

Study Notes for 1 Thessalonians 4 (Part 2) :13-18

Read 4: 13-18 completely

- **Verse 13** sets the theme for the entire passage. Paraphrase this verse in your own words whether verbally or in writing.
- How does a Christian's grief at a fellow believer's death differ from the grief others might suffer?
- Why do you think "sleep" became a popular figure for death in the ancient world?
- When a Christian dies only their body "sleeps" until Christ returns to earth. Read **Luke 23:32, 2 Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 1:23-24** and summarize what the Bible teaches about where our spirit and soul go upon death.
- Re-read **verse 14**. On what does Paul base his assurance that departed believers will come back with Jesus when He comes to gather His Church?
- Why do you think Paul emphasized to the Thessalonians that his teachings on this subject were based on "the Lord's own word?"
- What does Paul mean when he says that those Christians who are alive when Christ comes for His Church will not "precede" those who have died?
- Who are the "dead in Christ" in **4:16**?
- Re-read **verse 17**. Why is this a key verse of the passage?
- The Greek words translated "caught up" literally mean "seized up suddenly." Our English word rapture comes from the Latin translation of this word. Why is the Rapture of the Church important?
- How does the Rapture differ from the Second Coming of Jesus to the earth?
- What do you learn about the nature of our resurrected bodies from **1 Corinthians 15:35-55**?
- What do you think a "spiritual body" (**1 Cor. 15:44**) is like? How would it differ from, say a disembodied spirit or a body like those we have now?
- Paul did not write about the Rapture in order to give a prophetic timeline. What was his purpose according to **verse 18**?
- What difference does this guarantee of the Lord's return for His people, living and dead, make to you in your day-to-day life?