Women’s Bible Study

I & II Thessalonians

**Sixth Study** - I Thessalonians Chapter Four verses 13-18

**“The Final Resurrection”**

Studies in I&II Thessalonians Pages 33 through 37 (using Lesson 7)

Once again, the questions from Rev. Hanko’s Study Guides are in parenthesis after the questions.

All quotes by Wm. Hendrikson are from his New Testament Commentary on I & II Thessalonians

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**\_Day One\_**

**Asleep in Jesus**

Today we begin to look at Paul’s instruction to the Thessalonians on how Christ will come again.

**I Thessalonians 4:13&14 - Study Guide page 33**

**Read:** I Thessalonians Four I Cor. 15: 1-6 and 12-20

**Do:** If you can find it, it will be very interesting to read in connection with the next two day’s studies, the pamphlet The Intermediate State by Rev. Herman Hoeksema You may read the pamphlet at the following link: [www.prca.org/resources/publications/pamphlets/item/627-the-intermediate-state](about:blank)

“The Thessalonian believers had a problem, one which arose apparently out of a rather serious misapprehension of the truth concerning the return of our crucified and risen Lord Jesus. It seems as though many of them expected the Lord to return in their own time, and that then they expected to be glorified immediately with the Lord. Meanwhile, however, before this mistakenly expected return of the Lord Jesus, some of their fellow-saints in the congregation died. And about this they were sorely troubled. They bemoaned those who died, because, they thought, those dead saints would now surely miss the glory and the bliss of meeting the Lord when He came.” Prof. H.C. Hoeksema in the S.B. article: Hopeful Sleep

1. Read the introduction to Lesson Seven on page 33 in Rev. Hanko’s Study Guide.
2. Those who are asleep. (#2 pg. 33)

To whom does Paul refer when he speaks of “asleep” and of “them… which sleep in Jesus”?

(Q.2.a. pg. 33)

1. What is the theory of soul sleep? (Q.2.b. pg. 33)
2. Prove that the theory of soul sleep is wrong by showing from the Scriptures that those who die in the Lord are now in a conscious state. (Q. 2.c. pg. 34)

See: Psalm 16:10 Luke 23:44

II Cor. 5:1 Rev. 20

**Food for thought:** A definition of ‘soul sleep’ by Rev. Herman Hoeksema from the pamphlet: The Intermediate State:

“Another theory that is rather prevalent is ‘soul-sleep.” It is the theory that between physical death and the resurrection the soul lapses into a state of sleep, of unconsciousness…There are still people in the Reformed churches who cling to the idea of soul-sleep. They believe that after death the soul falls asleep and enters into a state of unconsciousness. They claim to have proof- scriptural proof. For proof they call attention to the fact that the Bible, both in the Old and New testaments, calls death a ‘sleep.’ Moreover, they point to certain saints who died and were called back to the present life, and they argue that the souls of those people were asleep in the state of death…All of these passages, and especially the Scriptures that speak of death as a sleep, those who believe in soul-sleep quote as proof for their position.” Continued…

\_\_Day 1\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cont

“In the New Testament the passages that concern the intermediate state are many. The Lord says to the penitent thief on the cross, ‘Today thou shalt be with me in paradise’ (Luke 23:43). The Lord says to His disciples during His earthly sojourn that He is going away to the house of many mansions, where He is going to prepare a place for them and that as soon as He has prepared a place for each of them, He will come again to receive them unto Himself that they might also be where He is (John 145: 1-3). II Corinthians 5 is a very striking passage. Not only does it speak of the heavenly house which we shall enter the moment that the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, but it also speaks of being absent from the body. Not only that, but the apostle, together with all believers, makes the confession in the eighth verse that we long to be absent from the body in order that, when we are absent, we may be present with the Lord. It seems as if the apostle means to say that our present bodies interfere with, are obstacles to, our being really present with the Lord, and for that reason he longs to be absent from the body in order that he may be present with the Lord. The apostle, in Philippians 1:20-23, says that he longs to lay down his life and be with the Lord, ‘which is far better.’ And if you read the book of Revelation, you find that heaven - heaven in its present state - is densely populated. Heaven is not empty. The saints are there, and before the throne of the Lamb they shout their hallelujahs in the presence of God… Scripture tells us in no uncertain terms, in the first place, that the saints after death will continue to exist consciously. In the second place, the Bible instructs us that the state of the saints after death will be reached at once, without any intermission. And finally, the Scriptures teach that this conscious state immediately after the moment of death will be a state of glory. Of glory!”

