# Pictures of the End

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. All right. Let me invite you back to your seats, if you would.

Good to see you this evening. Let me remind you, as I often do, to be, as the Lord just brings it to your mind, to be praying for the other ministries that are meeting at this time.
Two weeks from tonight, our youth choir will be in here. They are preparing for their mission trip. That's coming up pretty soon now that we've crossed over to January.
That mission trip takes place the second week, second or third week of March. And so we've got about 115 or so that's a part of our youth choir. They meet during this time, but they'll be in here with us in a couple of weeks.
And so we'll look forward to having them here. And our Kinder Praise Choir and Kids Praise Choir also, of course, meets during this time. So we want to always remember, as just the Lord brings to your mind, to be praying for those other ministries that take place, that the Lord would use the music programs of our church to teach our children and our youth, not only music, but also provide avenues for them to be able to serve with their voice, as well as their hands and their feet as well.
[1:34] 1 Thessalonians 5, what Jeremy read to us on the day of the Lord. It's been a few weeks since we've gathered here in this setting. So let me just remind you of where we were at the end of chapter 4, where we dealt with this issue of the coming of the Lord.

When we talk about eschatology, we're talking about the study of the last days. And as I've, anytime we cover this topic, which we actually have covered eschatology a lot recently, because in our study through the Gospel of Mark, there's an entire chapter that has so much eschatology in it. And so we spent actually a number of weeks. Back around the summer, I think that it was going through that chapter through the Gospel of Mark. And then here in 1 Thessalonians, there is so much eschatology here.
And we spent several weeks at the end of our time in the fall semester, the end of November and 1st of December, looking at some events related to eschatology.
I want to remind you what I try to always say, and that is that I don't think that we need to have the viewpoint ever that eschatology is irrelevant.
[2:56] It's not in the Bible to be irrelevant. It's here for a reason and a purpose. We do want to approach it graciously, knowing that there are committed believers who have different viewpoints.

And the fact that good people with good hearts and good minds have differing viewpoints should not be for us an excuse to stay away from it.
And it should not be for us a fear of looking into it. We do want to approach it, though, graciously, and not pretend that if somebody disagrees with, in this case, what I'm saying, that it's a matter of fellowship.
People are free to be wrong, all right? They can be wrong. It's all right. That's an attempt at a joke, but although I'm actually not kidding.
I wouldn't teach it if I didn't believe and wasn't convinced of it. But we do understand that good people with good hearts who love the Lord, who love His Word, have differing opinions.
[4:03] So we don't want to draw lines where there's no reason to draw lines. I've mentioned to you many times. I've got many men in my life that I cherish, some that I know well personally, and others know just from reading or be familiar with their ministries that have encouraged me and helped me.

I've profited from them, and I don't always agree with every bit of their eschatology, and that's okay. Having said that, I really do feel like in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 5 that what is being said here is very

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important, and that it's here for a reason to help us.
And so let me just pick up where we left off last time we gathered here for evening service. At the end of chapter 4, verse 18, Therefore, encourage one another with these words.
If the Holy Spirit didn't want us to understand what He's saying, there would not be much encouragement. The encouragement comes from understanding what is being said.
And so remember when Paul is first here establishing this church, he's just there for a few weeks. They get run out of town. We've covered that months and months ago.
[5:21] But in the short time he's there, he is teaching them eschatology, the study of the last things. And that may be surprising to us because often in the church today, it's just assumed that eschatology is either irrelevant or at least not essential.

But when Paul starts this church, one of the first things he does is root their understanding of the end times. So much so that he can write to them and say, as I've told you, as I've instructed you, as you've been taught.
He wants them to not only understand it, but to be able to bring it back to mind and to be clear on it, so clear that they could encourage each other with these words.
And so part of the challenge is, Paul has taught them that, so we've got 1 Thessalonians. Paul goes, starts the church, teaches them.
Paul and his companions get kicked out. He sends Timothy to go back and check on them. Timothy comes back and gives a report to the church. Paul then writes this letter known as 1 Thessalonians.
[6:34] Very shortly after this, he's going to write what we know as 2 Thessalonians that we're going to study on Sunday mornings here in just a few weeks.

