**Grace to You** :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

**Night People/Day People, Part 1**
Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8a
Code: 52-22

This morning we are going to return to our study of Paul's epistle to the Thessalonian church, 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 and we're going to begin a look at verses 4 through 11. And the title of our message is "Night People/Day People." And we all know that some people are night people, just in the normal human sense, and some people are day people. Some people prefer to do their work and their activities in the day, and some prefer to do them in the night. Some people like to sleep at night and rise up early with the dawn, go to bed early when the darkness comes. And others like the night. And just as that is true in some sense in terms of our human life, it is also true spiritually speaking. In fact, we could almost say that there are only two kinds of people in the world. And we would be accurate, biblically. There are night people and there are day people.

Let me read about them. First Thessalonians 5 beginning at verse 4, "But you, brethren, are not in darkness that the day should overtake you like a thief, for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We're not of night, nor of darkness. So then, let us not sleep as others do but let us be alert and sober, for those who sleep do their sleeping at night and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation, for God has not destined us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us that whether we are awake or asleep we may live together with Him. Therefore, encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing."

The whole human race, says Paul, is divided into two groups: night people and day people. Night people, we learn here, are associated with darkness, sleep and drunkenness. Day people are associated with light, alertness, and soberness. Now, Paul is really showing us the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian, a believer and an unbeliever, one who possesses salvation and one who does not. Now, the purpose in this text, the goal which he has in mind primarily, is to meet the need of the Thessalonian believers who are disquieted, and discomforted, and worried, and anxious, and nervous about their future. For some reason, they have become concerned about whether or not they are secure in the future. Having been taught by the apostle Paul something about the coming of Christ and having been given some information about the day of the Lord, they have become worried. Some have come along and confused them to some degree, and so there are a number of questions in their mind that Paul wants to answer as he pens this epistle, no doubt questions brought to him by Timothy when he visited the Thessalonian church.

They're very anxious and somewhat fearful about what is to come. They have questions along these lines: will those of us who die miss the Rapture? And why has the Lord not come back already? Why is He delaying His coming? Shouldn't it already have happened? And by the way, when is the Rapture to take place and when is the day of the Lord to come? And is it possible that we could perhaps miss the Rapture and get caught in the day of the Lord? Or worse yet, have we already missed it and has the day of the Lord already come? They have numerous questions about the future, and about their part in it, and when it is to come to pass.

In light of these concerns that they have, the beloved apostle has set in the inspired text the answers to their queries. First of all, they were concerned about Christians that died. Would they miss the Rapture? And so, in chapter 4 verses 13 to 18 he answers that question by saying no, they will rise first in the Rapture and you'll be there to join them. And then, he answered their question about the timing of the Lord's coming, when would it happen, in chapter 5 verses 1 to 3 by saying, "You can't know, no one can know, it's going to be unexpected." And now, he answers the question: will they miss the Rapture and is there any possibility they might wind up having to go through the day of the Lord? And here in verses 4 through 11 he says that's impossible, no, you will not experience the day of the Lord, you will not experience the wrath of God.

The purpose for which he writes is to settle their fears. That's why at the end of chapter 4 you notice verse 18, it says, "Therefore comfort one another with these words." And down in chapter 5 verse 11, "Therefore encourage," and by the way, that's the exact same verb in the same form as translated "comfort" at the end of chapter 4. Here it's translated "encourage." "Therefore encourage one another and build up one another just as you also are doing." So, he's really writing all of this to comfort, encourage, and strengthen them. Your future is secure, he's saying. Be comforted, be encouraged, be strengthened.

