

Scripture

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Summary

In this passage we see Paul teaching the Thessalonians about the return of Christ. They either have a misconception about the events of the end times or they are not allowing what they know to be true to affect the way they respond to the death of some of their loved ones. Paul has heard that they are grieving over death as those without hope and he writes to tell them that those who pass away before Christ's second coming will not be

disadvantaged in any way. What is of importance is not the timing of anyone's death but rather that through faith we have identified with Christ's death and resurrection. Paul explains that the past reality of Christ's death and resurrection and the future certainty of his return is what should fill us with great hope regardless of our circumstances. He wants the church to encourage each other with these words so that they can live in the light of this reality.

Sermon in a sentence

Christ's death, resurrection and impending return give us strength to live life now, grieving over evil yet filled with a certain hope and longing for his return.

Main Points

- I. Unnecessary despair
- II. Strengthened by hope through Christ
- III. What living in light of the truth of Christ's return looks like.

Other Scriptures:

Romans 8:9-11, 23; Phil 3:21; Col 3:1-4; 1 John 3:2; 2 Peter 3:9

Questions

1. What gives you hope when you wake up in the morning? Can this hope be disappointed?
2. What are you most prone to grieve excessively over? What affects you to the point of losing hope?
3. What three things does Paul anchor true hope in? How does the past work (death and resurrection) and future return of Christ fill us with true hope?
4. How does the truth that our physical bodies will be resurrected affect our view of life now?
5. How does this hope put strength and courage in us to live our lives in the present?
6. What aspects of your life are not being adequately lived out in the light of Christ's impending return?

Think On This

The only thing more certain than death and taxes is the reality of Christ's return.

RHC Core Values

Gospel-Centredness – To have the gospel in the centre of our ministry, and for everything we do to find its root in the gospel.

Experiential Faith – To actively seek the modern day work of the Holy Spirit, expecting him to move in our midst in signs and wonders, and to lead us to the will of God.

Theological Depth – To pursue a deep and soul satisfying knowledge and understanding of God through the Bible.

Community on Mission – To recognise that we are not here for ourselves, but are on a mission to bring the gospel to the world.

City Renewal – To see the gospel change every aspect of the city we are living in by doing social justice, integrating our faith and work, and seeing the city renewed culturally, socially and spiritually for the glory of God.