

The Return of Christ

Finale Series | Week 1

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The Hope We Have As Christians

1. The Return: Christ is coming again.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

John 14:3

We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

1 Thessalonians 4:14

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

1 Thessalonians 4:16

Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them...

Revelation 20:6

2. The Rapture: living Christians are taken away.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...

1 Thessalonians 4:17

...That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left...So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Matthew 24:39-41, 44

Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.

Revelation 16:15

3. The Reunion: Christians will be with God forever.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:17-18

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we

will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality...then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"...But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:51-55, 57-58

Group Questions

Read and discuss 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Matthew 24:39-44, and 1 Corinthians 15:51-58.

Are there things about the second coming of Christ that you find difficult to understand? If so, what are they?

What types of thoughts and feelings do you have when you think about the rapture?

What do you think it will be like to be with God forever?

How can you draw hope from the fact that Christ could return at any time and reunite you with God forever?