The way he addresses the security of the future of the believer is through a series of contrasts. He contrasts, of course, the Rapture with the day of the Lord. He contrasts salvation and wrath, life and death, blessing and cursing, hope and no hope, day and night, darkness and light, being asleep and being awake, being drunk and being sober, being separated from God forever and being forever with the Lord. All that series of contrasts unfolds in this entire passage. It is a multi-faceted description of the complete and total division between believers and unbelievers, and the implications of that division in the lives of both. The whole section really contrasts the saved and the doomed. And any fearful, or worrying, or fretting, or nervous, disquieted, discomforted Christian who is concerned about his future can look to this text and have his fears calmed. We have nothing to fear in the future if we belong to Christ because we are so utterly distinct, because there is such a tremendous and total contrast between Christians and non-Christians, believers and unbelievers. We have nothing to fear.

Having spoken about the Rapture which is our event, gathering us to the Lord, and the day of the Lord which is the event of the unbelievers that brings them eternal damnation, he now moves in

verses 4 through 10 to show us why we need not fear about our future because of our distinctiveness, our distinctiveness, and gives a number of contrasts to make that very apparent.

Let me just suggest to you three of them that we will look at. Three perspectives about the distinctiveness of a believer that secures him from any future judgment. We are distinctive, first of all, as to our nature. We are distinctive, secondly, as to our behavior. And we are distinctive, thirdly, as to our destiny. Because we have a distinct nature manifesting itself in a distinct behavior leading to a distinct destiny, we have nothing to fear.

Let's begin with a look at the distinctiveness of our nature, or the very essence of our being, our character. Verse 4, "But you, brethren, are not in darkness that the day should overtake you like a thief for you are all sons of light and sons of day, we are not of night nor of darkness." There is the contrast made very simple and very direct. We're not going to have any part in the day of the Lord. We're not going to have any part in the future judgments of God and His wrath because we are unique people. Our nature is different. In verse 3, he says that the day of the Lord is going to come with sudden destruction and they shall not escape. Mark that word "they." That's very important to his contrast, because in verse 4 he says, "But you, brethren." In contrast to them, you are not in darkness. You're not going to be in the night when the thief comes. You're not a part of darkness.

The term "brethren" here is an emphasis suggesting that we belong in the family of God. Brethren identifies us as Christians who will never experience the day of the Lord. The contrast is emphatic, and Paul draws it all the way down through verse 7 and even in to verse 8. Believers will never experience the wrath of God. They will never experience this sudden destruction. They will never experience the day of the Lord, the fury of God. Why? Because they are different in nature. You, brethren, are not in darkness. You don't belong to the darkness. You don't belong to the night. You don't belong to Satan's domain. You are not in darkness.

The people just described, who are the target for God's wrath on the day of the Lord, are in darkness, but you're not. To what does that refer? Well obviously, he's talking about spiritual darkness that characterizes and marks the nature of unbelievers. And it's really twofold. A number of years ago in studying 1 John, I went through the whole of Scripture to delineate the essence of this darkness and simply stated it falls into two categories: one is mental darkness; the other is moral darkness. The darkness of ignorance, on the one hand; the darkness of sin on the other. The darkness of unbelief on the one hand; the darkness of rebellion on the other. One is the darkness of not knowing; the other is the darkness of not doing, not knowing what is true, not doing what is right. The heart of an unregenerate, unsaved person is dark. That which generates his conduct is dark, and so his conduct reflects the darkness.

In John's gospel you remember these familiar words, "In Him was life," chapter 1 verse 4, "and the life was the light of men, and the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it."

To open the gospel of John, John reminds the reader that the world is in darkness, Christ the light came, but the darkness did not understand the light. Why? Chapter 3 of John's gospel, "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." They didn't want to see the light. They loved the darkness. Verse 20 says, "They hated the light and did not come to the light, lest their deeds would be exposed." And Jesus in John chapter 8 confronted the people in the outer courtyard of the temple in the city of Jerusalem with these words, "I am the light of the world, he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness but shall have the light of life." And so, the unregenerate world is characterized as dark. Even the prophets said He would come as a light to the nations. It's the darkness that comes to the mind that does not know truth; it's the darkness that's characteristic of the conduct of one who has no capacity to do what is right.

