

“Your Redemption Is Drawing Near”: Jesus’ Words on the End of the World (Part 5)

Introduction

- A. We’re now in **Part 5** of these sermons where we’re making our way through [Luke 21](#) and what has traditionally been termed the **Olivet Discourse**. I think today, just for the sake of time, we will only read the **verses in focus**, though, again, we remember they all come in the larger context of this chapter.

The Text

²⁹And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴“But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

³⁷And every day he was teaching in the temple, but at night he went out and lodged on the mount called Olivet. ³⁸And early in the morning all the people came to him in the temple to hear him. ([Luke 21:29–38](#))

No Topic More Worthy!

- A. I don’t have time for much **review** and **introduction** here other than just to say that Jesus has, for many verses now, been discussing matters concerning both the **destruction of the temple** and the **end of the world**.
- B. People may **scoff**, as they always have, at the thought of the **end of the world** and of **Christ’s return**. It seems an **improbability** to them at best, and a **joke** at worst.
1. But it’s **not much different**, as I imagine, from so many in Jesus’ day who could not have fathomed how such a splendid building as the **temple** there in Jerusalem—one of the great marvels of the ancient world, built with stones some bigger than the average **school bus**—could ever come down. Yet it did, just as Jesus said—at the hands of the Romans in **70 A.D.**
 2. And, we are left to conclude, if He was right on that, isn’t it quite possible He could be, and indeed will be, right about what He has to say about the **end of the world**? The one, again, as we’ve seen previously, was just a **picture** and **preview** of the other. In a way it seems that the one happening is meant to sort of **seal the deal** on the fact that the second will happen as well.

- C. Truly, then, I tell you, indeed, there is **no topic more worthy of our reflection** today than this. And we come now really to Jesus' **final remarks** on the matter in [vv. 29-36](#) in particular. And here things get especially practical it seems to me.
1. I'll be dividing up my thoughts here under **two headings**: (1) **We Are Watching**; and (2) **We Are Watched**. We'll spend almost the entire sermon on the **first** and just touch the second at the close.

(1) We Are Watching

- A. If the end of the world is **imminent**, as Jesus implies it is, if it really is **coming** "*upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth*" ([v. 35](#)), what sorts of things ought we to be doing to **prepare**? How is a person to **live** in between the **two advents** of Christ—between His arrival at Bethlehem (which we're remembering and celebrating even now) and His return at the end of time? How can we be sure we are **ready** for that day, that it not take us like a thief or a trap or something like this?
1. These are the questions that, it seems to me, **Jesus is attempting to answer** in this text. And we could sum up the essence of His answer quite simply here: Jesus says we are to be **watching**.
 - a. And He goes on to give us both (1) **The What**, and (2) **The How** of it all. In other words: in the verses that follow see both **what** we must be watching and **how** precisely we are to be going about it. So let's dive in!

(1) The What

- A. First, if we are to be ready for the return of Christ, **what** is it that He says we must be watching? There are **two objects** in particular He identifies here: (1) **Our World**; and (2) **Ourselves**.

Object #1: Our World

- A. This comes out in [vv. 29-31](#) in particular. Look at them again: "*²⁹And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near."*
- B. The idea here is that, just as a Jew in and around Israel would know that, when the **fig tree** begins to **bud** and **leaf** out, **spring** and **summer** are upon them, so too if the disciples are vigilant, watchful, looking to the **world** round about them, they will be able to discern some of that which Jesus has alluded to in the **preceding verses** and, in that, they will have a good idea that "*the kingdom of God is near.*"
- C. Now, we best be **clear** here that Jesus is not saying, as many throughout history have wrongly assumed, that the **day** or the **hour** can be known or **calculated** by some strange hocus pocus or **jigsaw-puzzling** of the Scriptures and headlines and things. No!

