

**Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church**  
**2080 West Grand Boulevard**  
**Detroit, Michigan 48208**  
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**“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another...” - Part One**

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: I Thessalonians 5: 11**

“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.” (King James Version)

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up as you are already doing.” (Holman Christian Standard Bible)

**GOAL:** To understand spiritual encouragement as it relates to believers.

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:** Explore the comfort believers have in Christ.

*“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforted us in all our tribulations that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we, ourselves, are comforted of God” (2 Cor. 1:3-4, Eph. 4: 11-13).*

Compassion for others leads us to comfort them. Encouragement builds them up and gives them courage. God has commanded us to comfort, edify and encourage others, and what a privilege that responsibility is. He has comforted us in the same way that a mother comforts her children and has been as compassionate toward us as a loving father. Therefore, we must always show tender, loving comfort, encouragement and edification to one another.

**LESSON INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:**

**Time: 51 A.D. Place: Corinth**

The Church in Thessalonica was established on Paul’s second missionary journey. Paul, Timothy and Silas traveled to Thessalonica after being persecuted in Philippi. For three Sabbaths, Paul preached to the Thessalonians from the Scripture. Jews, Greeks, and women heard the Word and became believers. However, some Jews became jealous of their influence. When it became too dangerous for the trio, the believers sent them to Berea.

After the Church was established in Thessalonica, the Christians suffered persecution by stoning, beatings, crucifixions, “torture and even death”. Not only was there a problem of persecution, but also the Christians were confused about the second coming of Christ. They thought Christ would return immediately after His resurrection. They could not understand why their loved ones

were dying before Christ had returned. They were grieved because they felt their loved ones who had died in Christ would be left behind. Almost three years after the church was established, Paul wrote this first letter to the Church at Thessalonica. The purpose of the letter was to strengthen their faith and assure them of Christ's return.

I Thessalonians 5:11, "Wherefore comfort each other, and edify one another, just as you also are doing" (NKJV) stresses that believers are to encourage and comfort each other. The command to encourage one another is found throughout the Bible. The Word suggests that all that we say or do should edify and build up the Church (Eph. 4: 29). When Timothy visited the Church in Thessalonica they were doing just that, encouraging, comforting and building up each other.

## LESSON CONTENT

### **The Greatest Comfort—Christ, Our Living Hope!**

*[I Thessalonians 4: 14- 17, 5: 1-11, Romans 1: 4: 6, 4: 25-5: 1-5]*

For Christians who believe that Jesus died and rose again, comfort for sorrow is ultimately related to what the future holds.<sup>1</sup> Under the constant threat of persecution and death, the Thessalonians, though steadfast in their faith, grieved because they thought their deceased loved ones would be left behind when Jesus returned. Paul corrects their erroneous thinking and assures them that the dead in Christ would indeed rise with the Lord upon His return (*I Thessalonians 4: 13-18*). In I Thessalonians 5, Paul outlines why believers can comfort encourage and edify each other. Because of our spiritual position in Christ; we are no longer 'in darkness, but sons of the light'. This metaphor of darkness and light represents the difference between believers and non-believers. Believers have the truth and understanding about God; non-believers are ignorant of the truth of God. Non-believers are spiritually blind; believers have their spiritual sight. Non-believers lead self-directed lives that may not be in accordance to God's Word; believers live in righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Being in Christ helps us to know God's truth, have spiritual sight and live righteous lives guided by the light of God's Word. What a comfort!

Christians will not be surprised by Christ's return, because they have been told it is coming. They will not be desolate because they will be with the Lord (I Thessalonians 4: 13-18, 5:9). In other words, the world is ignorant of the impending judgment associated with the Day of the Lord. The unsaved live under a false sense of security and will be caught unaware when Christ returns. Our position in Christ is why we ought to be 'sober and not drunk' (I Thess. 5: 6-9). The assurance of eternal life in Christ must not lead to complacency. We must remain 'spiritually alert' always striving to live in a manner consistent with our standing in Christ.<sup>3</sup> Knowing we are God's children is the deepest comfort of all!

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<sup>1</sup> Keathley, J. Hampton, III, Th.M. "*The Comfort and Challenge Concerning the Day of the Lord.*" (I Thessalonians 5: 1-11).  
Internet Source: [www.Bible.org](http://www.Bible.org)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

Similarly, modern day believers also need the comfort of God's truth regarding our future. We live in an immorally sin-sick world where love and care for the poor, lost, and hurting is not found. Additionally, rising costs, threats of violence, war and terrorism are part of our daily lives. We are reassured and comforted because our living hope and trust is in Christ Jesus. Christ's resurrection is the undeniable proof that He is God's Son and our Savior \_the help for and solution to sin, suffering, pain, and death (Rom. 1: 4 and 4: 25). While the world spirals towards destruction we have the assurance that we do not share the same fate as nonbelievers. **It is with these truths that we can comfort, encourage, and edify one another.**

.....**To Be Continued**.....