

December 6, 2022

### [1 Thessalonians 5:1-11](#)

As of writing this, I have just started reading “The Comfort Crisis,” by Michael Easter. The book’s premise is that, as humans, we need to experience some level of regular discomfort to maintain our physical and mental health. According to Mr. Easter, only 0.004 percent of human history has been lived in the relative comfort associated with the last century or so. That blip on the human timescale has been insufficient for our physiology to catch up to our technology. Worrying about our children’s choice of college, whether we can afford a vacation home, or the latest trend on social media doesn’t compare to worrying about whether we will have enough to eat, whether our rudimentary shelter will prevent death from exposure, and whether our children will die from the next round of influenza or other disease. The author’s antidote for our collective anxiety, obesity and general-ill health is to reset our minds and bodies through intentional self-infliction of discomfort in the form of physical challenges that invite cold, hunger, and exhaustion.

The Christians of Thessalonica chose discomfort by standing firm in their faith despite severe persecution. Paul’s words of encouragement point out that those who say “Peace and safety” are too comfortable. They are complacent in their faith, and they are not prepared for wrath of God that may come upon them like a thief in the night. In contrast, those who remain true to their faith, even if it means choosing discomfort, live their lives in daylight and will be prepared for the wrath of God because they are protected by the constant light of faith in Christ.

While the advent season is generally focused on the celebration of Jesus’ first arrival, this passage is a reminder that we need to live our lives with a focus on his second arrival. Just as Mr. Easter prescribes discomfort for mental and physical health, Paul made the same prescription for spiritual health. We should live our lives intentionally and not wander through our spiritual life as if we were asleep or drunk. Being a Christian is not about living our lives in comfort and sometimes requires difficult choices, but we can live in the comfort that remaining true to our faith will save us from an eternity of discomfort.

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