In Ephesians, Paul also elucidates the same thing in chapter 4 verse 17. He says that people operate in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their heart. So, it is an ignorant darkness and it is an immoral darkness. They are dark because they don't know the truth. They are dark because they love wickedness.

Everyone who is presently a Christian once walked in the darkness. In Ephesians 2 it says that we were dead in trespasses and sins and nothing is darker than death, and we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. We functioned in the lust of our flesh, the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. The world is in darkness. The one who controls that darkness is Satan, whose children they are. Satan himself Jesus called the power of darkness in Luke 22:53. He identified Satan as the power of darkness. In Ephesians 6:12 he called Satan's demons the forces of darkness. And they all occupy the kingdom of darkness, according to Colossians 1:13. And they are all headed for eternal darkness.

So, the domain of the lost, the domain of those without God, without Christ, is the domain of darkness, dominion of ignorant sin, wickedness and rebellion, the realm of the fallen sinful nature in Adam and unredeemed. But you, he says, brethren, are not in that darkness. You're by nature not darkness. "I am the light of the world and the one who comes to Me will not walk in darkness," Jesus said, "but will have the light of life." And you remember those wonderful words of our Lord in Matthew 5 where He said that you are the light of the world, let your light shine among men so they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven? And you remember the wonderful, wonderful truth of 1 John chapter 1 which tells us about our nature? It says that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all, and if we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth, but 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. If you say you know God, but you live in darkness, you don't know God. If you know God you live in light.

So, we're not in darkness. We're not night people. We're not people of the night. We don't live in mental darkness; we know the truth. We don't live in moral darkness; we live the truth. Because of this distinctive nature of the believer as a day person, a child of light, there is great relief. Back to verse 4. We have no fear that the day should overtake us like a thief. What day? The day of the Lord. That day belongs to the darkness. The prophet Amos looking forward to the day of the Lord in prophetic revelation wrote in chapter 5 verse 20, "Will not the day of the Lord be darkness instead of light? Even gloom with no brightness in it?" The day of the Lord is darkness; the day of the Lord is for the people of darkness, the night people.

And so, he says, the day of the Lord is not going to overtake you, it's not going to seize you, it's not going to catch you, it's not going to capture you like some unwary person sleeping in the house when the thief comes. The day of the Lord is the day of darkness and we have no part of darkness. We're not the people of darkness; we're not the people of the night. We won't be there when the day of the Lord comes. When it comes suddenly and unexpectedly like a thief, those in the dark will be taken captive by its terrors. And according to verse 3 they're going to be surprised. They're going to be saying peace and safety when it hits. But we have nothing to fear and we won't be there, it's an event for the night people, not the day people. Verse 5 says, "For you are all sons of light and sons of day. We're not of night, nor of darkness." And he keeps saying it over and over so that it finds its way deeply into our confidence. You are all sons of light. You are not night people. You're day people.

By the way, I went back to the gospels, being reminded that similar expressions I thought I had read there from the lips of our Lord, and I found indeed that is the case, that Paul was certainly building on the very teaching of Jesus. In chapter 16 of Luke and verse 8, our Lord speaking said, "And his master praised the unrighteous steward because he had acted shrewdly, for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light." And there He identified believers as sons of light, even in their weakness they are nonetheless sons of light. And I was reminded also of John's gospel, a wonderful statement in chapter 12 and verse 36. Jesus said, "While you have the light believe in the light in order that you may become sons of light." An evangelistic invitation to come to the light, to see the light, believe the light, live the light, become sons of the light.

