

# 1 THESSALONIANS 3 & 4 - "Concern for Their Faith; Encouraged by Timothy; Prayer for the Church; Plea for Purity; A Brotherly and Orderly Life; The Comfort of Christ's Coming !"

## OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – **Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221**; email – [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: [www.ptwente.com](http://www.ptwente.com) Click on "Latest Studies" under "Bible Studies" on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

## INTERPRETATION

## APPLICATION

### THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

**Pastor Chuck Smith:** The rapture is close. Jesus has warned us to watch for Him. Will you be ready when the Lord comes for His church?

Scripture References:

#### **CHURCH SAVED FROM GREAT TRIBULATION**

**Romans 8:1 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10**

**2 Peter 2:4-10 Revelation 3:10, 11**

**GOD'S PROMISE John 14:1-3**

**RAPTURE 1 Thessalonians 4:13-**

**18 RAPTURE**

**TRANSFORMATION 1**

**Corinthians 15:51**

**READY FOR THE RAPTURE**

**Matthew 24:36-44 Matthew 25:1-13**

**Mark 13:32-37 Luke 17:26, 27, 34-**

**37 Luke 21:34-36 1 Thessalonians**

**5:1-11 Smith, Chuck. The Rapture**

(Kindle Locations 525-529).

**J. Vernon McGee comments re the Rapture of the church:** "The coming of Christ for His church is called the Rapture of the Church. It is not a doctrine to argue about. It is a doctrine to live. Unfortunately, there are many who believe Christ is coming after the Great Tribulation. There are those who believe He is coming before, and others who don't believe that He is coming at all, and yet they say that they trust Him as their Savior. For all the groups there is one important question: **How does your interpretation affect your life? Does it do anything for you? If your view has no effect on your life, then you should reconsider what you believe. The expectation of the return of the Lord should be a motivating factor in the life of a believer.**"

### Summary of 1 Thessalonians References, by Chapter, to The Coming of the Lord and the Day of the Lord!

1Th 1:9-10; 1Th 2:19-20; 1Th 3:12-13; The Coming of the Lord- 1Th 4:13-18; The Day of the Lord - 1Th 5:1-11

**Jesus comes to meet His Church. 1 Th. 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up (harpazo-Gr.; rapturus-Lat.) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**

Paul's plain language leaves no doubt regarding the certainty of this event. Yet the timing of this event in the chronology of God's prophetic plan is a matter of significant debate among Christians.

Many Christians believe the Bible teaches that there will be an important seven-year period of history before the Battle of Armageddon and triumphant return of Jesus. The debate about this *catching away* centers on where it fits in with this final seven-year period, popularly known as the Great Tribulation, with reference to Mat 24:21.

- The *pre-tribulation* rapture position believes believers are **caught up before this final seven-year period**.
- The *mid-tribulation* rapture position believes believers are **caught up in the midst of this final seven-year period**.
- The *pre-wrath* rapture position believes believers are **caught up at some time in the second half of this final seven-year period**.
- The *post-tribulation* rapture position believes believers are **caught up at the end of this final seven-year period**.

The adherents of these different positions each believe their position is Biblical, and these differences of understanding should not make dividing lines of Christian fellowship. Nevertheless, this author's opinion is that the *pre-tribulation* rapture position is Biblically correct. Even other references to the return of Jesus within 1-2 Thessalonians support this understanding:

• 1Th 1:10 shows believers waiting for the return of Jesus. The clear implication is that they had hope of His imminent return, not the expectation of an imminent great tribulation.

• 1Th 4:13-18 assures us that those believers who died would share equally with the living in the events of the rapture and the resurrection, answering their fear that somehow the dead in Christ were at a disadvantage. But if Paul believed Christians would go through the great tribulation, he would count the dead in Christ as *more fortunate* than those living Christians who might very well have to endure the great tribulation. It would have been logical for Paul to comfort the Thessalonians with the idea that the dead in Jesus were better off because they won't have to experience the great tribulation.

