

letters to Thessalonica

#6, rapture, I Thess 4:9-18

Having completed the teaching on sanctification, Paul touches again on the importance of love and how the new believers should be occupying their time as they waited for Christ's return.

9 Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; 10 for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia, But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more,

11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you,

12 so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.

[1.] v:9, taught by God, **This teaching is also stated as “the law of Christ” or “love your neighbor”.** Find and jot down one of the references.

[2.] v:10, who are in all Macedonia, **These folks were not in the church of Thessalonica. Why did the Thessalonians need to love them?**

[3.] v:10 again, the brethren, **How can we show love toward the brethren in our area that are not of our congregation?**

[4.] v:11, lead a quiet life, **How would this kind of “low profile” combat the accusations from Acts 16:20-21?**

[5.] v:12, not be in any need, **How might obedience to Eph 4:28 assure everyone's need was taken care of?**

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We know from I Thess 3:1-3, that Timothy had gone to Thessalonica and returned with information for Paul. Probably along with his report, he brought some questions from the new believers, regarding some who have recently died from their midst. What happens to them when Christ returns?

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him (Christ) those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

[6.] v:13, you will not grieve, In this verse Paul documented the cold hard fact about dying with hope or no hope. Next to the categories below, write down who these are and why there is a difference.

a) Those who have hope.

b) Those who have no hope.

[7.] v:13 again, This truth is about 2000-yrs old. Why or why don't you feel it still applies today?

[8.] v:14, will bring with Him (Christ), This promise is also found in Jn 14:2 as well as what Christ is doing before His return. What is Christ doing?

[9.] v:15, by the word of the Lord, So far this teaching has been talking about those asleep in Jesus. This verse identifies another group that will be involved when Christ comes. Who are they?

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16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

[10.] v:16-17, will rise first, According to these two verses, which of the following is true.

- a) Those who are alive rise first.
- b) Both groups rise together.
- c) The dead in Christ rise first.

Continuing on with this lesson, we will look at one of the “mysteries”. This one, from I Cor 15:51-53, has to do with the two groups we’ve been studying, just before they are raised.

I Cor 15:51-54, Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,

[11.] I Cor 15:51, we will all be , According to the mystery (v:51) what will happen to all the believers before they are raised?

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

[12.] v:52, How long does this verse say the change will take?

[13.] v:52 again, the dead will be raised, We can estimate the dead in Christ have been dying for 2000-yrs. Suppose they were not going to be changed. Write a description of what their raising would look like, all around the world.

53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

[14.] v:53, this perishable must put on the imperishable, Recalling from our study in Acts about two fathers, we found that our perishable seed was from Adam, and our imperishable from God. As we are raised imperishable, what will we look like?

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OK, while we are still here in I Corinthians, we will look at a few more verses.

I Cor 15:47-49, The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.

Back to I Thess 4:18

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

[15.] I Cor 15:47-18, This verse is talking about Adam and Christ. Which is the earthy man and which is from heaven?

[16.] v:49, Just as we have borne the image, At the rapture, what will be the image of those who will meet the Lord?

[17.] How can this teaching be a comfort to all Christians?

[18.] In closing, why can or why can't we say that all Christians (those of the new covenant), along with their influence will have been completely removed from the earth?

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