again was that there was no advantage or disadvantage for one class of believer (living) over another (dead).

Live (2198) (**zao**) in this usage refers to the supernatural, spiritual, eternal life available in union with Christ.

The verb **live** is in the **aurist tense** which Robertson states is in the

First aorist active subjunctive constative aorist covering all life (now and hereafter) together with (hama sun as in [1Thes 4:17](#)) Jesus.

Together (260) (**hama**) is a marker of simultaneous occurrence, at the same time, denoting the coincidence of two actions in time. Here it refers to those who are alive and those who are dead. There would be no priority or precedence.

Together with Him (hama sun auto) is a strong statement indicating that not only will believers live **with** their Lord but also that both the **awake** (living) and the **asleep** (dead) **together** will be living with Him. The same idea of "togetherness" has been seen in the discussion of the rapture where Paul used hama to specify that both living and dead **will be caught up together** (see [note 1Thessalonians 4:17](#)). Here Paul is saying that both the living and the dead, will be living together, united with Him.

With (4862)(**sun/syn**) speaks of intimacy in contrast to the other Greek preposition for with, **meta**, which speaks of nearness without the idea of intimacy.

THEREFORE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER AND BUILD UP ONE ANOTHER JUST AS YOU ALSO ARE DOING: Dio parakaleite (2PPAM) allelou kai oikodomeite (2PPAM) eis ton ena, kathos kai poieite. (2PPAI): ([1Thes 4:18](#)) ([Hebrews 3:13; 10:25](#)) ([Ro 14:19; 15:2; 1Co 10:23; 14:5,12,29; 2Co 12:19; Ep 4:12,16,29; 1Ti 1:4; Jude 1:20](#)) ([1Th 4:10; Ro 15:14; 2Pe 1:12](#))

Therefore (dio) is a conjunction meaning on account of such a thing, for this reason or for this purpose. **Therefore** because of the foundational truth regarding our blessed **hope** just explained, Paul now issues a two part exhortation. Doctrine always precedes duty. Our belief is the foundation for our behavior. Both verbs in this exhortation are in the **present imperative** signaling that they are both **commands** to **continually carry out the tasks** of **encouraging** and **edifying**. Both are always needed by **day people** who are surrounded by **night people** and who live in a world of ever increasing spiritual darkness. **Encourage** (3870)

(**parakaleo [word study]** from **para** = side of, alongside, beside + **kaleo [word study]** = call) means literally to call one alongside, to call someone to oneself, to call for, to summon. **Parakaleo** can include the idea of giving help or aid but the primary sense in the NT is to urge someone to take some action, especially some ethical course of action. Sometimes the word means convey the idea of comfort, sometimes of exhortation but always at the root there is the idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence and with gallantry.

Build up (3618) (**oikodomeo** from **oikos** = dwelling + **doma** = building [of a house] from **demo** = to build - see word study on derivative verb **sunoikodomeo**) means literally to build, construct or erect a dwelling. **Oikodomeo** is used here as a metaphor meaning to build up, establish, confirm, edify. See **Alexander Maclean's** sermon below on **Edification**.

The church is not to be a place of passive absorption but of active participation in the lives of others.

It has been stated that **oikodomeo** is always a social word, having regard to the mutual improvement of members of the Church, and the growth of the whole body in faith and love. (Howson, John: The Metaphors of St Paul and Companions of St Paul)