

# The Hope for Heaven

## *1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11*

Paul often writes in this order in his New Testament letters: 1) Here is what we as Christians believe, and 2) this is how we should behave.

### **A. Understanding God's Plan—*four great acts***

1. Creation
2. The Fall
3. Redemption
4. Sanctification

### **B. How do I please God? (1 Thessalonians 4:1-12)**

1. Pleasing God is a matter of necessity for a Christian
2. We cannot please God by walking in sin; avoid sexual immorality, live a holy life
3. We know it takes faith to please God
4. Do not reject instruction; listen to the Word and the Holy Spirit
5. Present yourself with respect to believers and outsiders; work and be patient & kind
6. *More and More* should be the desire of every Christian
7. Love one another!

### **C. Heaven Can't Wait (1 Thessalonians 4:12-18)**

1. Do not grieve like the rest of the unbelievers who have no hope
  - Pagans believe that when you die that is it, you are dead forever
  - Pantheists believe that when you die you will be joined with a larger spiritual entity
  - Christians believe that when you die you will go to heaven and be like Jesus—paradise as Jesus told the thief on the cross
2. Paul says encourage each other with this:
  - Jesus was resurrected with a new body
  - When we die we will be in the arms of Jesus
  - Jesus will come for us during the rapture
  - When Jesus returns our spirits will be united with our new bodies.

### **D. Don't Worry (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)**

- A. Do not worry about the particular time of Christ's coming; but Paul instructs us to be prepared (Parable of the 10 virgins: Matthew 25:1-12)
- B. When the time comes it will bring God's wrath on unbelievers; so what does this say about our responsibility to unbelievers?
- C. Christians are the light in the world and should display the three graces:
  - Faith—gives us reason to watch and be sober.
  - Hope—we have grounds to build unshaken hope when we consider our salvation
  - Love—the greatest of these, true and fervent love in preparation of Christ's return

The doctrines of the resurrection, the rapture and second coming of Christ, are a remedy against the fear of death, and undue sorrow for the death of our Christian family and friends. Through all of these doctrines we have full assurance.