1. Remember, in **Mark's** account of this discourse, He says specifically that *"concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father"* ([Mark 13:32](#)).
 2. And back at the beginning of this chapter, you recall, He warned: *"Listen, false Christs will come and others will be saying 'The time is at hand!' but don't go after them!"* (cf. [Luke 21:8](#)).
 - a. So we must **disavow the notion** that what Jesus means here by this parable of the fig tree that we can **know for sure** all the ins and outs of the end times. That's not what He's saying.
- D. But He is saying that we can **know something**, we can have a **general idea**, some sense of **awareness**.
1. We know we're going to see things like **natural disaster** and **calamity, international conflict** and **war, persecution** and **tribulation**—all with unprecedented **intensity** and **severity**.
 2. We know that there will be a **great rebellion** of humanity against God likely fomented by some **rebel par excellence**—called *"the antichrist"* or *"the man of lawlessness"* or *"the abomination of desolation"* and so forth.
 - a. But how **exactly** all of this will play out, **we don't know**.
 - i. And yet still He says we should be **watching**. Watching our **world**. Aware of the signs of the times.
- E. Now, one quick **final observation** to bring out on this before we move on. I love the **imagery** Jesus leverages here. I wonder if you noticed.
1. You see, Jesus in other places, when speaking of the **end of the age** and the **last day**—particularly, when He's relating it to those who are **not His disciples**—He talks about it with **ominous, foreboding** imagery. It's coming like a **storm** (cf. [Matt 16:1-4](#); [Luke 12:54-56](#)), or a **thief** (cf. [Luke 12:39](#); [Rev 3:3](#)), or a **trap** (cf. [Luke 21:34](#)).
 2. But here, when He's talking to **His own disciples** about it, **He says it will be like the arrival of spring and summer**. It will be like that time of year when things that have been **dormant** and **dead** suddenly burst forth with **new life!**
- F. We spoke last time from C.S. Lewis' **Mere Christianity** about how Jesus is going to bring **the world we're all longing for**, and I think that's the idea here again with this image of the **budding fig tree**.
1. In fact, if I good borrow yet more from C.S. Lewis' work, I think what is pictured here is something similar to what we see happen with Aslan in the world **Narnia**. You remember, when the world lay under the **white witch's curse**, it was *"always winter and never Christmas"*—that's how they described it. Cold, dead, nothing to celebrate.
 - a. But then when **Aslan**, the great Lion, arrives to **combat** the witch and **overturn** the curse, suddenly the ice begins to thaw and **Spring** emerges out from under it!

- i. That is what this last day shall be like for **God's people**. Here is why Jesus says in that verse just prior to the ones in focus this morning, [Luke 21:28](#): *"Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your **redemption** is drawing near."* It's going to be a **good day** for you!
- G. We should pause at this point and recall that whether this day is going to come upon you like a **thief** intruding upon **your party** or like welcome **Spring** after a **long Winter** depends upon where you stand right now with **Jesus**.
 - 1. If you're not interested in His love or His law, if you're trying to get your fill of **earthly pleasure** here and now, however, whenever . . . well then that day will come upon you like a trap. Beware: you're **feasting on the devil's bait stick** and it's not going to end well.
 - 2. But if you are throwing all your chips in on **Jesus**, trusting Him, delighting yourself in Him, even in the hard times . . . well, brother, sister, listen to me: **warmer weather is on the way!**
- H. And all this really **leads us onward** to the second object of our watching: namely, **Ourselves** . . .