And if you just turn the page, I just want you to see this. In 2 Thessalonians 1, verse 5, the heading in my Bible likely says something similar in yours, the judgment at Christ's coming.
Chapter 2 is all about the Antichrist. So Paul writes to this church these two letters, and it's filled with eschatology, the study of the last things.
And so this is very important in the mind of Paul, and he wants this church to be encouraged by what is here. The problem is he has taught them that while there is suffering and persecution in the life of the church, he's taught them the church is going to be lifted out and not be there during the final events known as the tribulation.
And the problem is they are now suffering affliction. We see that in 2 Thessalonians. And their concern is if this is the day of the Lord, if the day of the Lord is here, and they have been taught they're not going to be here for the day of the Lord, then that means one of a couple of things.
[8:07] Either Paul was wrong, or they're not really believers. If the church is going to be lifted before the day of the Lord, and they're experiencing the day of the Lord, either they've been taught wrong, or they weren't truly converted.

Now, why was this such a problem? Well, let me take you fast forward here and show you 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 1.
Now, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to Him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed either by a spirit or a spoken word or a letter seeming to be from us to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.
This isn't that hard for us to grasp here. A false teacher has sent them a letter claiming to be from Paul.
Paul says false teachers have a spirit behind it. False teachers have a, there's a demonic realm in the sense of every false teaching is from the father of lies.
[9:31] Our enemy. And the false teacher is telling them that they should be shaken, they should be alarmed, they should be afraid that the day of the Lord has come.

If they are in the day of the Lord, if they're in the time of this tribulation, of this wrath of God being poured out, and they've been taught that the church won't be there for that, chapter 4, 13 to 18, then either they were taught wrong or they're not truly in the Lord.
And that's why they were left behind to go through this. That's why they are so shaken. That's why they are alarmed.
And so Paul is writing not only to give them a certain theology of the last days, but to encourage them. Now, another issue going on in the minds of the people of this church is what happens to those who have preceded us in Christ.

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If Paul has talked about this gathering of the saints, this gathering of the church, if he is talking about these who are going to be caught up with the Lord, that's chapter 4, verse 17, we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with the Lord in the clouds to meet Him in the air.
[11:00] If there is this great blessing for believers when the Lord comes to gather His church, to have them caught up in the air, the question on their mind is a good question.

Does that mean those who have preceded us in death miss out on the blessing? Paul has taught them this.
He has obviously encouraged them with this. And their concern now becomes, what about these who have died? Paul has come, started the church, established the church, taught the church.
He left Thessalonica because they were kicked out. In that time, some of the faithful have died. And they're thinking, you taught us that those who are alive are going to be caught up in the air and it's going to be this monumental, glorious occurrence, this amazing moment when the Lord gathers, raptures His church.
And when that happens, what about those who have passed away? Have they missed out? And so he's addressing that. And his answer is, they have not missed out.
[12:19] Look at verse 15. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with the cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
Then we who are alive, who are left, will be, and here's where the word rapture comes from, caught up together with them in the clouds to meet Him in the air.
So what Paul is doing in this letter is helping the church to understand that those who die in Christ are not going to miss out.
The dead in Christ will rise first, and then those who are alive will meet Him in the air, will be caught up together with Him.
[13:23] Therefore, verse 18, encourage one another with these words. We will be with the Lord.

