

1st Thessalonians 5:6-13, "What to Do While We Wait, Part 2"

- ↳ We are pursuing the answers to the question, "What do we do while we wait on what God has for us." For that answer, we are consulting the "waiting book", 1st Thessalonians, i.e., waiting for the Lord to come; waiting for the Lord to change the circumstances, waiting for the Lord to change us. We saw last time that the first thing we need to do while we wait is: "so then let us not sleep as others do but let us be alert and sober" **1st Thessalonians 5:6**. In other words, don't sleep through this. This will require all of us working and doing what we can. Stay off the juice of emotions and distractions and be sober in what we say and do. Be self-controlled; it is a mind game before it's anything else.
- ↳ "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." **1st Thessalonians 5:8**. Be properly clothed, this is not a dinner party, it's a battle, and the battle isn't for a comfortable church with a good preacher, but for a church that is focused on the world. We come to church, we study the Bible, we give, and we serve. Why? So, we can have better lives? No! It is so we can be better equipped to reach a world that is dying without a Savior. Properly dressed in Faith, Love, and Hope in the Savior who will reward us, if we are dressed like that, the right Pastor will always be glad to be a part of what's going on here.
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1. Adding more to our checklist of what to do while we wait: 1st Thessalonians 5:8-13.

- ✓ Remember, though we belong to this church, this isn't our church; that is, it is neither here to please us, nor here to serve us, it is His! It is His to call all the shots and make all the decisions, and our job is to join in and accommodate ourselves to His system and His ways. One of the aspects that we accommodate ourselves to is Jesus' system of leadership. He is big on chains of command. You don't have to question how Jesus will be leading your church; He will be doing it through His leaders. If you want to wreck this church, go around and disrespect the roles of the leaders in this church. It says we are to hold them in high esteem because of their work, because of the position in which God has placed them within the body. This is very strict: notice that it doesn't say to do this if you like them or agree with them. Again, God works through the system of leadership that He has established, and He will judge leaders who don't do right, but that is always His call.
- ✓ **1st Samuel 24:4-13**: This is how you treat a person who's in leadership that you disagree with. Respect your leadership and expect that God will be leading this church through them. Pray for your leadership. They aren't perfect, and they have a lot on them. This transition will not be easy or simple; this is a major transition for this church, the future is at stake, and they know it.

2. Live at peace with one another, 1st Thessalonians 5:13.

- ✓ That's straightforward, but it is not simple as noted in **James 4:1-4**, "What causes fights and quarrels among you?" It's not because there are a lot of changes taking place, or because we are out of our comfort zone, or because we are feeling bad, it is because of our own selfishness. If we get concerned about ourselves and what we want and don't want and allow our feelings to make decisions for us, this will be the ultimate outcome. It happens on the playground every day; it will happen here if we are not mature and surrendered to the Lord. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit's control: **Galatians 5:22-23**.

Peace is one of the few things that sets us apart as belonging to God. Anybody can throw up a building and parking lot and hold a meeting where we sing and somebody lectures us, but will we be submitted to the Spirit? Anyone can be unkind, unloving, and selfish, but can we surrender to the control of the Spirit so that He can guide our hearts and minds? He cares about the direction of this church far more than any of us do. "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:7.