Object #2: Ourselves

- A. This piece comes out in particular as we come to [v. 34](#), where Jesus says explicitly and with great emphasis: *"But **watch yourselves** . . ."*
 - 1. Now, on this we'll really have much **more to say** as we come to consider **The How** of our watching, but let me at least say something here by way of **introduction** . . .
- B. It seems to me that our generation is at one and the same time both **good and horrible** at this idea of watching ourselves.
 - 1. On the one hand, we are **always** thinking of ourselves, watching ourselves, are we not? This is, after all, what we might call the **"selfie generation."** When we go out to experience the world, no longer do we just experience it, right? Now we want to **watch ourselves experiencing** it and we want everyone in our social networks to watch us experiencing it as well.
 - a. So we go on a trip to the **Grand Canyon** and we don't just stand on the edge silently taking in its splendor like those strange folks from bygone eras may have done. No! Now we busy ourselves with our **phones**, trying to get the **angle** just right, and the **filter** just right, and the **outfit** just right, and these things . . . so that we look something impressive to all of our **followers**. We stand on the edge of the Grand Canyon, and we watch not God's majesty and beauty. **We watch ourselves.**
 - b. And it's this way at a **concert** or at **dinner** with friends or during **family outings** or **trips**. In fact, the feeling seems to be, if we can't get that selfie it's as if the event itself **might as well not have happened**. If I can't watch myself doing it, what's the point.

- i. So, you see, on the **one hand**, we're obsessed with watching ourselves. We're **too good** at it, you might say.
 - 2. But on the **other hand**, we're **horrible** at it—we hate to do it, we won't do it.
 - a. You see, Jesus is calling us to something so **much deeper** than selfie culture. If you noticed, He's talking about watching, not our appearance and our external encounters in this world. No! He's talking about watching our **hearts**: *"But watch yourselves lest **your hearts** be weighed down . . ." (v. 34).*
 - i. And here I say is where we are weak. It's one thing to watch ourselves **externally** through the lens of a camera. Put on our best face and appearance. It's another thing entirely to watch our **hearts**, to grow in tune with what's happening on the **inside**, with the stuff that's turning deep within the soul.
- C. Megan and I got hooked on this **show** (thanks to one of you who recommended it actually) where they bring these **survival experts** out to crazy remote places and they drop them off one by one alone and in isolation, and then they all compete to see who can survive there the longest.
 - 1. And what's interesting to watch is that for some, of course, it's the standard stuff like **food**, or **shelter**, or **wild animals** that gets them to tap out.
 - 2. But for others, it's this **psychological piece**—being alone, without the distraction and the noise and the selfies and stuff, and you have to face what's inside. It starts coming out and we don't know what to do with it. We've seen guys tap out with great shelters, full bellies, and all this, because they can't handle the stuff that's coming up and out from their **hearts**. . . it's this piece that gets them. Because we're not good at this.
 - a. But Jesus is saying this is what the **Christian**, the disciple has to grow in tune with or we're not going to be **ready for the day of His return**. We've got to watch ourselves. More specifically, we've got to keep a watch on our hearts.

(2) The How

- A. So the question that emerges here now is: **How?** How does Jesus say we're to go about watching the **world** and watching **ourselves** at this deeper level so that we're ready?
 - 1. It's this **second piece**, in particular, that I'm going to focus on because that seems to be Jesus' primary aim here. **How do we watch ourselves?**
- B. Now, I've got **four suggestions** for us, all drawn from the text, but before we look at these let me say **something up front** here real quick that seems to me to be incredibly significant . . .
- C. When it comes to being ready for Jesus' return and the end of the world, as I've mentioned there are those who think the matter is all about doing these **complex calculations** with prophecies and things to determine the day and the hour and all of this. You get ready by opening up the Bible and the daily newspaper and try to find the overlaps and things.

1. Some of us, because we've come from some of these Christian circles, may feel end-time stuff is so **confusing** and **crazy**, we just **gave up** on trying to figure it out or be prepared. But, again, Jesus says it's not about these things at all.
- D. The best way to get prepared for the **future** coming of Jesus, as we'll see, is to simply **walk faithfully with Him today**, right now, wherever you're at, in whatever you're doing. Jesus is going to point us to the **common everyday means of grace** that every saint can do, whether you have any idea how to interpret [Daniel](#) or [Revelation](#) or [Luke 21](#). That's how you get ready.
1. This is why one commentator says: *"The End cannot be prepared for by anticipating and forecasting, but by watchfulness and faithfulness in the present"* (PNTC).
 2. Or another says: *"The readiness demanded . . . does not relate to eschatological calculation, as if faithful disciples could forecast the time when Jesus would return. The disciples demonstrate that they are ready for his return by doing God's will"* (Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 812).
- E. So, I said I've see **four suggestions** Jesus gives us in this text. Let's look at those briefly now . . .