And when this event happens, when we are caught up together with Him, this is where in the Gospel of John, He speaks that He goes to prepare a place for us, and He'll come again to receive us unto Himself, that where He is, we will be with Him also.
And those who are dead in Christ, will rise first, and we will be with Him there together in the air.
This is just kind of a side note. Romans 11 says, when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, so there is, in God's sovereign providence, there is this fullness of the Gentiles, this church age, and after that event that event takes place, the Lord returns to complete His work with Israel.
And He put that together, there is somebody out there who I don't know the Lord does, at some time that we don't know the Lord does, who's going to be that final Gentile, who's going to close out the church age, who's going to come to faith in Christ, the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, and when that happens, the Lord descends, the dead in Christ rise, and we are caught up together to meet Him in the air.
Now, I don't know who that last person is, according to Romans 11, is going to usher that time in, but what a testimony that man or woman is going to have. He's going to think to himself, I should have done this a long time ago.
[15:03] During that time, starts off this event known as the tribulation, this seven-year period where God's wrath is poured out upon the earth, and that begins chapter 5, and we're going to look this week and next week in verses 1 through 11 at these pictures that He gives us, these pictures of the end.

He's dealt with the events of the rapture, and now we turn our attention to what we call the day of the Lord. It's not a day in the sense of a 24-hour period.
It's a day in the sense of a season of time, and in this period of time, the Lord is going to deal directly and dramatically as His wrath is poured out, Revelation 6 to 18.
You can sit down and read all about it. Our Old Testament has 19 references to the day of the Lord, and several others in the New Testament as well, and this begins with the time of the tribulation leading up through the events related to the second coming of Christ.
So in verses 1 to 3 of chapter 5, let's look tonight at pictures of the second coming, and there are in these three verses two pictures He gives us, or we could call them two illustrations, two analogies.

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[16:36] One is of a thief in the night. The other is of labor pains. Let's look here in verses 1, 2, and 3. He says, Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you.

We're talking about the period of time known as the day of the Lord. When He says, concerning the times and seasons, chronos and kairos, one of those words deals with clock time, calendar time, and the other word deals with a period of time or an era of time.
Concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. They've been taught. They've been instructed. They're not going to know the exact day that this takes place.
They're to live constantly ready. They're to live with a sense of understanding that the Lord could return at any time.
Now how is that possible? Well, I believe when you look at the Old and New Testament and put it all together, I believe there are very clear things that need to happen before the second coming.
[18:00] The second coming is an event that is fulfilled after a series of signs preceding it come to fruition.

of the church. However, 1 Thessalonians 4, 13-18, the rapture of the church needs no sign. The rapture is a signless event.
The rapture could come any moment. Second coming has a number of signs. The gospel walks us through that. Revelation walks us through that. But the gathering of the church, verse 17, chapter 4, being caught up together with Him is a signless event.
What God's people are to do is not try to figure out dates and times. What God's people are to do is to live ready.
Live ready. The tragedy that so many people make in their life is they think in terms of at some point in my life I'm going to get serious about things.
[19:12] At some point I'm going to get serious about studying the Bible. I'm going to get serious about serving. At some point I'm going to get serious about the things of God.

It happens even in just worldly things. People often, if you ask somebody that's 25, how do you see your retirement years, they're not going to tell you, here's how I picture it, I'm broke, I can't afford anything, and I choose between food or medicine.
Nobody assumes that's how it's going to be. And their assumption is at some point they'll start preparing for retirement. But who wants to put money aside at 24 or 25 or 26?
You just start to spend your money. We'll put money aside for retirement in our 30s when we start to make money. And the 30s come and you've got these children who want to eat every single day. And it gets expensive and you think, well, we can't really save now, it's expensive, but in our 40s, that's when we're going to start to save money and then, oh, by the way, here comes college.
[20:22] Well, that's kind of difficult to save for, but soon, when the kids get out of the house, then we're going to start saving for retirement, and then at 54, you go sit down with the financial advisor and they tell you, I've got a great plan for you if you'd have started this 30 years ago.

You just always assume you've got more time. God's people are to live with the sense of awareness that our days, every day, is a gift.
And it is presumptuous and even arrogant to assume that God owes us more time. He does not. And so, it's not our responsibility to try to figure out dates and times, and when you read a teacher or hear a teacher who tells you he's got something with the date figured out of when Christ is coming again, he's done you a great blessing.
What he's just told you is never listen to him again. He's made it easy for you. You should never listen to anybody who tells you they've got dates and times figured out because the Bible makes clear we don't know the day and the hour.
[21:35] Instead, we are to live with this sense of imminency that Christ could return for us any time. The rapture of the church is a signless event.

