



Some briefer notes again for this week. This is a passage with aspects that we can be absolutely clear on, and also aspects that have confused the church for millennia!

There are 2 clear ideas at the heart of the passage though that we explored on Sunday

(1) Know when you are – following some kind of letter supposedly from Paul, the Thessalonians were muddled about whether Jesus has in some sense already returned – this has led (in ch 3 to some of them free-wheeling and not working). We remembered that God’s plan was not finished – Jesus was still to return and justice be served. This was clear because there were particular things still to happen before he comes back (the rebellion and the man of lawlessness). We remembered again that when we know the future, so we know what matters now.

(2) Know who’s in charge – despite the pain and suffering that might be faced for being a Christian – we once again saw God’s power and sovereignty in preserving and protecting his people. It he who restrains the man of lawlessness, he who preserves his people and indeed who allows people to have what they want – if people do not want God he confirms that in them meaning they cannot be saved.

A few questions to start your group off

In all areas of life, what ways do we see our future reality shaping the things we focus on now?

While it’s hard to be sure on the details of ‘the rebellion’ etc (see also Matthew 24) what can we be sure of? How is Paul fore-warning us?

How can we get better at remembering ‘when’ we are in light of Jesus’ return? What difference does it make that God is in charge?