Now, that may sound like a strange term, sons of light, and perhaps for us in the English language it is a bit unfamiliar. But let me take you back, if I might, to the Hebrew idiom that is really behind this Greek concept. It is a Hebrew idiom. The Hebrews used to say that a man is the son of whatever influence dominates his character, whatever influence dominates his thinking, whatever influence characterizes his nature. We might even say that today. We might see some person who is dissolute, who is unruly, wild, careless, reckless, sinful and say idiomatically he's a son of the devil. And that would be catching the same sense of this idiom. Back in Judges, for example, chapter 19 verse 22, those who are characteristically wicked are called sons of Belial, or sons of the devil. There were two of the disciples, James and John, who got a nickname; their nickname was sons of thunder. Why?

Because it seemed as though they had been born by the thunder: volatile, aggressive. And then, there was that very wonderful man in the early chapters of the books of Acts, Barnabas, who in chapter 4 verse 36 was called the son of consolation. It was if he was born or fathered by comfort, consolation, tenderness, gentleness. And so, we understand that to say someone is the son of is to merely say that their nature or their character obviously seems to have been born of that. To say we are sons of light means that the dominant influence in our lives is light. The influence which characterizes our nature or our character is light. Light on the mental side that we know truth. Light on the moral side that we live right.

We live in the realm of light, we're destined for eternal light. When you see me you can see in me the characteristics of my father. You can see some of the physical features of my father, some of the intellectual and emotional characteristics of my father. I bear the imprint of the one who gave me life. And so, it is that we who have received the light will characteristically be the sons of light. We live in the realm of light. We conduct ourselves as day people. We are headed for eternal light in heaven's glorious light, even the Lamb Himself. So, we are sons of light. We bear the nature of light which is truth and virtue. And then, as if we might miss it he adds, doubling the point, "You are all sons of light and sons of day." Light belongs to day just like dark belongs to night. If you were to do a little word association game and someone said "day," you might say "light;" and someone said "night," you might say "dark."

And so, Paul carries out his contrast. Day is the realm in which light dominates. Night is the realm in which dark dominates. And so, we are not only sons of light but then therefore sons of day. That's our nature. It isn't our nature to be in the darkness. It isn't our nature to be caught in the day of the Lord. It's totally inconsistent with who we are. We're not going to be around in the night the thief comes.

And then, Paul says it another way as if we don't understand it yet, at the end of verse 5 he says, "We are not of night, nor of darkness." That explains exactly what he's been saying. We live in a completely different sphere of life than those who will be caught by the day of the Lord and know the wrath of God. Sin has no dominion over us. We know gospel truth and sanctifying truth. We have the light in us, the indwelling Holy Spirit. We face no condemnation ever. We will never experience the full fury of God's wrath. The day of the Lord has nothing to do with us. We're different.

We have risen, Paul says in Romans 6, to walk in newness of life. We are new creations, he says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, old things have passed away, all things have become new. We are a new creation again, he says in Galatians 6:15. We have been created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. Our life is hid with Christ in God and therefore our life is different. No need to fear missing the Rapture, friends. No need to fear that you might get caught in the day of the Lord. No need to fear wrath. No need to fear condemnation. We have nothing to do with the darkness. We have everything to do with the light. We're day people.

Can I put it to you simply? We belong in the day. We live in the day. And the future for us is the dawning of an eternal day. So, we don't need to be anxious then about our future because of the distinctiveness of our nature.

Second point, because of the distinctiveness of our behavior. Consistent with our nature is the manifest behavior which should be to us a confirming confident evidence of our secure future. And this follows right on the first theme and is linked by the words in verse 6, "So then." So then, this is a good reminder of the relationship between the Christian's identity and his conduct, between his nature and his behavior. Those two are inseparably linked all through the New Testament. What we are dictates how we act. We are day people, so we act like day people. That's our character. Therefore, that's our conduct, that's our behavior. Verse 6, "So then, let us not sleep as others do," others meaning unbelievers, "but let us be alert and sober." Let's be different. Let's be who we are. Now, while we want to celebrate the fact that we are different, we also want to admit that this is an exhortation. And the fact that it is an exhortation is very important. He doesn't say in the prior verses, "Please be day people." He says, "You are day people." Our character, our nature is fixed by the transforming regenerating power of the gospel. But even though we are day people, we still have the fallen flesh. And so even as day people, it is possible for us to have some night life, isn't it? And so, we need to be exhorted to let that pattern of righteousness which is normal to our nature be uninterrupted.