Now, what we are to do is to recognize that because that's true, we are to make the most of every single day.
We are to redeem the time by living for Him. So, chapter 5, concern the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you for you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

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Now, just stop for a minute, just a little bit of Bible study here. He says you're fully aware. How are they fully aware? Because He's taught them this. He was only there for a few weeks at the beginning.
He's already taught them this. Eschatology's not something to be afraid of nor to ignore. It's there, chapter 4, verse 18, that we can be encouraged by it.
[22:54] You yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. Meaning, it's going to be sudden.

It's going to be unexpected. Thieves don't, in our world, a thief does not broadcast when he's going to come to your house and break in and steal.
When he says it's like a thief in the night, it's not because what he's doing is wrong. It's not because he's coming to steal anything. He's talking about the day the Lord will come like a thief does. Instantly. Suddenly. And when people are not expecting it. If you knew when the thief was coming, you would be prepared. If you knew when the thief was coming, you would not be home and you would have law enforcement there waiting for them.
If you knew that there was somebody getting ready to steal your purse at the store, you wouldn't have it just laying out in the basket. If you knew the thief was lurking, you would be prepared.
[24:07] prepared. But the thief comes when people are not prepared, when it's sudden, when it's unexpected. God's people are to live with this constant understanding that the Lord could return for his church at any time and that's going to inaugurate this day of the Lord and the world is going to be carried away in all kinds of other things.

Comes like a thief in the night. Verse 3, while people are saying there is peace and security, then sudden destruction will come upon them.
The world is going to have all kinds of things that happen that for the faithful are invitations to repent and to trust in the Lord.
But for those who do not believe and trust in the Lord, they will ignore all of those things and just be carrying on their business. Much like in the days of Noah.
Noah is laboring away building this giant boat with people just mocking him. What's the boat for?
[25:32] Well, for God's judgment. judgment. What kind of judgment when he floods the earth? What's a flood? A lot of rain. What's rain?

It seems so foolish to them. Crazy Noah building a giant boat because he says all this water is going to fall.
Since when does water fall? the earth is watered from beneath until the rain comes.
And you might think, well, what will happen is these people have heard Noah preach and they don't believe him. He's a preacher of righteousness, the Bible tells us, and they're going to ignore him. but once thunder starts to come and once sprinkling starts to come, then they're going to get in. But the family that believes gets in and who closes the door? The Lord does.
[26:35] because man's not sovereign, God is. And when you think of the day of the Lord, it's going to come suddenly and unexpected, verse 3, and there will be destruction.

It's going to come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman and they will not escape. Most of the people on the earth will have no interest in the things of God.
Most of the people on the earth will not care about the gospel. And you say, well, if all these prophecies come to pass, surely won't that mean everyone believes?
And I would say read Isaiah 7, read Micah 5, read Isaiah 53, and you've got specific promises and prophecies of the coming of Christ and his first coming fulfilled in incredible, intricate detail and most did not believe.
The Lord will have a remnant. He always has his remnant, but the majority will not believe. What will the majority be doing? Well, the majority are going to be trusting in and following a man known as Antichrist.
[28:05] And you say, well, do we get much clarity on that? Yes, 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 is all about that. Sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains upon a pregnant woman and they will not escape.

The pictures of the second coming, one is like a thief in the night and one like labor pains. Second, there's pictures of how then we are to live in light of the second coming.
This is a great parallel passage to what we said this morning in 1 Peter 4 7. Knowing that the Lord is at hand, 1 Peter 4 7, how are we to live?

