**Thompson Road Baptist Church**

October 2, 2016

The Worthy Wait: 1 Thessalonians 4.13-5.11

1. Introduction
   1. Waiting for Gavin to be born
   2. Proposition: As Christians, Jesus’ return and judgment should be an opportunity for hope
      1. Note: we want to say what Scripture says and no more. There is no room or need for speculation in this passage. Revelation and Matthew add more, but I believe what Paul offers is the framework for how we can be encouraged when considering the end times.
2. The Return of the King (4.13-18)
   1. Paul’s concern: The believers’ lack of hope (v.13)
   2. Paul’s answer: Recalling the truth about Christ’s actions
      1. The promise of the Gospel (v.14a)
         1. In this passage we get a multifaceted view of the Gospel. Here, the focus is on Jesus’ victory over Satan and death; cf. Acts 2.23-24, “This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.” 1 Corinthians 15.54-57, “When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
      2. The promise of the Second Coming (vv.14b-17)
         1. The Return (v.16a)
            1. Though Jesus has gone away to be with the Father in Heaven, Scripture promises that he will return; cf. Matthew 16.27, “For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.” Hebrews 9.27-28, “And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”
         2. The Resurrection (v.16b)
            1. When Christ returns, he will call the dead to rise; cf. John 5.25, “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.”
         3. The Rapture (v.17a)
            1. For those believers still living, they will also be called to the Lord at this time; cf. Matthew 24.30-31, “Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”
         4. The Reunion (v.17b)
            1. At this moment, there is a great and everlasting reunion of all the redeemed with Christ for eternity
      3. An Encouragement (v.18)
         1. The believes are called to use these truths as an encouragement to one another not to lose hope; cf. Hebrews 10.24-25, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”
3. The Judgement of the King (5.1-11)
   1. Paul’s concern: The believers’ lack of focus on the end (vv.1-3)
      1. Paul has already addressed the hope they have, and now he addressing their need to stay focused on where this hope is looking towards, in contrast to the aimlessness of the world (ie, what is the meaning/purpose/goal of life?)
   2. Paul’s answer: Recalling their identity as children of light
      1. This means maintaining a readiness for the Lord’s return (i.e. staying awake and being sober) (vv.5-8)
         1. Recall previous section on sanctification and brotherly love
         2. See also 1 Peter 5.8-10, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.”
      2. This means remembering the Gospel by which they’ve been saved (vv.9-10)
         1. Just as before, the primary corrective for the believers’ failure is the Gospel. This time the emphasis is on Christ’s substitutionary death reconciling us with God; cf. 2 Corinthians 5.21, “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Colossians 3.1-4, “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”
      3. An encouragement (v.11)
         1. Once again, the believers are being called to use this information in removing the power of fear and anxiety
4. Conclusion