

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11**

**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** 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

Good Morning, My Sisters and Brothers in Christ. Since I last stood here I have spent some quality time with my family in Florida; spent some serious time reading and thinking in St. Louis and visited with my 104 year old Aunt Parthenia, the last living member of my parent's generation. I have also met with my women's Together In Ministry group, hosted a Ministers Council Sunday Supper where 23 ministers gathered to eat and fellowship; and transition from the presidency of the Ministers Council to the Past President/Treasurer. I am not saying this to boast about what has been happening in my life but rather to draw attention to the fact that we all lead very busy lives. As I considered the busyness of everyday living I begin to wonder about how do we see God in the busyness? How do we live with conscious hope? Where does God really fit into the picture?

I imagine that the people of the church at Thessalonica were much like us, busy people, living their lives, going about their business. Yet in the midst of their busyness they stopped to consider what would happen to those who had died before the return of the Lord. In other words they were **not** too busy to have concern for others.

In an effort to answer their concerns Paul writes to them to clarify three points:

**1. Those who have died in Christ will live again in Christ:**

**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.

**2. No one knows when Jesus will return.**

**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.

Paul sounds much like a frustrated parent:

in other words, how many times do I need to tell you this?

### **3. As we wait we must wait as those who have faith in God**

**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.

That is the essence of the passage in front of us this morning. But I wonder if you will tarry with me for a while longer and allow me to work on this a bit more for our youth. In this day and age where “re” is often a prefix buzzword designed to get the attention of our youth – Gospel Remix (music)- Jesus Family Reunion The Remix (VBS)- The Message Remix (Bible with emphasis on youth.)

Would you allow me to preach – the “re” of this passage?

#### **RESURRECTION, RETURN, REUNION**

SHALL WE PRAY! Holy, Awesome and Righteous God we your people come this morning to hear a Word from you. We ask you to allow us into your presence, to receive our humble attempts at prayer and to answer according to your will. We need you Lord! We know that we cannot make it without you. We desire to always be in your will. Feed us now with Words that will strengthen us, sustain us and transform us into who you would have us to be. I ask that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to you! And the people of God did say AMEN and AMEN.

#### **RESURRECTION, RETURN, REUNION**

Kingdom Seekers I hope you can turn me on for a few minutes. Stop thinking about the homework you have yet to complete, the friends you still need to text and the calls you want to make. Bring all of your attention to this place and this time. It is still Easter time. As a matter of fact if you were to look at a religious calendar you would see that there are seven Sundays after Easter Sunday – seven Sundays before we get to Pentecost. So it is very appropriate that we focus again on RESURRECTION. Resurrection is one of the building blocks of our faith. Without a resurrected Jesus there would not be Christianity and without

Christianity there would be no purpose for a Baptist church. As Paul teaches the church at Thessalonica he reminds them that:

**14** For we believe that Jesus died and rose again,

But we really do not have just Paul's word. We have the word of the angel at the empty tomb:

Matthew 28:7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples:  
'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you  
into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

But if that is still not enough proof for you we have the word of Jesus himself as recorded by John:

**John 11:25** Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection  
and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even  
though they die;

Someone might try to tell you that the resurrection is not real, or maybe symbolic or even a metaphor. But I want you to know and be able to tell all who ask that Jesus is resurrected – He lives – He Lives – He Lives!

The next word I want you to hold on to is **RETURN**. Return has three parts to it! And you need to understand each one.

### **1. Jesus has returned to the Father**

**John 13:3** Jesus knew that the Father had put  
all things under his power, and that he had come  
from God and was **returning** to God;

### **2. Jesus will return for us**

**John 14:** "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You  
believe in God; believe also in me. **2** My Father's house  
has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you  
that I am going there to prepare a place for you?

### **3. We who have died in Christ will return to the Father**

**3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come  
back and take you to be with me that you also may be  
where I am.

## **RESURRECTION, RETURN,**

### **REUNION**

We all know about family reunions. Sometimes we look forward to them and sometimes we do all we can to avoid them. But when Jesus returns there will be a family reunion.

**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

## **RESURRECTION, RETURN, REUNION**

**RESURRECTION – IT IS A FACT**

**RETURN – IT IS A PROMISE**

**REUNION – IT IS SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO**

**But wait there is one more “re” word that deserves your attention this morning repentance.**

“Re” – once more, afresh, anew reacquaint, reactivate, restore

“Re” – force or intensity – redouble – resound

“Re” – with reference to – relating to