Rev. Herman Hoeksema in the pamphlet The Intermediate State

**To take with you:** I Thessalonians 4:13

**“Nowhere does the Scripture teach that the soul is ever in an unconscious state of sleep.**

**In fact, according to Scripture, the soul never sleeps, but it is always conscious and active.**

**Especially true this is of the souls of God’s children! They go immediately into a conscious state**

**of glory with Christ!** Rev. M. Schipper in the S.B. article: Intended Comfort for the Bereaved

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**\_Day Two\_**

**The Believer’s Sleep**

Today we continue to look at what sleep means in scripture

**I Thessalonians 4:13 - Study Guide page 34**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18 Psalm 16:9-11 Psalm 73:24 Prov. 14:32 Is. 38:18&19

John 11:31-35 Phil. 2:27 Eccl. 12:7 II Cor. 5:8

**Do:** “During the short period which had elapsed since the Thessalonians first heard the Gospel some believers had passed from this earthly scene. It was with reference to them that friends and relatives were deeply disturbed. In fact, they were so alarmed that Paul adds: in order that you do not grieve as do the rest, who have no hope.” Wm. Hendrikson

1. How were the Thessalonian believers sorrowing? (see Rev. Hanko’s introduction)
2. How are we to sorrow?
3. Look up the following passages which refer to ‘sleep’: (Q. 2.d. page 34)

Job 14:12 Acts 7:60

I Corinthians 11:30 I Corinthians 15:51-52

I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Continued….

**\_\_\_Day 2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, cont.**

1. What does it mean that the departed believers ‘sleep’? (Q. 2.d.1) page 34)
2. Explain why the salvation of departed believers is not yet complete. (Q. 2.d.2) page 34)

**Food for thought:** “In the light of the fact that we believe in Jesus Who died and rose again, what becomes plain concerning the saints who have preceded us in death, concerning those who died having like precious faith? This, that they are only ‘asleep!’” No, that they are asleep is not a mere euphemism, a pleasant expression to cover up the ugly reality of death. But it is a figurative expression conveying a very real and beautiful truth concerning the saints who die…Our spirit is not in a state of unconsciousness until the day of the final resurrection. On the contrary our spiritual soul is in heaven, in paradise, with Christ, delivered from sin and sorrow and pain, - in glory, waiting for the final and full glory of the day of Christ! Besides, the text is after all concerned not about the spirit, but about the body which lies asleep in the dust of death. How shall those saints who are in the grave ever know the joy of the coming of the Lord? This was the concern of the Thessalonian saints. They are not dead but sleeping! Their death is but a being asleep with a view to the awakening of the resurrection! Asleep they are: for through the death of the body all contact with our present world and with this present earthly existence is lost - just as it is when in the literal sense we fall asleep. But just as one who in the latter sense sleeps will presently wake up, so it is with the Christian. Sleep is hopeful! Sleep looks forward!” Prof. H.C. Hoeksema in the S.B. article: Hopeful Sleep

**To take with you today: Job 19:25&26**

**“When you contemplate your fellow saints in death,**

**do not leave the impression as though their death is a terrible thing.**

**Do not think or say; awful, implacable death!**

**Rather, be glad and glory for those who fall asleep in Jesus!**

# Say, rather: hopeful sleep!” Prof. Hoeksema

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**\_Day Three\_**

**Resurrection**

Today we look at Christ’s resurrection and ours in Him.