So, he says in verse 6, "So then, let us not sleep as others do." And he adds another component here. We've been talking about night, and we talked about darkness, and now we add another component: sleep. The unregenerate are in the night; the night is pitch black and they're asleep. That compounds their insensitivity, doesn't it? It's night. That's that enough. It's pitch black. That's doubly bad. And they're in a coma, absolutely insensitive, insensible to spiritual reality.

The fourth dimension is added in verse 7 when he talks about drunkenness. If you want to see the depth of insensitivity of an unregenerate person, see the compounding of those four concepts: it is night for them, it is pitch black, they are asleep in a drunken stupor. We have nothing to do with that kind of life. We're day people. And wouldn't it be absolutely ridiculous for us to conduct ourselves as if we were night people? That's his whole exhortation here. Day people shouldn't act like night people, that's not the pattern of your life so why interrupt the normal righteous pattern with night life? It's no place for night life with day people.

There's a comparative passage that comes at it from a little different angle. And I just want to point out the parallels, not the differences. Romans 13. Romans 13, and here is another exhortation to day people to act like day people. Down in verse 12, the middle of the verse, as I said he comes at it a little differently, but there's a similar kind of exhortation, the middle of verse 12. "Let us therefore," referring to believers, "lay aside the deeds of darkness," the night life. We don't have any part with

that. That doesn't belong to us. Let's put on the armor of light and let us behave properly as day people, not in carousing, and drunkenness, and sexual promiscuity, and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. Let's put on the armor of light. What's the armor of light? Verse 14, it's the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's start acting like He acts. Let's not make provision for the flesh. By the way, night people are in the pitch dark, in a coma, drunk, but they are wide awake to the flesh and sound asleep to spiritual reality.

He says don't be like them. Don't conduct yourself like the night people. You're day people. To me it's so wonderful how this exhortation is built on our character and not on fear. God could have said, could have changed the whole plan and said, "Look, you either act like day people or you're going to wind up in the day of the Lord. You either act like day people or you're going to feel My wrath. You're going to feel My condemnation. You're going to feel My damnation." I mean, He could have made the plan go that way and motivated us by fear, or He could have even said, "Well, you won't go to hell eternally, but I'll tell you, if you mess around with night activities, you're going to go through the day of the Lord and you're going to get blasted in the day of the Lord." He could have said that and try to move us by fear, but He doesn't. He tries to move us by a sense of spiritual dignity. He says, "You wouldn't want to do that, would you? After all, you're day people. You belong to God." And he lifts us up above the motive of fear to the point of dignity and honor where we say, "Look, I belong to God. I'm a child of the day. I'm a son of the light. I don't act like that."

There's no place for night life among day people. We're above that. By God's grace and the power of God's Spirit, I say no to the carousings of my flesh, its sensuality, its sexual promiscuity, its strife and jealousy, and I say yes to the day, to virtue, purity. And I will put on the armor of light, which means putting on the character of Christ and putting on the conduct of Christ.

Your conduct then must demonstrate your condition, your character. So, let us not sleep as others do, others meaning non- believers who are asleep foolishly, unwitting and unwary of what is coming. You remember the parable in Matthew 24 where Jesus said if the head of the house what time of the night the thief was coming he would have been on the alert. But, they're going to be asleep. We don't want to sleep. We don't want to be spiritually witless. We don't want to be spiritually unwary. We want to truly be awake to spiritual reality, that's the point. Let us be, verse 6, alert. That's his first statement: let us be alert.

