Pentecost 25 11/15/2026
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 28A

SERMON TEXT IS THE APPOINTED EPISTLE READING FOR THIS SUNDAY, FROM THE 5TH CHAPTER OF 1ST THESSALONIANS

It is that time of year that our worship, our readings and our hymns focus our attention on the 2nd coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In our lesson, Paul calls it "the Day of the Lord". And, what a day that will be!

The Scriptures describe that day something like this: It will start like any other day. The alarm clock will go off in the morning, and people will get ready and do what it is they do. Kids will back their backpacks and go to school; coal miners will dig coal; ranchers will feed their cows; retired folks will meet their coffee club at the appointed hour; people will talk about the weather. All will go like any normal, typical day.

Then, wham! The day of the Lord. In the twinkling of an eye, in the sounding of a trumpet, He's here. Just like labor pains tell a woman with child that the baby is coming, the day of the Lord will come with the judgement He promised. The sheep and goats, believers and unbelievers will be separated; and destruction will come upon this fallen world, so that it will be no more. And there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, screams and cries, because that destruction will be painful. There is no escape from it. Destruction will come upon all those who are in darkness. God's wrath will come upon a sinful world that has rejected Him.

But, you now all that. Paul says, *Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have <u>no</u> <u>need</u> to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are <u>fully</u> <u>aware</u> that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night (vv. 1-2).* You know it's coming, so you are ready for it. Right?

So, when it come to the day of the Lord, no fears, no worries, right? Well ... Maybe ... Hopefully ... Kinda?

It's like this: even though we know the day of the Lord is coming and the destruction is coming with it, even though we confess that Jesus is coming again to judge the living and the dead, we find ourselves this day living in a sinful, broken, dark, dark world. We still live among a whole lot of people who have no idea this day is coming. And it really will hit them like a thief in the night.

They wander around in the darkness of the valley of the shadow of death; looking for peace and security in things of today; *"their god is their belly and they glory in their shame,* and because we live in such close proximity to them, we get sucked into their way of life (Ph 3:19). When it comes to the day of the Lord and being ready for the day of the Lord, sometimes, we are not ready at all. Paul describes it in our lesson as falling asleep or getting drunk. That's a fancy way of saying we let our guard down and we give in to the temptations of the flesh, the world, and the devil. And we end up doing exactly what all those people looking for peace and security around us are doing. Things like: cheating on our school work or our taxes. Indulging in that secret affair, that no one knows about. Telling lies, spreading rumors, gossiping. Worshipping things like our leisure time, or our bank account. And we find ourselves, rather than being ready for the day of the Lord, we're sleepy, drowsy, because we've given into temptations; we've given into to sin.

Really, it is our sins that bother us when it comes to this whole day of the Lord thing. We know the day of the Lord is coming to bring destruction upon those who live in darkness. That troubles us. That scares us because we sin and our sin is ever before us. We even pray, "Thy

Kingdom Come," but we hope that when He comes, it will be at 10:30 Sunday morning, so He finds us in Church, not at a time that would be inconvenient for us; a time when we are asleep or drunk; a time when we are engaging in the "fun" of sin. We are worried and afraid about Jesus coming again, because what if He comes a time when we are doing or thinking or saying something we shouldn't be?

If you have fear and worry over the day of the Lord, I invite you to listen to this, *God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him (vv. 9-10).* To be sure, our sins, our sleepiness, our drowsiness, our giving in to those temptations dictate that we should suffer the destruction and wrath of the day of the Lord when He comes as a thief in the night.

And that's exactly what would happen to us had not Christ Jesus died for the sins of the world. When Jesus died, He went to the cross carrying all of our sins, all those times we've given in to the flesh, the world, and the devil. He took all of our sleepiness, all our drowsiness upon Himself and then He took God's wrath against us upon Himself. That wrath ended His life when He was nailed to the wood of the cross and its His death and cross that has won for you the forgiveness of all your sins. It has made you a child of the light, a child of the day, such that whether you are awake or asleep, you belong to Christ. So that when the day of the Lord comes, there are no worries for you. That is your reality.

But, there is also the reality that we are still in this dark world with people running around looking for peace and security in the things of this world, and the world and the devil, and our flesh tempting us to go to sleep and go back to the shame of our sin. And what do we do about that? Paul

has a simple plan for that and its this: Be who you are. *For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness (v. 5).* We are strangers here; we are destined to live with Jesus in the new Jerusalem of heaven forever and ever, without end. We just be who we are, without fanfare, without pomp or circumstance. We just do what we have been called to do in the vocations to which God has called us.

So that when the day of the Lord approaches, the children of light, the children of the day get up when the alarm clock goes off, pack their backpacks and go to school, pack their lunch and go dig coal at a coal mine, feed cows, take care of kids, drink coffee with their coffee clutch, talk about the weather; simply be who they are in Christ.

And as you do what you do as the children of light, children of the day, you are dressed in the right attire – the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet of the hope of salvation. Dressed in that, you are perfectly defended against the attacks of the flesh, the world, and the devil, so that you are ready for the day of the Lord when it comes.

So, you do what it is you do as children of the light, children of the day, and wearing that attire, we also encourage one another. We look out for one another. We build one another up. Mom and Dad, you read the Scriptures and teach that Word to your children. You pray for one another. You send a sympathy card to one grieving. When you see a brother or sister in the faith, drifting off to sleep, giving in to the temptation of the flesh, the world, and the devil, you who are the children of light, children of the day, encourage them to stay awake, to turn from temptation and be who and what they are in Christ.

When it comes to the day of the Lord, the 2nd Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, we know who we are -- we are the children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. We are not destined for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. So today, as we live in eager expectation of our Lord's return, we do what we do. We are properly attired. We encourage and build one another up in Christ Jesus. We do that because when it comes to the day of the Lord, we have no fear, no worries, because we have Jesus.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.