

Walk in Hope

by Stephen Boreland

The sermon emphasizes the importance of walking in hope, which is rooted in the believer's understanding of the Second Coming of Christ and its practical implications.

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:7

Topics: "Second Coming", "Christian Living"

Description

Stephen Boreland preaches on the Thessalonian epistles, emphasizing the Second Coming of Christ as the central theme, providing believers with a comprehensive understanding of this truth and its practical implications. The sermon delves into the believer's salvation, service, sanctification, solace, security, suffering, signs, and separation in light of Christ's return. Paul's encouragement in 1 Thessalonians 4 focuses on the believer's fourfold walk: in holiness, harmony, honesty, and hope, highlighting the importance of progress in the Christian life and readiness for Christ's return.

Transcript

The theme of the Thessalonian epistles is the Second Coming of Christ, this doctrine is mentioned in every chapter of the two letters, giving the believer a comprehensive understanding of this truth and its accompanying practical implications. These eight chapters present the coming of Christ and:

1. THE SALVATION OF THE BELIEVER, 1V9-10.
2. THE SERVICE OF THE BELIEVER, 2V19-20.
3. THE SANCTIFACATION OF THE BELIEVER, 3V13.
4. THE SOLACE OF THE BELIEVER, 4V16-18.
5. THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER, 5V23.
6. THE SUFFERING OF THE BELIEVER, IV7-10.
7. THE SIGNS TO THE BELIEVER, 2V1.
8. THE SEPERATION OF THE BELIEVER, 3V5.

THE SOLACE OF THE BELIEVER AND THE COMING OF CHRIST. 1 THESS 4.

One of Paul's favourite pictures of the Christian life is that of a walk. You see walking always suggests progress and we must always be making progress in the Christian life. Here in 1Thess 4 he encourages the believer to engage in a fourfold walk.

1. WALK IN HOLINESS, V1-8.

These believers were formerly pagans who engaged in gross immorality, so Paul gave four incentives to holy living.

- A. In order to please God, v1.
- B. In order to obey God, v2-3.
- C. In order to glorify God, v4-5.
- D. In order to escape judgement, v6-8.

2. WALK IN HARMONY, V9-10.

The secret of harmony is love the source of harmony is the Lord.

3. WALK IN HONESTY, V11-12.

Paul gave these believers two pieces of sound advice, mind your own business and work for your own living.

4. WALK IN HOPE, V13-18.

The Thessalonians were confused about the future so Paul wrote to enlighten them, and he brings several things to their attention here for their encouragement and ours.

A. The reason, v13.

His reason for writing he states plainly, "I would not have you to be ignorant". Ignorance leads to idolatry, cf Rom 1v18-23. And confusion about the future leads to carelessness in the present.

B. The reasoning, v14.

Paul's reasoning here for the hope of a future resurrection is based upon the historical fact of Christ's resurrection, cf 1Cor15v3-8. The believer is identified with Christ in his death burial resurrection and accession, all that He does we share in, cf Rom 6v8&11. Therefore because He rose we also shall rise.

C. The revelation, v15.

Speaking authoritatively from God Paul assured the Thessalonians that living saints would not prevent sleeping believers from being resurrected. Paul had been specifically instructed concerning these matters and the resurrection order had been revealed to Him, cf 1Cor15v51ff, & 1Cor 15v22-23.

D. The return, v16a.

When Christ returns He will come personally, cf Jn 14v2-3. (the background to this being the Jewish wedding). His return will be heralded by "the voice of the arch angel and the trump of God". Some have

suggested that the reference to the trumpet here and in the parallel passage in 1Cor15v52 identifies this event with the blowing of the last trumpet of the seven in Rev11, cf Rev11v15. But in Rev11 it is the angels trumpet and not the "trump of God" and it is sounded for judgement and not for salvation as it is here.

E. The resurrection, v16b.

The resurrection here is of "the dead in Christ", thus identifying it as the resurrection of the church. The Bible knows nothing of a general resurrection though it may at times speak of resurrection in general terms. Instead it identifies a series of resurrections, beginning with Christ's and ending with the unsaved dead, but it categorises all the resurrections under two categories, the "first", which involves the saved of all ages each in their order, and the "second", involving all the unsaved dead, cf 1Cor15v23, Rev20v4-6&11.

F. The rapture, v17a.

The rapture is the believers departure from the earth at the time of the return of Christ and the resurrection of Christians. At that time there will be a translation and a transformation, when believers will be caught up to glory and changed for glory, cf 1Cor15v51ff. The Greek word translated "caught up" is *harpaso*, its used variously in the New Testament, and its varied use gives us an idea of what's involved in the rapture.

(i). In Jn6v15, its translated "seize by force", one commentator says, "I trust it does not mean that Christians will be so attached to this world that they will have to be taken by force as lot was from Sodom".

(ii). In Acts 8v39, referring to Phillips removal from the Ethiopian eunuch its translated, "caught away speedily". The believers rapture will be "in a moment in the twinkling of an eye".

(iii). In Acts 23v10, referring to Paul's rescue from the riotous crowd it is used in the context of being rescued from danger. The rapture will be a rescue from the danger of the tribulation. The believer need not concern himself about the possibility of going through the tribulation, for he is promised that he will be kept out of it, cf Rev3v10, he has not been appointed to it cf 1Thess5v9, with Rev6v15-17. Besides the church is seen in heaven before the tribulation begins on earth, cf Rev4v4.

(iv). In 2Cor 12v1-4, Paul describes his visit to heaven, here *harpaso* is used to denote moving to another place. The rapture removes us from earth to heaven to the place prepared for us. Were going home.

E. The reunion, v17b.

Saints will be united with their Saviour, and reunited with their deceased brethren. No more sin, no more suffering, no more sorrow, no more separation, and to be forever with the Saviour.

"FACE TO FACE WITH CHRIST MY SAVIOUR

FACE TO FACE TO SEE AND KNOW

FACE TO FACE WITH MY REDEEMER

JESUS CHRIST WHO LOVES ME SO."

F. The resolution, v18.

This truth is a great comfort to the believer it consoles him in time of:

Pain, because he knows that one day all pain will be gone.

Passing, when a loved one dies to now that Christ will bring with Him all who die in Him.

Poverty, to know that our treasure is in heaven.

Persecution, to know that He's coming to rescue us from danger.

One day a health inspector walked unannounced into a factory in England and demanded to see the factory floor. After some deliberation the manager came down and reluctantly agreed to allow the inspector onto the factory floor. As the two men walked through the doors into the food processing area the manager turned to the inspector and said, "you know if we knew you were coming we would have cleaned up". We know Christ is coming, therefore we ought to be ready.

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