Now, sleep is natural to the night people, but not the day people. By the way, the word sleep here is different from the word sleep he uses back in chapter 4. Back in chapter 4:13, 14 and 15 he uses the word sleep several times to refer to the death of believers, that believers who have died are only asleep because it's temporary and they're going to wake in the Rapture. Here, he uses a different word that actually doesn't normally mean death, there are few places where it can be used to mean death but it normally means just sleep. And so, he says, this is the sleep of spiritual indifference, living as if there is no judgment. They're asleep. They can't see truth. They can't live virtue, and they

aren't even aware that judgment is coming. They are absolutely tuned out, living their lives as if there would never be a judgment of God, living their lives as if there never were a God. We expect night people to do that, people who are insensible, helpless. But not Christians.

Now, this is a part of our comfort, too. Even though I am a day person, if I am living the night life I'm going to lose my confidence that I'm a day person. And when my life is characterized by righteousness, my confidence is high. When my life is characterized by unrighteousness, I begin to question whether I am a day person, and I may wonder whether I will escape the day of the Lord. It is not possible for Christians to be caught in the day of the Lord. It is possible for sinning ones to think they might be, because confidence can be lost. So, if I am to be comforted, encouraged, and strengthened with hope, I have to live like a day person. Titus 2 is a good parallel where Paul says, "The grace of God," in verse 11, "has appeared bringing salvation to all men." And that salvation carries with it instruction about denying ungodliness, and worldly desires, and living sensibly, righteously, godly in this present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus. You see, part of our ability to look for that hope, and that blessed hope, and that glorious appearing is to be living holy lives.

So, the apostle says don't sleep like unbelievers do, be alert and sober. The word "alert," very simple, be awake. The Greek word is *grgore*, from which the name Gregory comes. Be awake. Be alert to what's going on in the spiritual dimension, truth and virtue. See what's happening. Don't be sleeping and slumbering and witless. First Peter 1:13 says, "Gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." That's the same kind of injunction. Get your mind together. See truth, perceive truth, be sober in your spirit, and then you'll have hope for the coming of Christ without fear. As you look to the future, Peter says again in 2 Peter chapter 3, and you realize what's going to happen in the end, you see the day of the Lord coming, you ought to be found in peace, spotless and blameless, waiting for the patient Lord to reveal His final salvation.

So, I'm to be alert and awake to truth and righteousness and reality, not living in some inebriated condition or some stupor of sleep that I have been induced into by getting involved in the night life, the world. Then, he adds sober. And I'm sure these words could be flipped back and forth in a synonym fashion; I don't think he intends to make a difference between the two of them. But I would just point out the word sober means free from the influence of intoxicants. And so, he's just extending his illustration. He talked about the ungodly being asleep and drunk and so now picking up those two things he says be awake and sober. And to really, talking about the same kind of thing as their sleep and their drunkenness are simply two ways to define their insensitivity, so are being awake and sober are two ways to define our sensitivity to spiritual reality. Being sober means what alert means: under control, self-control, having a proper balance, maintaining a settled confidence, having your priorities carefully laid out, being filled with spiritual and moral seriousness, being zealous for what is true and what is right; not overexcited and not indifferent but sane, and balanced, and consistent, and calm,

and steady spiritually. We have to be that way as we live as people of the day.

William Hendriksen has an excellent paragraph in which he writes, “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. He is by no means a stoic. On the contrary, with a full measure of joyful anticipation he looks forward to the return of the Lord but he doesn’t run away from his task.” He writes, “The apostle’s exhortation then amounts to this,” and here’s his translation: “Let us not be lax and unprepared but let us be prepared, being spiritually alert, firm in the faith, courageous, strong, calmly but with glad anticipation looking forward to the future day. Let us moreover do all this because we belong to the day and not to the night.” End quote.