**I Thessalonians 4:14-15 - Study Guide page 34**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18 I Cor. 15:1-4 & 51-58 Acts 17:1-3

**Do:** “Over against pagan hopelessness Paul now proceeds to lay a solid foundation for Christian hope with reference to believers who have departed from this life.” Wm. Hendrikson

1. How do we often understand the word ‘if’ in the scriptures? Then how would you read verse 14?
2. What message did Paul first bring to the Thessalonians? Acts 17:1-3
3. Show that the resurrection of the believers necessarily follows from the resurrection of Christ.

See the Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day 17 (Q. 3.pg. 34)

Find Scriptural proof.

Continued…

\_\_\_Day 3\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cont.

1. What does the last phrase of verse 15 mean - ‘that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.’?
2. What did Paul mean in verse 15 ‘For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord.’? I Cor. 15: 1-8

**Food for thought:** “If we believe…,” the apostle says. And when he says this, he is not proposing that perhaps it is doubtful whether we believe. Surely, he is not proposing the damnable heresy that our believing is the condition of God’s salvation. On the contrary, he is addressing the saints, the believers. He is making an argument on the basis of that which they believe. He intends to say: if we believe that Jesus died and rose again - and we do! - then this follows from that faith, namely, that God will through Jesus bring those who have fallen asleep with Him….

Emphasis falls here on the fact that Jesus also entered into temporal, physical death and the grave. He did not merely suffer, in order to by-pass death and suddenly to be glorified. But He died. He entered into the same death and the same grave into which those who fall asleep in Jesus now enter. O, indeed, this also implies that Jesus tasted death for the entire church. He died for our sins. And also when He entered into the grave, the realm of the dead, the place of corruption, He did so in our behalf. And it is for that reason that the sting of death is removed and the victory of the grave is gone. But here the apostle emphasized that we believe in and confess a Head Who once died also, Who once was in the very same grave in which the saints are laid when they fall asleep. But Jesus rose again!... He entered into death, but He emerged! He entered, but He made His exit – on the other side! He passed through! He, our victorious, living Lord!... We belong to that Jesus. By faith we cling to Him, even as we are one with Him. Our faith is in Him as the Jesus Who saves His people, in Him as the legal and organic Head of His church. And because He is our Head, therefore what is true of Him is true of us, His members. Hence, for the faith of the saints it is established: when our Head died and rose again, we died and rose again! Jesus died and rose again. We are one with Him by faith. We shall also live with Him! Blessed cross-and-resurrection faith!” Prof. H.C. Hoeksema in the Standard Bearer article: Hopeful Sleep

**To take with you today: I Thessalonians 4:15**

**“To deny the future resurrection of the bodies of believers is to deny Christ’s resurrection and**

**to make faith vain, leaving us in our sins.**”Rev. Ron Hanko in Doctrine According to Godliness

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**\_Day Four\_**

**Christ’s Coming**

Today we look at the order of the events of Christ’s Second Coming.

**I Thessalonians 4:16-17 - Study Guide page 34**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18

**Do:** 1. Christ’s second coming (#4 pg. 34)

Give the order of events at the coming of Christ. (from verses 16&17) (Q.4.a.pg. 34)

1. What is meant by the sign of the Son of man? (Q. 4.b. pg. 34)

see Matthew 24:30

Continued…

**\_\_Day 4\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cont.**

**Food for thought:** “The second coming was pronounced at Christ’s ascension. (Acts 1:11) That coming will be a bodily coming, not like His coming back in the Holy Spirit as we read in John 14:18 and following. It will be a visible coming. (Rev. 1:7) It is necessary that His coming be seen by all, to see Jesus is truly Lord. It will be a miracle. At that instant all natural humans will see Him. Before Jesus gets to earth there will be the resurrection of the dead. The heavens will open up, Jesus will raise up everyone, and everyone will see Him coming. He will come with all His saints. How must that be understood? What is going to happen at the moment He returns? He will appear as the heavens are rolled back. At that instant He will raise the dead from on high (so that they can see Him come.) Then at once all elect are going to be caught up into the air to be with the Lord and we will come with Him in that way…