Suggestion #1: Study the Word

- A. I get this from [v. 33](#) in particular, where Jesus says without even a stutter: *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but **my words will not pass away**."* Let that sink in. *"Everything the eye can see. It's going to go. But even after it's all gone. My words will remain."* It takes your breath away, doesn't it?!
- B. I think in **times** especially like the ones we're in right now—that just feel **chaotic** and **tumultuous**—we're all looking for **something stable**, some **bedrock for the soul**.
1. I was just **lying in bed** yesterday morning, as we're dealing with **more uncertainty**, more **stay-at-home orders**, more **fire warnings**, more **PG&E shutdowns**, more **craziness**, and I was thinking, if I didn't on the daily in the **morning**, come to God in His Word and settle my soul down into something eternal and unchanging, man, I don't think I'd **make it**.
 - a. **How do you have peace** if you're waking up and going straight to the **news**, or the **blogosphere**, or your **social media feeds**, and you're following this or that **commentary** and **projection**, and you rarely if ever let God's word break in on the matter?
 - i. You'd be **turning** this or that way. You'd be **up** and **down**. You'd be all up in **knots** inside. If you have peace for a bit, you certainly wouldn't have it for long.
- C. No, you see, we need something that even as **heaven** and **earth** are **shaking** and **unraveling**, it's still there, it's still solid, it's still true and lasting. We need **God's Word**.

1. It **stabilizes** us. It helps us **interpret** the crazy around us. It **illuminates** the stuff that's off in our hearts. It shows us the way **forward**. It reminds us that, in it all, God has a **plan**, He's on the **move**, He **loves** us, He's working for our **good**, and He will ultimately bring in a **new heavens and new earth** in Jesus.
 - a. Man, that makes a difference, if you get those things in the mix in the morning, that changes how you come at the **rest of your day**. And more than that, it keeps you ready and waiting for **Christ's return**.
- D. So, as we now approach a **new year** (which, honestly, just seems wild to say, that a whole year has gone by with us like this), it's always a good time to **evaluate** how you're doing with God's Word.
 1. It's fine and good to hear it **preached** and **expounded** by others, but you need to be in it yourself, **personally, day by day**. Are you? Do you have a **plan** to engage it more faithfully in the new year? Let's talk, I'd love to help if I can.

Suggestion #2: Walk in Obedience

- A. I think this is what comes out in the latter part of [v. 34](#) there: *"But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap."*
- B. Jesus is **warning** us here, and there are **two sides** to it, really . . .
 1. On the **one hand** Jesus warns against the more **flagrant sins** like *"drunkenness"*—*"dissipation"* is the translation of a Greek word that really refers to the **hangover** that comes from such activities.
 2. But then on the **other hand**, He warns against the more **sanitized types of sins**, what He calls here the *"cares of this life."*
 - a. These are the things that **don't look so bad** on the outside—it's important to be concerned with your **vocation**, your **money**, your **health**, your **relationships**, and things like this—but these things can **own you**, they can become the objects of your **faith** and **hope**. They can displace Christ from the **throne** of your heart.
 - i. Here is that **Parable of the Great Banquet** where it's not flagrant sin that keeps people from coming into the banquet of the Lord, it's common everyday concerns—I've got a **field** a need to tend to, **oxen** I need to care for, a **wife** I should be at home with, and so forth ([Luke 14:12-24](#)). They're **cleaner** activities, but they can be just as **deadly**.
- C. What we find here in Jesus' warning is really the same sort of thing that we see also in the **Parable of the Soils**—where the **Word of God** is scattered like seed and it falls on various soils. And one soil, you remember, is shot through with **thorns**. And Jesus says of this soil: *"they are those who hear [the word of God], but as they go on their way they are choked by the **cares and riches and pleasures** of life, and their **fruit does not mature**"* ([Luke 8:14](#)).