• 2Th 1:3-10 comforts Christians enduring hardship, promising them a coming *rest*, while their persecutors will face certain judgment. But if Paul knew that the church was destined to pass through the great tribulation, it would have been more appropriate for him to warn these Christians about worse trials and suffering ahead, rather than hold the promise of a coming *rest*.

**And thus we shall always be with the Lord:** The manner in which Jesus will gather us to Himself is impressive. But the main point is that whatever the state of the Christians (dead or alive) at the Lord's coming, they will ***always be with the Lord***. This is the great reward of heaven - to be with Jesus. Death can't break our unity with Jesus or with other Christians.

"We shall be so with Him as to have no sin to becloud our view of Him: the understanding will be delivered from all the injury which sin has wrought in it, and we shall know Him even as we are known." (Spurgeon)

**An Old English Clergyman said:**

"Everywhere Paul went, he created a revolution. Everyplace I go to they serve me tea!"

### **BLESSED ASSURANCE – Fanny Crosby -Tom Fetteke**

*This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long; This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior all the day long.*

*1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a **foretaste of glory divine!** Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood. (Refrain)*

*2 Perfect submission, all is at rest, I in my Savior am happy and blest, **Watching and waiting, looking above,** Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.*

*(Refrain 2X)*

*This is my story....This is my song!*

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## INTERPRETATION

## APPLICATION

### 1 THESSALONIANS 3 & 4 -

#### "Concern for Their Faith;

*1Th 3:1 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, 1Th 3:2 and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, 1Th 3:3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.*

*1Th 3:4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.*

*1Th 3:5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.*

#### Encouraged by Timothy;

*1Th 3:6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you—*

*1Th 3:7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith.*

*1Th 3:8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.*

vs. 1-2 ...could no longer endure it (stand it) – When Paul *could no longer* bear up under, hide, or suppress his impatience, his painful emotions, his wish to know of their state, he sent Timothy to them. Paul could not be with the Thessalonians himself so he did the next best thing. He sent his trusted companion and fellow worker *Timothy, Our brother and minister* (one who renders service) *of God, and our fellow laborer*, to them. *To establish and encourage you concerning your faith*: Paul wanted Timothy to *establish and encourage* them, not so much to inspect the Church there as it was to help them and assure them again of the Scriptures.

v. 3 ...should be shaken (going back and forth like a wagging dog's tail) *by these afflictions*: As and when the Thessalonians were established and encouraged, they would be stronger to being *shaken* by afflictions. Timothy's ministry would help them to endure their present hardship. Without a good understanding of the truth concerning the place of suffering in the life of the believer, we are in great danger of being *shaken* in our faith. Timothy was being sent to *encourage* and *establish their faith*. **Those not mature in their faith are subject to being shaken!** Typically those will always be putting God to the test to heal or remove their present affliction, threatening God – "if You don't take me out of this affliction right now, I'm through with You"! *These afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this*: Paul wanted the Thessalonians to know that their time of present suffering was in God's control. These were afflictions they were *appointed to*. As part of the normal Christian life, believers have an appointment with affliction.

v. 4 When Paul was with the Thessalonians (just a few months before writing this letter) he warned them they *would suffer tribulation*. Though he was only with them a few weeks, he taught them about the place of suffering in the Christian life. In Jesus' parable of the soils (*Mat 13:1-23*), He described the way that some fall away when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word. Jesus said when tribulation arises, and not if tribulation comes. The Christian's faith will be tested. Paul knew this, and as a good pastor, he warned the Thessalonians.

v. 5 Paul could barely *endure* the thought that the faith of the Thessalonians might crumble under this season of affliction, so he sent Timothy to both check on them and to help them. *...the tempter had tempted you*: Paul recognized that Satan - wanted to exploit this season of suffering. Paul was concerned that due to his short stay there, the Thessalonians were not really established in their faith, that they were still largely spiritual babes, much more vulnerable to Satan's attacks. *...labor might be in vain*: If the Thessalonians did waver in their faith, Paul would consider his work among them to have been *in vain*. Having great concern, Timothy was sent to them, because those who are in affliction need the help of other godly people.

