

*Skin in the Game: Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians*

March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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**Hope that Doesn't Die (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)**

**Hope... (vv. 13, 18),**

**1. Because the dead will be *raised* through Christ (v. 14)**

**2. Because the dead will be *recognized* by Christ (vv. 15-16)**

**3. Because the dead will be *reunited* in Christ (v. 17)**

**For further thought and discussion:**

**Getting Started**

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?

2. When did you first realize that you would someday die? How did this realization impact you?

### Going Deeper

3. Paul writes verses 13-18, so that the Thessalonians might not grieve, “*as others do who have no hope*” (v. 13). How did people in the Greco-Roman world view death? What similarities do you see between people’s views then, and people’s views now? Why might the Thessalonians have been unprepared for the loss of loved ones? How might we be ill-prepared to face the reality of death (especially in modern society)?
4. Paul describes the dead as those “*who have fallen asleep*” (vv. 14, 15). What is Paul saying (and not saying) about believers who have passed away? How does Jesus transform the very meaning of death for Christians (see Mark 5:38-43; John 11:23-26)?
5. How would the Thessalonians have understood Paul’s references to the “*coming of the Lord*” (v. 16), and going out to “*meet the Lord*” in the air (v. 17)? What kind of event is Paul describing? How does this background information help us understand the significance of Christ’s return? Why is it significant that the dead in Christ rise *first* (v. 16)? Why would this point have been of special interest to the Thessalonians?

### Application

6. What does it look like to grieve as people who *do* have hope (v. 13; see John 11:35f)? What’s the difference between worldly and godly grief?
7. Paul writes these words, so that we might use them to encourage each other (v. 18; see also 5:11). How does Paul’s teaching encourage you? How might we use these words to encourage someone who has suffered bereavement, or who is facing death? How does this passage help prepare you for your own death?
8. What’s one thing you can do this week to apply this passage?