1. Some are choked by *riches and pleasures*. Others are choked by *cares and anxieties*. But, whatever the case, these kinds of people hear the Word, but they don't bear good fruit.
 - a. And that's why I say one of the things we must do if we are to be prepared for the coming of Jesus is to walk in obedience here and now, to bear *good fruit*. The Word of God avails us little if we are not actually *hearing* and *doing* it.
- D. So we all need to ask, what is God calling me to do right now? What are these **little steps** of obedience—am I taking them? Don't worry about trying to be ready for the *apocalypse*. You follow Him faithfully *today* and you'll be ready.
 1. You do *dishes* without grumbling; you resist temptation to *sexual sin*; you press into a *Home Group* and do life with other believers; you open your hand to the *poor* in your midst; you share the *gospel* with a neighbor—you do the everyday little things . . . and you'll be ready.

Suggestion #3: Stay Alert in Prayer

- A. This comes out in [v. 36](#) in particular: *"But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."*
- B. You know, prayer is really that critical link between our *studying of God's word* and our *fruitful obedience* to it. It's where we ask *God to do* in us through Christ and by His Spirit what we don't have the *strength to do* in and of ourselves.
- C. This past week we had a big old bonfire in the backyard with the kids and things. It was fun. But there's something of that image I could borrow at this point.
 1. In many ways studying God's Word is like lining up **logs** preparing to burn. Initially it might feel heavy, you don't understand it, you don't feel it like you should, you don't want to obey it. But you put it in your firepit anyways. And prayer in some ways is like what you do if you have a little **ember** burning, you *blow* and you *fan* and soon the flame catches and engulfs the other logs.
 - a. Prayer is kind of like that. We are hearing God's Word as we study it, but in prayer we ask God: "*Help me understand it, help me feel it, help me trust in it, help me obey it . . . light it up in my life Lord!*"
- D. I recently read that George Whitefield, that renowned **evangelist** key to the **First Great Awakening**, would be up at **five** in the morning, on His knees with a **Bible** laid open before Him, studying, but not just studying, *"praying over every line and word . . . till the passage, in its essential message, [had] veritably become part of his own soul"* (Dallimore, *George Whitefield*, 1:82-83).
 1. That's what we're talking about. *"God, get this in me—in my heart and in my life!"*
- E. The Greek word behind what's translated *"praying"* here is *deomai*, which quite literally means *"to plead or beg"*! That's the idea here.

1. We must remember: prayer is not this *civilized exchange* between two equal counterparts. It is fundamentally a *throwing of ourselves down* at the feet of Christ pleading for mercy and grace to help in our time of need (which is all the time!), begging Him to do in and through and for us what only He can!
- F. **Have you ever prayed like that?** *Humble*, on the *ground*, a *beggar* in the dirt?! That's the kind of prayer that Jesus is talking about here. That's the kind of prayer that keeps you *ready for the return* of our Lord!

Suggestion #4: Don't Go It Alone

- A. There's one last thing to say here, and it might otherwise be lost on us because it's more *implicit* than *explicit* in our text. But it's this idea that, if we want to be ready for the end of the world, well, we **better not go it alone**. We need brothers and sisters in Christ, the saints, the family of God, to be in it with us, together.
- B. This is especially brought out in the **Greek text** when you realize that every verb is in the **second person plural** which just simply means the you is not just one person but "*you all*."
1. We see this play out in the English too at points. Therefore, in [v. 34](#), He doesn't just say: "*Watch yourself (sg.) . . .*" He says: "*Watch yourselves (pl.) . . .*" There's **more than one** disciple here. And that's important.
- C. Why do you think some of us are *gathered outside*, right now, in the cold and even with threat of the pandemic and things; and others of us are *at home online*, kids running around.
1. It's hard to concentrate, but we're **prioritizing** this part of our week, *why?* Because we **need each other** in this.
- D. It was on my heart this past week to **text a brother** who had moved away quite awhile ago. And I didn't say much, just that I loved him, was thinking of Him, wanted to tell Him that Jesus was near Him.
1. And he texts back and says that, that little text right there, **made his week**, gave him the encouragement he needed to keep pressing in towards Jesus and things. Come on! That's what this is about.
- E. I thought of [Heb 10](#) at this point, where the author says this: "*²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near*" ([vv. 23–25](#)).
1. I love that. In view of "*the Day drawing near*" don't neglect to **meet together** with other believers. You're going to need that.
- F. Some of you need to **shoot up a flare** and let us know you need help. You've been maybe too ashamed to bring it out in the open.