v. 6 Timothy returned from his visit to the Thessalonians, bringing *good news*. The Thessalonians were doing well in *faith and love*, and Paul helped them to do even better with this letter he wrote. *...have good remembrance of us*: Timothy also brought the good news that the Thessalonians had good remembrances from Paul's short visit, even if it had created much tumult for them.

v. 7 *...we were comforted*: Paul was filled with delight as the Holy Spirit is visiting his hearers, making them to know the Lord, and confirming them in that heavenly knowledge.

v. 8 Paul wrote this letter from Corinth, and his coming to that city was marked by difficulty. Yet since Timothy came back with good news, Paul had a renewed strength and freshness of life (*for now we live*). It made Paul feel much better that the Thessalonians were doing well.

vs. 1-2 We see that Paul was not only interested in seeing people being born again, but to be established in their faith. Being in Thessalonica for so short a time, he was concerned those in the young church would remain spiritual babes. **Do we understand the importance of this concern of Paul for them to come to maturity in the faith?**

vs. 3-4 One of the important aspects, so concerning to Paul, was that of being established in faith to be able to encounter and spiritually survive afflictions that will come to believers. *2Ti 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*

v. 5 Paul is so concerned, he sends Timothy back to them to know their faith. To *encourage* and *establish them in their faith*, lest Satan would have victory over them in their afflictions and fall away! **We need to remember to grow in our faith, all the time, having our character being built in quiet times so that our faith can survive during the time of extreme afflictions – that we would not be shaken!**

v. 6 Timothy has come with such good news from Thessalonica! Good news of *their faith* and *love* and that they had a *good remembrance* of Paul, greatly desiring to see him again! What a great testimony. **Would we have been in that number with such a testimony?**

vs. 7-8 Notice here how encouraging the faith of the Thessalonians was to Paul, in his affliction and distress. **Are we aware of the impact we have on others – either examples of encouragement or discouragement? As we continue our walk in the Lord, it's a tremendous encouragement to others. Here it gave Paul encouragement "to live", knowing that they were standing steadfast in the Lord.**

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## INTERPRETATION

## APPLICATION

*1Th 3:9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God,*  
*1Th 3:10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?*

### Prayer for the Church:

*1Th 3:11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you.*  
*1Th 3:12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,*

*1Th 3:13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints* (holy ones).

### Plea for Purity:

*1Th 4:1 Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God;*

*v. 9* Paul's *thanks* and *joy* overflowed because he knew that they did *stand fast in the Lord*. Some find it easy to rejoice in the *material* prosperity in the life of others, but Paul honestly rejoiced in the *spiritual* prosperity of others.

*v. 10* The news from Timothy was great, but it wasn't enough. He wanted to *see* the *face* of the church family in Thessalonica. He wanted it enough to pray *night and day . . . exceedingly* that God would make a way for him to see them. He believed that his personal presence would be a help to *perfect* (to establish) *what is lacking in your faith*: In the midst of all this joy, Paul called attention to the fact that they were still *lacking*. Though he repeatedly complimented them (*1Th 1:3, 7; 1Th 2:13, 19-20; 1Th 3:6*), he was also concerned to *perfect* (complete thoroughly) *what is lacking in their faith*.

*v. 11 Now may our God and Father Himself*: Paul begins a passage of written prayer. He told the Thessalonians what he prayed for - *Direct our way to you*: Paul was encouraged at the current state of the Thessalonians and by the fruit that Timothy's ministry had there. Yet he still prayed that God would *direct* his *way to* the Thessalonians. The ministry others brought to them was helpful, yet he believed they still needed the authoritative instruction and encouragement only the apostles could give.

*v. 12 ...make you increase and about in love*: Paul, such an encourager and exorter, was always pushing for further establishing the faith and it's action re loving one another is his church plants. *To abound* (exceed) *in love to one another and to all*: Paul looked for them to show love *to one another*, the family of God, *and to all*. This love was to begin in the family of God, but it was to go beyond! *Just as we do to you*: Paul setting himself as a standard of love to be emulated, was such a wonderful and important example. Our lives should be such that we could tell young Christians, "Love other people just the way that I do."

