



# TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

**Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.**

**But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.**

*1 Thessalonians 5:1,2,4,5*

## **Don't be Surprised!**

In sports there is nothing like a last second score to win the game. Fans live for it! Players dream about it! Those moments infuse sports with a sense of purpose and anticipation.

Now, imagine sports with no game clock. Do you think the players would give maximum effort to win? Probably not. Offenses would take their sweet time. After all, what's the rush? No sense in teams playing defense. What's the point? Teams have plenty of the time to score later. Would fans even watch the game? Doubt it. What a snooze fest! In fact, with no game clock, even players could take naps.

Just as sports with no countdown would be pointless, people who live life with no countdown lack purpose. God said, "Time is counting down until I am come back! You just don't know when the buzzer will sound." Does the countdown until Christ comes back fill you with happy anticipation... or not? Is this where we must admit we haven't given it much thought? Are we so busy living today that we have no time to consider this no guarantee of a tomorrow?

Often, we live in the dark, forgetting that time is counting down until God comes again. The apostle Paul's encouragement in 1 Thessalonians 5 is a wake-up call for Christians. Wake up and see that you are not living in darkness! You live in the light of Christ. That means we will not be surprised by Christ's second coming. Instead, we get busy getting ready for it!

This good encouragement motivates us to take advantage of every opportunity to worship and praise God, spend time in his Word, and celebrate his Sacraments. This moves us to go and proclaim the gospel to those who don't know the forgiveness Christ gives. This compels us to serve God by serving our neighbor!

While living as "children of the light" provides good encouragement, even better, it is good news. As children of the day—that is, God's children—the good news is that God will not judge you based on the darkness of your sins. Instead, when God returns to judge, he will judge you on the basis of what Christ did for you on the cross. There God's Son didn't play games. Jesus won the battle and gave you the victory over sin, the death, and the devil.

Do you want to live your life with more purpose and greater anticipation? Count down the days until you eternally experience the blessed victory that is yours in Christ, and, until then, make all your days count for God's glory and praise.

**Prayer: Dear Jesus, while our thinking is often selfishly consumed with our present circumstances, forgive us, and keep us mindful of your future return. By the good news of your Gospel, move us to live in your love and in the freedom of your forgiveness and not fear all our days until we are with you forever in heaven. Amen.**