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Well, this is exactly what 1 Thessalonians 5 is saying as well. What are the pictures of how we're to live in light of the second coming? Verse 4, But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief, for you are all children of light, children of the day.
We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.
[29:25] Does that sound familiar to anybody? Is anybody here this morning? It's not the same sermon, but it's the same idea, isn't it? You get the idea that the Lord's pretty intent on this?

And isn't it interesting that in 1 Peter 4 and 1 Thess 5, when it's talking about the nearness of the day of the Lord, when it's talking about the end of all things, it tells you in both passages be sober minded.
have your thinking clear. For so many people, even people who come to church regularly, they keep putting off the things of God.
But it's with clarity of mind, when we think about the end and how we're to live, it's supposed to wake us up.
So we make the most of the days that we have. So how do we live in light of the second coming? What pictures does he give us? Number one, we're to live in the light, not in the darkness.
[30:37] Go back to verse four. But you, there's a contrast here. Paul is speaking now to the church to believers, but you, Christian brothers and sisters.

But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day.
We are not of the night or of the darkness. People of darkness are the unbelievers. We are to be children of the light.
Make note of Ephesians 4, 17 and 18. Now this I say and testify in the Lord that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds.
They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of their heart.
[31:37] Psalm 82, 5. They have neither knowledge nor understanding. They walk about in darkness. darkness. So when you think about the end times, it's not first a call to argue or debate.

It's first a call to be ready, to be prepared. He says you are living in the light.
you're not to be caught off guard by this. For the unbelievers, the day of the Lord is like a thief in the night. They're going to be completely caught off guard by it.
But for Christians, we should not be people who are surprised at the events that are going to unfold. We don't read about the tribulation and be shocked or surprised.
He's revealed it to us. We don't fear it because the Lord has told us beforehand what to expect. Then even with affliction and persecution that takes place before the time of the great tribulation, we don't sit back and say, what a strange thing.
[32:54] Why is there suffering in our life? We know why there's suffering in our life. He's told us that. We're not surprised that our body breaks down.

2 Corinthians 4 tells us the outer man wastes away day by day, but the inner man is renewed day by day. Outer man, our flesh, breaks down.
Inner man, our heart, our spirit, built up. Why? Well, the outer man breaks down because we're all going to die.
Unless we're alive and the Lord comes to catch us up with Him, we're all going to die. We know that. That shouldn't surprise us. That shouldn't catch us off guard. We know that.
Now, with that in mind, let's live as children of light. Let's live with biblical understanding to make the most of every day.
[33:58] baby. When we were raising our boys, I always wanted to try to be able to wrestle with my kids, play one-on-one with my kids, work out with my kids.

Then, now we've got these grandkids, and I thought, man, I want to be able to play with them, too. I want to be able to wrestle with them, too. Yesterday, at the gym, I'm doing these box jumps.
If you ever watch an old man do box jumps, it's kind of frightening. I looked around and I thought, I wonder if people are concerned about me. Should we get a life alert around his neck?
Should we watch him? This is an old dude jumping. If you ask me, why are you 51 doing box jumps? Here's why. Because if the Lord allows me to live, I want to be able to go outside and run with my grandkids and play with my grandkids and wrestle with my grandkids and throw a football

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with my grandkids, I want to be able, if the Lord allows me health to do it, I want to be able to do it. But I'm not surprised that it's hard to do that at 51 because I believe in the inerrancy of Scripture. When the Scripture says the outer man wastes away, I say, Amen.
[35:17] I know it. I feel it. I understand it. And so we're not caught off guard by that. No, we don't need to be afraid of that either. We want to make the most of the days.

But if you go through life thinking you just have endless time on this earth, if you go through life thinking that you'll never get sick, you'll never get diagnosed, you're never going to be hurt, you're never going to be terminal, if you go through life thinking that somehow what we know is true is not going to be true for us, then we're living as children of darkness.
And he says that's not how you're to live. Live as children of light, with insight, with understanding, with wisdom.
people of light are to live as believers. Isaiah 2, 5, O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.
Darkness, unbelievers. Christians, believers, are to live in light. So let the reality that this life on this earth is not forever, let that influence everything you do.
[36:46] Let the reality that Christ is coming again influence everything you do. Now let me take you back to this morning's text for just a minute.

