



Sermon-Based Discussion Guide

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Gospel: The Return

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SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

Believers Who Have Died

¹³ Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5

The Day of the Lord

¹ Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ² for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³ While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

⁴ But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. ⁵ You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. ⁶ So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

ENGAGE

Do you believe in life after death? What questions do you have that you like God to answer about life after death?

DISCUSS

1. How can we know for certain that Jesus will really return? What verses can you find to support the claim of Jesus's return?

2. Have you ever had a discussion with someone about heaven and/or Jesus coming back and they make a comment like, "I sure hope I get to go." What does that say about that person? What can we share with those people who talk like that?

3. What do you think it will be like when Jesus descends from the heavens to return to the Earth? Will it be a quiet and down played or loud and exuberant?

4. What are we as believers to be doing while we wait for Jesus to return? Are we to sit around idle and wait for the coming of Christ? Should we be worried about His coming? Discuss what we should be doing until that day comes.

YOUR NEXT STEP

If you don't have an assurance that you will be in heaven when Jesus returns then make sure you take care of that now. If you are sure of your salvation then what unfinished business do you have? We don't know the time or the day of Jesus's return so you always be ready with a clear conscience and a heart at peace.