*v. 13 So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness*: God wanted them to have their *hearts* established *blameless in holiness* (set apart from the world and unto God). Paul was reminded of Jesus' return, because nothing can encourage us to holiness like remembering that Jesus might come today. At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." Most schools of thought would agree that this verse indicates that the saints are going to come with Christ when He comes to the earth to establish His Kingdom. But this verse also seems to indicate that He doesn't reward them until that time when He comes to the earth to establish His Kingdom. Yet many of us believe that believers will come before the judgment seat of Christ *before* that; that is, we believe that when He takes the church out of the world, the world enters the Great Tribulation period, and then he comes to establish His Kingdom at the end of the Great Tribulation period. So the question naturally arises: When is He going to present us "unblameable in holiness before God"? Is it when He takes the church out of the world? Or, will it be at the time He comes to the earth to establish His Kingdom? The answer depends upon our understanding of this phrase, "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." The word "coming" is *parousia* – which, means, *presence* or *being alongside*. Therefore, "at the coming (*parousia* – presence or being alongside) of our Lord Jesus" refers to the fact that *believers are going to be present with the Lord Jesus at the very moment that we are caught up to meet the Lord in the air*. He will take us home to glory, to the place that He has prepared for us. So that this "coming" does not refer to the return of the Lord with His saints to establish His Kingdom, but to our coming to heaven into the presence of the Father. We have the same thought in *1Th 2:19* . We will come into the presence of the Lord Jesus and at that time will be presented "*unblameable in holiness before God*."

*v. 1 Finally... then, brethren....that you should abound more and more*: Paul, beginning the final section of the epistle, was thankful for the growth he heard about from Timothy, but he still looked for them to *abound more and more* in a *walk* that would *please God*. *...as you received from us*: In the few weeks he was with them, he instructed them in these basic matters of Christian morality. Paul knew how was important to instruct new believers in these things, especially considering the practices and beliefs in the culture there. Paul knew they needed to be reminded that their *walk*, their manner of living - was *to please God* and not themselves.

*v. 9* Paul is telling of the joy in his heart over their continuance in the faith! He is giving thanks to God, not taking any credit himself. A good example for us!

*v. 10* Encouraged by the good report from Timothy, Paul is praying night and day to be able to go back and see them and encourage and establish them in their faith. **What causes us to pray, night and day, exceedingly?**

*v. 11* Here Paul is praying that in God's will he would have a chance to return to them! What love! What commitment!

*v. 12* Jesus told us that our love is small and shallow if we only love those who love us also (*Mat 5:46-47*). **Note the importance of mature believers being a much needed example to the newer believers! May our love for one another abound!**

*v. 13* A blameless heart comes from living a holy life. Paul's prayer for them is that the Lord may establish their hearts blameless in holiness. Holiness is not that hard to attain. It requires two things: a knowledge of the Word of God and to obey His Word by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit! A great prayer for us!

*vs. 1-2* Paul get the word that they are doing great and he praises the Lord for them. But here he keeps exhorting them that they should abound more and more how they ought to walk and to please God!

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## INTERPRETATION

## APPLICATION

*1Th 4:2 for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.*  
*1Th 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;*

*1Th 4:4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,*

*1Th 4:5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;*

*1Th 4:6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.*

*1Th 4:7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.*

*1Th 4:8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.*

**v. 2 ...commandments:** These were not suggestions or personal ideas from Paul, but were **commandments** from *the Lord Jesus*, and must be received that way.

**v. 3** Paul gave these commands to a Roman culture, marked by sexual immorality. Chastity and sexual purity were almost unknown virtues. Nevertheless, Christians were to take their standards of sexual morality from God and not from the world! **the will of God, your sanctification:** Here, it is very clear what the **will** of God was for the Christian. **Sanctification** means to be set apart. God wants us set apart from our godless culture and their sexual immorality. If our sexual behavior is no different than unbelievers, then we are not sanctified. Unbelievers, not knowing God, do not have the spiritual resources to walk pure before the Lord; ...**abstain from sexual immorality (porneia)**, referring to any sexual relationship outside of the marriage covenant, fornication). God grants great sexual liberty in the marriage relationship (**Heb 13:4**). Satan does all he can to encourage sex outside of marriage and to discourage sex in marriage.