The fact that time is short and the fact that Christ is returning does not mean that you are to withdraw from society, withdraw from the world, and look to do a bunch of weird, radical, heroic stuff.
What did the Bible tell us this morning? In light of his return, what are we to do? Be sober minded for the sake of our prayers. Self-controlled.
In fact, when we get to 2nd Thessalonians in a few weeks on Sunday mornings, one of the things that's happening at the church in Thessalonica is there are people who are beginning to shirk their responsibilities.
They're saying that we were taught that Christ is coming again to get us. We were taught that the day of the Lord is going to come. So if this life on this earth is temporary, then if the rapture could happen at any moment, and if the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night, and if everything on this earth is going to be done away with, there are people saying, let's just not go to work tomorrow, what's the point?
[38:07] Let's not go to school tomorrow, what's the point? Let's not fulfill any commitments because this world's coming to it anyway.

And part of what happens in 2 Thessalonians is Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has to correct them to not live like that. To not have a bunker mentality.
to not have a mentality of if this is not forever, nothing matters. That's not how we're to live. We're to be faithful.
You know the verse that says if the one who is able to work and does not work, he should not what? Eat. In other words, if you're able to, you should provide for yourself.
Well, why would you stop providing for yourself? Because you just figure, hey, this world's coming to it anyway. Let somebody else take care of it. Let somebody else take care of my needs.
[39:10] Who cares if I'm a faithful worker, my job's not going to last forever anyway. That's not the Bible's teaching. It's in light of the reality that our time is limited and our life on this earth is temporary that actually frees us up to make the most of every day that we have and to do all he's given us to do and recognize that the things done for the glory of Christ are the things that last forever.

But do your laundry tomorrow and pay your bills tomorrow and provide food for your children tomorrow and do your homework tomorrow.
And you say, well, Christ is coming again anyway. let's just not pay the electric bill. Well, you will quite literally be children of darkness. Christians should not have a reputation for being unreliable. Christians should have a reputation of understanding that we are people of our word, hard workers, making the most of every moment, not to build up our kingdom, but because we recognize Christ is coming again, this body will break down.
I'm not promised tomorrow, so I'll be faithful today because it's the only day that's promised to me. And I don't have to go find some heroic radical thing to do because the Bible says in light of his return, here's what you're to do, be self controlled, sober minded for the sake of your prayers.

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[40:54] Live right, think right, pray right, and live as a child of light. So we are to live, first picture he gives us is live in the light not in the darkness.

Next, verse 6, live being awake, not asleep. Verse 6, so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake.
live being awake. If you're raising children, be awake as a parent. And don't sleep through your years of parenting.
If you've got little ones at home, you feel like you've got endless time. You don't have endless time. The days are short. It doesn't need to be frightening, but it ought to wake us up.
If you've got teenagers, if you've got kids right now that are in our youth choir, you've got 7th graders or 9th graders or seniors, they have spent far more time in your home already than you have left with them.
[42:11] That doesn't need to scare you. That's the way life's supposed to be. But it should wake you up. you ought to make the most of every day. We always, or I should say we always, but the temptation is to always think as if we have endless time.

I remember when my kids were getting married, both of my sons, I remember right the week they were getting married, sitting back and wondering, did I teach them everything I was supposed to? Did I teach them anything I was supposed to?
Have I done what I was supposed to do? And it's not that my time of being their dad comes to an end, but the relationship changes. It's supposed to. And they still have Marcy they can call to help, you know, change their transmission.
What did y'all change? Transmission? Alternator? I went to Denver to preach and Marcy and Benjamin are changing out alternators, whatever that is on a car. I clearly didn't teach them that. time is short. You don't have endless time. That doesn't have to scare you. But it ought to cause us to live awake.
[43:31] If you're a Sunday school teacher at our church and you're teaching third graders, your time with those students, you'll see them again once they finish third grade, but you'll never have access to their heart and mind like you do this year.