We have to live like day people: alert, awake, balanced, godly, under control by the truth, not like the sleeping drunken people of the dark night who will be jolted out of their self-induced coma by the day of the Lord. And by the way, all the tenses in the verbs here are present. The Thessalonians are being told to live continuously these kinds of lives, because they will not experience the day of the Lord. What an elevated motive that is. This is the highest call. This is calling us, like Paul in Ephesians 4, to walk worthy of our calling. Not out of fear, but out of the nobility of spiritual identity. We’re different. We’re different, so we live in a completely different way. These are patterns of behavior which must characterize us.

And as if we still don’t understand, Paul teaches us further in verse 7, “For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.” He just looks at a simple, common, everyday observation. People sleep at night. People get drunk at night. So, he’s saying sleep and drunkenness go with night. So, we expect night people, unsaved people, to sleep and get drunk because that goes with night. It’s their nature to be dark so their conduct follows. They will sleep; that’s passive indifference. They will get drunk; that’s active sin. So, passively and actively, they’re going to act like night people because they are night people.

In Luke 12:45, Jesus telling a parable and maybe Paul also had this in mind when he was writing. Jesus said if the slave says in his heart, “My master will be a long time in coming. And begins to beat the slaves both men and women and to eat and drink and get drunk, the master of that slave will come on a day when he doesn’t expect him, at an hour he doesn’t know and cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.” We expect the night people to sleep. We expect the night people to get drunk. We expect them to be passively indifferent to truth and morality. We expect them to be actively engaged in cultivating sin. But, verse 8, we’ll stop with this first line, “But since we are of the day, let us be sober.” We’re of the day. The same thing he said in verse 5, sons of light, sons of day. Let’s be alert. Let’s be watchful.

You notice how repetitive this is? It’s probably an indication that this was a very serious issue with the Thessalonians. In fact, it’s so serious that even after he said all of this apparently he has to write the

second epistle in part to again tell them they're not in the day of the Lord. Somebody was really after them to confuse them about this issue.

We are day people. As day people, we have nothing to do with the darkness. The thief will not come in the night of our ignorance because we're not ignorant. The day of the Lord will not come in the night of our immorality and unrighteousness and ungodliness because we are marked out by righteousness and godliness. That's our character. And the distinctiveness of our nature sets us apart from the darkness, and the distinctiveness of our behavior does as well. For the pattern of our lives is righteousness; foolishly, we inject it with the night life. We ought not to do that, for when we do that men may not see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven, right? And thus, we not only dishonor the Lord and bring upon ourselves chastening, but we certainly detract from the attractiveness of the transforming power of the gospel in the eyes of those who watch our lives.

We are day people. We're to act like it. It is our nature. It is our behavior. And I'll only mention it this time, it is our destiny. Please notice verse 9. "God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our future is all bright. Our future is all light. Our future is all day. And when the day star comes and the dawning of our eternal day arrives, we will reach the destiny for which we were redeemed in the past and are sustained in the present. We became children of day. We must live as children of day until we enter into the eternal day. We have nothing to fear, beloved. We are day people, not night people. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, this is an encouraging portion of Scripture for us. We realize that we are unworthy of such unimaginable goodness that You have bestowed upon us to make us day people, children of light, children of the day, to make us the very habitation of light as the light of Christ has come to dwell within us. We are overwhelmed that we've been taken out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. We're overwhelmed that we shall never walk in darkness but always have the light of life. And we have hope in our hearts that someday we'll enter into that eternal light where none of the deeds of the night life will ever exist. Father, help us to act like children of the day, particularly as we live in the world of darkness around us, that men may see the light like a city set on a hill that cannot be hid. And Father, we also ask for those here who are night people, and have heard this message, and are in the night, and it's pitch black, and they're asleep in a drunken stupor, utterly insensitive to truth and virtue and to coming judgment: may the light dawn in their hearts. May the Spirit of God enlighten them, convict them of sin, draw them to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, to turn from their sins and follow Him, to hate the darkness and love the light, that they too might become day people, to look for the glorious day of heavenly joy. And these things we ask in the name of Christ. Amen.

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