**v. 4 That each** (each individual church member) ...**should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor:** We are to live differently than the world when we **possess** our body **in sanctification and in honor**, which is the opposite of immorality, which degrades and debases oneself. Those who do not restrain their sexual desires act more like animals than humans, following every impulse without restraint.

**v. 5 Not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles...** This clearly means the sexual conduct of the Christian should be different all around us in the world.

**v. 6 That no one should take advantage... defraud his brother in this matter:** When we are sexually immoral, we **take advantage of and defraud** others, cheating cheat them in greater ways than we can imagine. The adulterer defrauds his mate and children. The fornicator defrauds his future mate and children, and both defraud their illicit partner. In Leviticus, chapter 18, God instructed Israel on the matter of sexual morality - one may not uncover the nakedness of another not their spouse. The nakedness of an individual belongs to their spouse and no one else, and it is a violation of God's law to give that nakedness to anyone else, or for anyone else to take it. **because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.** God is an avenger with those who defraud any brother/sister in this manner of sexual immorality. God will punish sexual immorality, and that no one gets away with this sin - even if it is undiscovered.—He moves in and judges them!

**v. 7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness:** Christians are to be sexually pure, because that is our **call from God**, not to **uncleanness**, but to **holiness**! Sexual immorality is inconsistent with who we are in Jesus Christ.

**v. 8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God:** Rejecting His call to sexual purity is not rejecting man, but God Himself. No matter how we try to rationalize this sin, we still **reject God** when we sin in this way. This strong command here did not seem to come because the Thessalonians were deep in sin, but rather to prevent sin, in light of the prevailing low society standards and of the seductive strength of sexual immorality. ...**given us His Holy Spirit:** We have been given the Holy Spirit, who empowers the willing, Christian to overcome sexual sin. By His Spirit, God has given us the resources for victory; we are responsible to use those resources.

**v. 3 Here is a great statement! What is the will of God for you? This is the will of God, your sanctification – your life being set apart, set aside for God's purposes. Specifically, that sanctification was abstinence from sexual immorality. How are we doing with regard to this?**

**vs. 4-5** Do we know how to possess our own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like unbelievers? Our bodies are to be used **only for honorable things, things of and for God**. We Christians are to have control of these sexual desires over our body!

**v. 6** No Christian is ever to induce another person in any for of sexual immorality! The Lord is the avenger of all such! This is a great warning verse! This should put the fear of God in each of us!

**v. 7** Paul developed this same line of thought in **1Co 6:9-11; 1Co 6:15-20**, concluding with the idea that **we should glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's**.

**v. 8** If we reject God's call to sexual purity we are not rejecting man but God Himself. We have been given His Holy Spirit, who empowers us Christians to overcome sexual sin.

