

THE RETURN OF OUR HOPE

PART SIX: LIVING RIGHT NOW IN THE FUTURE

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 • Pastor Dean Lancaster • October 12, 2025

Ignorance produces fear, anxiety, worry, stress, etc. Our Father does not want us living in ignorance of the future. In this passage Paul writes about the Rapture, which gives us our basis for hope in the future.

Followers of Jesus Only Go to Sleep

1 Thessalonians 4:13–14 *And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.*

An ignorant Christian can become a hopeless Christian.

Wrong doctrine leads to wrong beliefs which lead to wrong living.

The Bible describes death for a follower of Jesus as “sleep.”

The word “cemetery” means “a sleeping place”; it is the place where bodies await the resurrection.

Followers of Jesus will Enjoy a Reunion

1 Thessalonians 4:15–16 *We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves.*

Followers who die will come back with Jesus, which means that loved ones who pass away remain alive in heaven with Him.

Jesus will shout and if we are asleep we will wake up.

Jesus’ return is a comfort because He will bring back His people who have “died in the Lord.”

We can be assured of our resurrection.

Followers of Jesus will be Eternally Blessed

1 Thessalonians 4:17–18 *Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. So encourage each other with these words.*

The body we place in the cemetery is like a seed awaiting the harvest.

The words “caught up” are from the Latin word “rapturo.”

Clear teaching about Jesus’ return gives comfort and encouragement rather than fear and divisiveness.

It is a joy to anticipate future fellowship.

God wants us to encourage one another with the truth of the future.

Take this with you...

We don’t know everything.

We do know enough.

We live now in light of what we know about then.

We have the knowledge enough to rise above our circumstances and experience peace and joy today.