

PTI Conference
Bible Exposition – 1 Thessalonians



1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

Paul continues to deal with issues in the church. Some in the church had fears and worries about their friends who had died

Paul's goal is to encourage them. This is never meant to be a contentious subject!

We are not ignorant

Death is a cause of grief and sorrow even for Christians. But it might also be a cause of fear. Paul is writing against ignorance so imparts knowledge. For the Christian, death has been transformed so that "asleep" is a fitting description (4:13 and see also John 11:11-13, Acts 7:60).

God has revealed what we couldn't otherwise know. Not ignorant because we have his word.

We do not grieve like the rest

Christians were concerned about friends who had died. Although death causes sorrow, it is not the same as others. Why? Because we have hope. Even Jesus wept at the tomb of his friend Lazarus (John 11:35) but our grief is softened by hope.

Basis of that hope is the death and resurrection of Christ (4:14). It is a solid basis for hope (John 14:19, 1 Cor 6:14, 2 Cor 4:14). Not grieving like the rest because we have hope.

We are not distracted by when he will return

When you look forward to something, you want to know WHEN it will happen. Christians have always been eager to work out when Christ will return. But Paul had already told the church enough. That day will come like a thief in the night.

"Day of the Lord" is used to describe various times of God's coming to intervene for his people. In the NT it becomes the "day of Christ" (1 Cor 1:8, Phil 1:6).

Paul tells them what Jesus told his disciples, that the time is unknown (Matt 24:36). Not distracted by WHEN because we know he WILL return.

We are not taken by surprise

Although we don't know when, that day holds no fear for Christians because we are in the light. Paul uses metaphors of darkness and light, night and day, asleep and awake to speak about the difference between those who are in Christ and those who aren't.

Eph 4:18-19, 2 Cor 4:4-6, 1 Pet 2:9 all use similar pictures.

Not surprised by his return because we are waiting patiently and expectantly for him.

We are not unprepared

There is a preparation for Christ's return that takes away the dread fear of that day. It is to be awake, alert, in the light, in the day. There is a behaviour that belongs to the day, not drunk or asleep but alert, ready, armoured like a soldier. Three characteristics of faith, love and hope are our armour.

Not unprepared for that day because ready by the death of Christ for us.

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