If you're their Sunday school teacher, this is your year. And half your year is gone. Now don't scream in joy, alright? Don't be excited and clap.
Half the year is gone. Your time to influence that young heart and that young mind, the days are short.
That doesn't need to make you live in dread, but ought to wake you up before you study to teach Sunday school next week. Because you think in terms of this year is going to take forever, you blinked your eyes, you went from August to January, you blink them again, you're going to be in the next August, and those third graders are moving off to fourth grade, you'll still see them, you can still talk to them, you'll never have access to influence them like you did this year.
Make the most of your time. See, what Paul is saying here is that when you think about the end times, the purpose is not ultimately to get a pre-millennial and an all-millennial and have an argument and debate.
[45:02] The purpose is to help the church live in the light and to be awake and to make the most of every day.

One last thing is that we are to live in sobriety and not drunkenness. Verse 6, so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober for those who sleep, sleep at night and those who get drunk are drunk at night, but since we belong to the day, let us be, what's your word? Sober, which sounds a whole lot like 1 Peter 4, or 1 Peter 4 verse 7, be self-controlled and sober minded.
Two texts today, both of them dealing with thinking in view of the end, both of them saying our immediate response, to thinking about the end, is to be sober minded.
I think about that when you go to a ball game and you watch parents in the stands scream and yell and berate officials and just act absolutely insane and then go home at night and lecture their kids on being disciplined.
[46:37] and the kids saying it's not what I saw tonight. Or when mom and dad, every conversation about their boss or their authority is always demeaning and disrespectful and cutting and rude and then tells their children, don't you back talk me, I taught you better than that.

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And the kids saying I'm actually just doing exactly what you've taught me. the fact that the Lord is coming does not make us retreat and live in a bunker underground.
The fact the Lord return, however, does make us say let's live in the light, not darkness. Let's be awake, not asleep and let's be sober minded, not going through life as if we were drunk, giving up full control of our senses and just living likewise.
animals. Paul tells them that in light of the teaching of the return of Christ, live faithful lives.
Which is why at the end of chapter 4 verse 18, he says therefore encourage one another with these words. encourage each other, help each other, care about each other.
[48:17] It's not just encourage yourself with these words, it's encourage one another. people in our church that are struggling and hurting, encourage them, help them.

When you see young families who are burdened with things happening to their children, pray for them, love them, serve them, get to know them. when you see people in our church who lose a loved one or lose a spouse, encourage one another, help each other, make sure that together all of us are saying let's live in the light not the darkness, let's live awake not asleep, let's live sober minded, not as if we are spiritually drunk.
encourage one another, help one another, care for one another, the study of the end times is there to help us understand that our response is to live every day for the Lord.
Every day. So, your body will break down unless the Lord returns first, you will die.
It's a fact. Don't be afraid of that. Don't be discouraged by that. But by all means, don't waste today, if that's true. You're raising your kids, they're going to leave your house one day, sooner than you think.
[50:05] Don't be afraid of that. But by all means, don't waste your time with them. the people in your Sunday school class are either going to graduate out, or if you're teaching adults, one day the people in your class are going to move away, or they're going to go off to serve somewhere else in our church, or they're going to go to be with the Lord in glory.

Don't be scared about that, but my goodness, don't waste your time this week to study, because your chance to influence them for Christ is now.
See, this is the way that the Bible speaks of eschatology, not debates and arguments, clarity and sobriety, not fearful, but faithful.
And this is how God's people are to live. We'll pick up with the rest of the passage next Sunday night. Lord, thank you for your word. I pray that it would give us encouragement.
I pray it would give us help. I pray it would give us direction. Thank you that you have spoken to us. May we encourage one another with these words. In Christ's name, amen. God bless.
[51:27] You're dismissed. God much We'll take which will work one first time to bring these others will may hold close two together another his saying

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