**1. Motivate**

What are some hobbies or interests that have connected you with other people?

* kid’s sports
* fishing

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/477ch2k4> If you don’t have wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/j4dwefwb>

* cooking
* quilting
* golf
* doctoring
* kid’s schooling, carpooling
* choir, band, orchestra
* woodcarving, woodturning, wood working

**2. Transition**

We need that interaction with others.

* This is especially important in our Christian life
* Believers share and experience life in Christ together

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Children of Light

Listen for contrasts.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-8 (NIV) But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. 5 You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. 6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

Identify the several contrasting metaphors Paul used in these verses and identify the meaning of each.

* darkness and light awareness of God’s Truth
* asleep and alert application, heeding God’s Truth
* self-controlled and drunk allowing God to control your life

What concepts in these verses suggest a sense of togetherness or fellowship among those who believe?

* believers are to be united
* together we receive God’s Truth
* together we apply it to our lives
* we serve God together as He controls and guides us
* we trust God together

How can we help one another navigate through a world growing increasingly dark?

* faithful in exposing ourselves to God’s Truth
* personal study of God’s Word
* regular attendance and participation in group Bible Studies
* involvement in ministry together

What are some threats to the church standing united in a world wrapped in darkness?

* our culture and society push that spiritual darkness at us
* in popular entertainment
* in woke ideologies
* emphasis on materialism
* divisiveness of politics

How are faith and love like a breastplate?

* body armor protects vital organs
* we think of the heart as the seat of emotions
* faith and love protect our emotional being

How is salvation like a helmet?

* a helmet protects our brain
* the reality of our salvation protects our intellect
* the Truth of Christ’s redemptive act is a fact
* we can base our spiritual life on that reality
* our thoughts and reasoning are protected by God’s Truth

How can the themes of vigilance and sobriety, mentioned in verses 6 and 8, help us navigate the challenges and temptations of the world around us?

* we cannot just drift through our Christian life and be oblivious to world events and attitudes
* to identify counterfeit money, you have to be very familiar with the real thing
* we need to be communicating with God daily … receiving His communication to us (Scripture) and communicating to God in worship, praise, thanksgiving, declaring our trust
* don’t fill your mind with the world’s entertainment
* fill your mind with God’s Truth

3.2 Encourage One Another

Listen for how to encourage.

1 Thessalonians 5:9-11 (NIV) For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

What has God appointed for those who believe and how was it accomplished?

* God did not intend for us to suffer the judgment of sin
* God intends for us to experience His salvation through faith in what Christ has accomplished
* God wants everyone to know this
* 2 Peter 3:9b *(NIV) The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

Consider the benefit of salvation Paul focused on in verse 10.

* Jesus took the punishment we deserved
* When you confess and repent from your sin and receive by faith the salvation Jesus has accomplished … you are FORGIVEN!
* The believer who dies goes directly into God’s presence.
* While the believer lives, he or she is made into a new person.
* God’s holy Spirit dwells within that believer.

What instruction did Paul give that would be helpful to the body of believers?

* encourage one another
* build each other up
* as a member of the Body of Christ, minister to one another
* support one another in prayer
* be actively involved in church ministries

What are some practical ways we can build one another up?

* speak words of encouragement
* complements
* pray for and *with* one another (more than just saying, “You are in my thoughts and prayers.”)
* as you are involved in church ministries, you can specifically say or do things that help a fellow member of the Body of Christ
* maybe another person needs a word of exhortation, advice, or warning

How can talking about God’s promises for our future encourage us in our daily lives?

* changes one’s focus to Jesus, instead of the troubles of the world around us
* Satan tries to fill our minds with temptations or accusations
* God’s promises remind us of God’s love for us, His power and authority to accomplish good things for us
* Colossians 3:1-2 (NLT2) Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, *set your sights on the realities of heaven*, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God’s right hand. 2 *Think about the things of heaven*, not the things of earth.
* Hebrews 12:2 (NLT2) We do this by *keeping our eyes on Jesus*, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.

3.3 Challenge One Another

Listen for challenges given.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15 (NIV) Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. 13 Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. 14 And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.

Note the antecedent of the pronoun “those” in verse 12.

* They “work hard among you”
* They are “over you in the Lord”
* They “admonish” you
* Paul is speaking of pastors and ministers.

How were the brethren to treat “those who work hard among you”?

* respect them
* hold them in highest regard in love
* realize how hard they work

How can we best honor our church leaders who provide us with spiritual guidance?

* support them in prayer
* tell them of your appreciation – verbally, texts, emails, written notes
* when someone criticizes them, remind them they are God’s servant and deserve our support
* unite with them by serving the church – both the local congregation and the whole Body of Christ

How might the closing admonition in verse 13 apply to leaders and followers alike?

* hold one another in high regard – think good things about them, don’t always look at faults
* live at peace with leaders and fellow believers
* don’t always be looking for ways to criticize

What are some appropriate ways to challenge and spur one another on within the church?

* offer opportunities to become involved in ministry
* train them as necessary
* model faithful service
* give words of encouragement and positive suggestions for improvement
* when complementing, note specific examples of what you appreciate that they have done
* as said before … pray for them and with them

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

A bear in a coat

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Find fellowship.

* Regularly invite someone at church you don’t know well to dinner.
* Get to know them more deeply.

Support your leader.

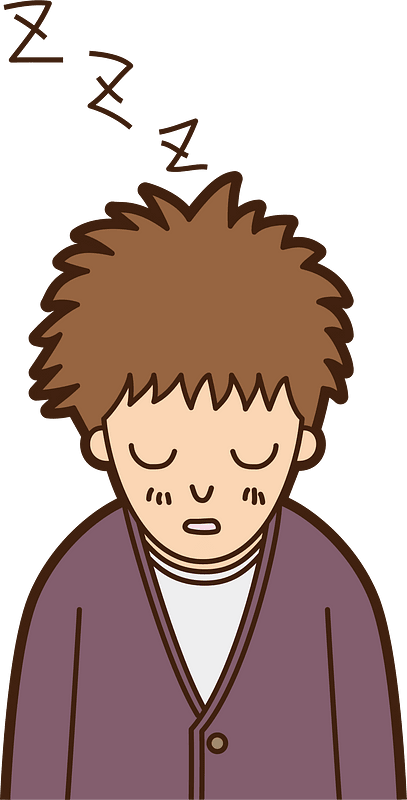
* Pray for your pastor every week.
* Call or send a note stating your support and appreciation for him this week.

Invite accountability.

* Ask a strong Christian to be your accountability partner.
* Schedule regular times to check how you’re growing spiritually and obeying Christ daily.
* Share your weaknesses and welcome advice.

Gotta love it … the crossword. Just remember the words and clues come from 1 Thessalonians 5:4-15 (NIV). Help and other Family Activities are found at <https://tinyurl.com/j4dwefwb>

A cartoon of a person holding a phone

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1 Down hint

Crossword Puzzle