1. Others of you, you're **getting used to this quarantine** thing and you're slowly pulling away from community.
 - a. You got to press back in. Get consistent with **Sundays**. Join a **Home Group**—whether it's virtual or not. Start a **DNA Group**. Start a **text thread** where you share prayer requests or little encouragements from Scripture. Do something.
 - i. Just **don't go it alone**. The verbs are second person plurals. We're doing this together.

G. So that's: **We Are Watching**—The **What** and The **How** . . .

(2) We Are Watched

- A. I just have a few things to say about this and we'll be done. I know it sounds **creepy** at first, we are watched, like we've got someone **stalking** us or something. But that's not what I'm going for here.
 1. I'm talking about the fact that what will get us through to that last day where we can "**stand before the Son of Man**" (**v. 36**) isn't going to ultimately be **our ability to watch** for the signs of the times or watch ourselves and all of this.
 2. It's going to be that **God** has committed Himself to **watching over us**. He's got His eye on us. He's got His eye on you. That's what I'm talking about here.
- B. I don't know about you but when I read verses like the ones before us talking about **staying awake at all times**, and **praying always**, and getting **strength to escape** this stuff, and all that, or back up in **v. 19**: "**By your endurance you will gain your lives**"—I'm just thinking: "**I can't**. *I don't have it in me to go the distance. What then? I'm not going to stay awake, I'm going to sleep. I'm not going to stand, I'm going to fall.*"
 1. The **disciples**, these guys Jesus is talking to right now, you remember, in just a day or two, in the Garden of Gethsemane He says Stay awake with Me, watch and pray, **three times** He says this and each time He comes back and their **sleeping**. We can't do it. So what then?
- C. Well, here's where we need to remember that we're not just **watching**, we are **watched**—God is personally looking over us to keep us keeping on.
 1. This, I think, is the meaning of Jesus' words in **Matthew's account** of this discourse: "²¹ *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.* ²² *And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But **for the sake of the elect** those days will be cut short*" (**Matt. 24:21–22**).
 - a. He's watching and He's going to **order** the unfolding of the **end-times** with ultimate concern for the **salvation of His saints**. Before He'd ever let you or I fall, He's going to cut it off—He won't let that happen. He's got you!
- D. You know this idea of **standing** before the Son of Man. There's a clear link in this forward to **Rev 6-7** where we get this vision of the **return of Christ**, this **last day judgment**.

1. And in [Rev 6](#) all these **kings** and **mighty ones** of the earth are hiding themselves “¹⁵ . . . in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and **who can stand?**’” ([vv. 15b-17](#)). That’s the question. Who can stand?!
2. And then fast forward in the vision to [Rev 7](#) and John writes: “⁹ After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, **standing** before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” ([Rev. 7:9–10](#)).

E. Oh brother sister, **watch this world, watch yourself**, to be sure.

1. But, at the end of the day, the reason you’re going to be able to stand before Jesus on that day, is because God’s been **watching you**, He’s **washed** you in the blood of the Lamb and He’ll **keep** you keeping on in Him . . . to the end. Hallelujah!

“¹ Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. ² For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³ While people are saying, ‘There is peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴ But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵ For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶ So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸ But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing” ([1 Th. 5:1–11](#)).