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## INTERPRETATION

## APPLICATION

<p><b><u>A Brotherly and Orderly Life;</u></b>  <i>1Th 4:9 But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;</i>  <i>1Th 4:10 and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more;</i>  <i>1Th 4:11 that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you,</i>  <i>1Th 4:12 that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.</i>  <b><u>The Comfort of Christ's Coming !</u></b>  <i>1Th 4:13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.</i></p> <p><i>1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.</i></p>	<p><b><u>v. 9</u></b> ...concerning brotherly love you had no need that I should write to you: These principles are so basic that Paul knew they were obvious to the Thessalonians. They were <i>taught by God</i> about the importance of love, yet we must all be reminded.</p> <p><b><u>v. 10</u></b> ...you do so toward all the brethren who are in Macedonia: They were not without love. Their love <i>toward all the brethren</i> was well known, but once again, Paul is exhorting to <i>increase more and more</i> in their love.</p> <p><b><u>v. 11</u></b> ...aspire to lead a quiet life: This means that we should have an aspiration or ambition in life, <i>to lead a quiet life</i>. <i>Aspire</i> has the thought of ambition. <i>Quiet</i> has the thought of peace, calm, rest and satisfaction, which contradicts the modern attraction to entertainment and excitement, which is damaging both spiritually and culturally. Excitement and entertainment seduce people into living their lives for one thing, that of the thrill of the moment. We need to live the <i>quiet life</i> so that we can take time and give the attention to listen to God, getting to know Him better...<i>your own business</i>, which means Christians focus on their own life and matters instead of meddling in the lives of others – minding our own business is Biblical. <b><i>Work with your own hands</i></b> - the dignity and honor of work. Work is God's plan for the progress of society and the church. We fall into Satan's snare when we expect things to always come easily, or regard God's blessing as an opportunity for laziness. The Greeks thought the better a man was, the less he should work.</p> <p><b><u>v. 12</u></b> When we combine the love of our brothers with work, we <i>walk properly</i>. Unbelievers not yet Christians (<i>those who are outside</i>) will see our example and be influenced to become followers of Jesus. ...<i>may lack nothing</i>: If they followed Paul's teaching and example, they would <i>lack nothing</i> and come to the place of genuine Christian maturity.</p> <p><b><u>v. 13</u></b>...do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, Four times in his letters Paul asked Christians to <i>not</i> be <b>ignorant</b> about something: (Ignorance in these areas is still common among Christians.): • About God's plan for Israel (<b><i>Rom 11:25</i></b>); • About spiritual gifts (<b><i>1Co 12:1</i></b>). • About suffering and trials in the Christian life (<b><i>2Co 1:8</i></b>). • About the rapture and the second coming of Jesus (<b><i>1Th 4:13</i></b>). ...concerning those who have fallen asleep: In the few weeks Paul was with them, he emphasized the soon return of Jesus, and they believed it earnestly. Yet after Paul left, they wondered about those Christians who died before Jesus came back. Had those who died miss out on that great event and that they might miss the victory and blessing of Jesus' coming.  <i>Lest you sorrow as others who have no hope</i>: For the Christian death is like laying down for a nap and waking in glory. It is moving, not dying. For these reasons, Christians should not <i>sorrow as others who have no hope</i> when their loved ones in Jesus die. Our sorrow is like the sadness of seeing someone off on a long trip, knowing you will see them again, but not for a long time</p> <p><b><u>v. 14</u></b> ...Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring... In the resurrection of Jesus we have an amazing example, a promise of our own resurrection. Troubled Thessalonians were answered and comforted by the statement, <b>God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus</b>. Their death does not mean that they will miss their share in the Rapture....<b>Jesus died and rose again</b>: This was the confident belief of the Apostle Paul and the early Christians. We will certainly live, because Jesus lives, we live! So we do not sorrow as those who have no hope. When a sinner dies, we mourn for them. When a believer dies we only mourn for ourselves, because they are with the Lord.</p>	<p><b><u>vs. 9-10</u></b> God has taught you to love one another. Paul is telling them, yes, that's true, and I'm telling you to continue to grow in that love! That it would increase more and more!</p> <p><b><u>v. 11</u></b> Does this describe our lives? Living a quiet life? Minding our own business? Working with our own hands?</p> <p><b><u>v. 12</u></b> Believers can never be indifferent to the impact produced by their example. We're not to be a burden to the world. That is not a witness that would draw the unbelievers to the Lord!</p> <p><b><u>vs. 13-14</u></b> We're told here what happens to those believers who have died! (<i>fallen asleep</i>) <i>Absent from the body, present with the Lord!</i> And that those believers who have died will not miss any aspect of the Rapture! <i>We do believe that Jesus died and rose again and that God will bring with Him those who sleep with Jesus!</i> The Rapture is a glorious event for both groups – a win-win for both groups, those who have died and those who are still alive</p>
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# 1 THESSALONIANS 3 & 4 - "Concern for Their Faith; Encouraged by Timothy; Prayer for the Church; Plea for Purity; A Brotherly and Orderly Life; The Comfort of Christ's Coming !"

## OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – [Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221](#); email – [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: [www.ptwente.com](http://www.ptwente.com) Click on "Latest Studies" under "Bible Studies" on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

## INTERPRETATION

## APPLICATION

**1Th 4:15** For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

**1Th 4:16** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

**1Th 4:17** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

**1Th 4:18** Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**v. 15** ...by the word of the Lord, Speaking most confidently and positively, Paul emphasizes that this was an authoritative command, that we should prepare ourselves to receive a momentous and interesting truth. *We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep:* Paul wanted them to know that *those who are asleep* - Christians who have died before Jesus returns - *will by no means* be at a disadvantage. Those who are *alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede them*. God will allow *those who are asleep* to share in the glory of *the coming of the Lord!*

**v. 16** ...shout...voice of an archangel...trumpet of God...There are Scriptures, **Rev. 1:10-12**, John said I heard a voice as of a great trumpet, saying unto me, I'm the Alpha and the Omega, and the beginning and the end. And I turned to see the voice, which spoke to me. And he said he saw Jesus Christ. And so the voice of Jesus is as a trumpet. In **Rev. 4:1**, John said, I heard a voice as of a trumpet saying unto me. I saw a door open in heaven. There was a voice as of a trumpet, saying unto me, come up hither and I will show you things that are going to take place in the future. **Rev. 5:9** And they sang a new song, saying worthy is the lamb to take the scroll and loose the seals for He was slain. He has redeemed us by His blood, out of every nation, tribe, tongue and people. And He has made us unto our God, kings and priest. And we shall reign with Him on the earth! Who can sing that song? Only the church, that's the song of the church. Then where is the church? Right there in heaven observing this glorious scene. The church was raptured in **Rev. 4:1!** The voice of as of His trumpet, saying, come up hither. Jesus is coming with a shout, the voice like the arch-angel. The voice like of a trumpet and the shout, Jesus will be saying, come up hither! Come on up!

**v. 17** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them: Those alive and remaining until this coming of Jesus are **caught up** to meet Jesus in the air, together with the dead in Jesus who have already risen. The verb translated **caught up** (seize, snatch away) here means to seize, or to carry off by force, which cannot be resisted". This passage is the basis for the New Testament doctrine of the **rapture**. The word **rapture** comes from the Latin Vulgate, which translates the phrase **caught up** with **rapturus**, from which we get our English word **rapture**. Paul's statement, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is both dramatic and fantastic. He speaks of Christians flying upward, **caught up . . . in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**. We wouldn't believe this unless the Bible told us it were so, not any more than we would believe that God who became a baby, that He did miracles, that He died on a cross and He lives in us. Those having different positions each believe their position is Biblical, and these differences of understanding should not make dividing lines of Christian fellowship. Nevertheless, this author's opinion is that the *pre-tribulation* rapture position is Biblically correct. Even other references to the return of Jesus within 1-2 Thessalonians support this understanding: **1Th 1:10; 1Th 4:13-18; 2Th 1:3-10; ...we shall always be with the Lord:** The manner in which Jesus will gather us to Himself is impressive. But the main point is that whatever the state of the Christians (dead or alive) at the Lord's coming, they will **always be with the Lord**. This is the great reward of heaven - to be with Jesus. Death can't break our unity with Jesus or with other Christians!

**v. 18** Therefore comfort one another: They were to give comfort. In the way God works, we always receive comfort as we give it. **With these words:** The truth of the return of Jesus for His people, and the eternal union of Jesus and His people is to be a source of **comfort** for Christians, both for the loved ones of those believers who have died and for present believers who are alive and remain!

**v. 15** Paul setting an example of expectancy for the church of all ages. From the early church, the proper Christian anticipation includes the imminent return of Christ.

**vs. 16-17** When the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout; the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God. The dead in Christ will rise first. Then those who are alive and remain shall be caught up, snatched away, raptured together to meet the Lord in the air and to be with Him always!! Hallelujah! Are you watching? Are you waiting with expectancy? Are you ready?

**v. 18** We are to comfort one another with these words is two ways – first comfort one another concerning your loved ones who have died, that this is what has happened to them. Secondly comfort one another with the words that the Lord is coming back at any time! As things get worse, that may be our only comfort – that the Lord is coming back at any time!