

# AUTHENTIC:

REAL FAITH  
IN REAL LIFE

## 1 Thessalonians – Lesson 7



### Authentic Hope

Life is hard, and suffering happens. In the midst of the challenges of life, it's easy to lose sight of the glorious promise of eternal joy in the presence of God. This section of Paul's letter to the Thessalonian church offers us hope for the future—a day is coming when Christ will return and will draw all of His people to Himself. This sure and certain future gives us courage and strength to live our lives empowered by a desire to please Him.

### *Examine the text:*

***Jesus will return and the dead will rise!***

*The death of a loved one is a profound and devastating loss. There is grief; there is sorrow. There has been a hole punched through the fabric of our life. We grieve. Our emotions are overwhelming. Yet for believers, there is an undergirding river of hope that can sustain us through the time of intense grief. The Bible explains the basis of this hope in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.*

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- a. The church at Thessalonica was strong in faith; nevertheless, there was a point of confusion among them about the fate of those among them who had died. Paul addressed the Thessalonians' anxiety by reminding them of the bedrock foundation of their faith in Jesus. What is that foundation? (1 Thess. 4:14a).

*Note: the terms "sleep" and "asleep" are euphemisms referring to physical death.*

- b. Read Acts 1:11. What was proclaimed about Jesus in Acts 1:11?

- c. What is Paul's encouragement to the church? (1 Thess. 4:14)
- d. How does this knowledge of Christ's return give us a perspective of hope in the midst of grief? (4:13-14)
- e. List the sequence of events that you find in 4:16-17.
- f. What is our final destiny, as summarized in the last clause of 4:17?
- g. How are we to apply this understanding as we wait for Christ's return? (4:18)

*This dramatic event is referred to as the "rapture" of the church. The term derives from the Latin verb "rapturo," which is the Latin translation of the Greek word rendered "caught up" in our English translations of 1 Thess. 4:17.*

### *Explore the concepts:*

- 2. Read John 11:25-26. How did Jesus describe His authority over death?
- 3. Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-58.
  - a. What does this passage reveal about our eternal state of being at the resurrection of the dead? (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)
  - b. The Bible proclaims that that Jesus has conquered sin and death. How would you justify this statement? (1 Corinthians 15:54-57)



## *Exalt the Savior*

In God's original creation, God was present with Adam and Eve, and there was no death or sin or suffering or pain. This state of perfection was shattered when Adam and his wife were persuaded by Satan to doubt the goodness of God. They chose to disobey God, rejecting God's authority over them. As a result of this disobedience, all of creation suffered the curse of sin, death, and separation from God. As a result of this disobedience, mankind is subjected to the reign of sin and death.

But even as the curse of death was revealed, the promise of hope and redemption was given.

God promised in Genesis 3:15 that one day a Savior would come—a Savior who would crush the head of the Evil One, thereby destroying the reign of sin and death over the lives of God's people.

We learn later in Biblical revelation that this promised Savior will be a King. He will establish the Kingdom of God—a people who will live and reign with God forever in a state of glorious perfection.

Jesus is this promised King.

Jesus is God the Son, the divine Person who left His heavenly glory to be born as a man, experiencing the limitations of humanity and living an earthly life of perfect obedience to God. Jesus lived the life we should have lived. Then, in an ultimate act of love and mercy, Jesus paid the penalty for our sin in His death on the cross. Jesus lived the life we should have lived, and He died the death we deserved to die.

Because our sinless Savior died, we who trust in Him have been set free from the penalty of sin. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we know that we also will be raised to live with Him forever. This is our blessed hope.

*The Gospel brings the assurance of life after death*