



WINTER 2023 // WEEK 5

Life Group Questions

A People of Hope // February 11/22, 2023

Together Forever // 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

## Introduction

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In this week's passage Paul addresses a concern the Thessalonian church had about whether those Christians who died before Jesus' return would miss out on the resurrection and therefore life with Jesus. Paul assures them that all followers of Jesus, whether dead or alive, will receive a resurrected body at Jesus' Coming and live forever in His presence. Because of this Paul urges the Thessalonians not to grieve the deaths of their own as those without hope. Rather they are to be people who exhibit hope in their grief and are to encourage each other with the truth Paul has told them.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Due to preferences over a wide range of groups, we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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- 1) Are you a morning person or a night person?
  
- 2) When you die or when Jesus returns, what is the first thing you would like to say to Jesus or ask him?

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
    - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
    - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
    - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
  - 2) Choose someone to read the passage aloud for the group.
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## Personal Spiritual Exercises

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Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

**Prayer Focus:** Paul commands us to encourage each other with the truth of Jesus' return. Pray each day this week that God would give you a specific opportunity to encourage someone who has recently experienced the death of a Christian close to them. Use the truths you learned from 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 to give them hope. Or, if you have recently experienced the death of a Christian loved-one, ask God that he would provide you comfort and encouragement through the words of this text.

**Scripture Focus:** The basis for why we have hope in our own resurrection when Jesus returns is the resurrection of Jesus. Take some time to read slowly and carefully 1 Corinthians 15:12-23, 50-57 and notice the similarities between this and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and the hope we have because of Jesus' resurrection.

### Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?