The disciples asked about ‘one’ sign. “And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matthew 24:3) Jesus answered there will be several, but he concludes by saying at the end there will be one special sign… He implies when you see it (the sign of the Son of man) you will know and almost immediately Christ will come in the clouds of heaven… Some think just before Jesus comes some sign will appear that will tell those watching that His coming is at hand. A huge cross in the sky - etc. Bible expositors say we don’t know and shouldn’t guess, but we will know. Jesus didn’t mean one great last sign. The truth is the sign of the Son of Man is the Son of man himself appearing before all in heaven. The sign that consists of the Son of Man. That’s the way this kind of phrase is used elsewhere in scripture. In Romans 4:11 the sign of circumcision is the circumcision itself, not a sign that points to it. When we read in Matthew 24:30 - the sign of the Son of man in heaven, it is the Son of man himself - the sign consisting of the appearing of Christ in the clouds.”

Prof. David Engelsma from notes taken from his lectures on Eschatology

### To take with you today: I Thessalonians 4:16

**We would be satisfied to just watch Him come.**

**But Jesus is always the Head of the Church.**

**In His goodness and love He even permits us to share in His glory at His coming.**

## Prof. Engelsma

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**\_Day Five**

**Events at Christ’s Coming**

Today we look into some specific events which take place at Christ’s return.

**I Thessalonians 4: 16-17 - Study Guide page 34-35**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18 John 5:25-29 Matthew 24:29-31 Matt. 16: 27

**Do:**

1. How is the sign of the Son of man related to everything that follows it? (Q. 4.c. pg. 35)
2. The Lord will descend “with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God” (vs. 16). (#4.d.pg. 35)

What is meant by “with a shout”? (Q. 4.d.1) pg. 35)

1. How is the Lord’s coming with a shout related to John 5:28? (Q. 4.d.2) pg. 35)
2. Who is the accompanying archangel? (Q. 4.d.3). pg. 35)

Daniel 10:13&21 Daniel 12:1 Question #4 cont.

\_\_Day 5\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Question 4 cont.

Jude 9

Revelation 12:7

**Food for thought:** “(This is) a ‘signal shout’ a ‘war shout.’ Jesus is represented as a victorious King, giving the word of command to the hosts of heaven in His train for the last onslaught, at His final triumph over sin, death, and Satan (Rev. 19:11-21).” Jamison Fausset Brown

“Just as even here and now the voice of the son of God is life-giving, causing those who are spiritually dead to be quickened, so also, when he comes back ‘all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out’. The command, therefore is definitely *his own*, proceeding from *his lips*. It is not a command issued *to* him, but an order given *by* him, leaving heaven in his human nature, he utters his voice, and immediately the souls of the redeemed also leave, and are quickly reunited with their bodies, which, thus restored to life, arise gloriously.” Wm. Hendrikson

“The term archangel or chief angel occurs only here and in Jude 9. In the latter passage Michael is the archangel. He is represented as the leader of good angels and as defender of God’s people… It is possible that Michael is *the* archangel, that is the *only* archangel, but it is also possible that he is *one* of the archangels (one of the seven angels that stand before God’s throne.)… One fact is at least well-nigh certain: ‘a shouted command’ and ‘an archangel’s voice’ are two different things. The former proceeds from the Christ, the latter from his archangel, Nevertheless, the two sounds have this in common, that they are the signal for the dead to be raised.” Wm. Hendrikson

### To take with you today: John 5:25

**“It is for this coming, therefore, that we wait and watch and hope.**

**Our whole life as believers can be described from this point of view:**

**it all has as its goal and purpose the appearing of Jesus Christ.**

**Nothing else should matter to us so much as that.**

Rev. R. Hanko in Doctrine According to Godliness

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**\_Day Six\_**

**The Sound of the Trumpet**

Today we look into the significance of the sound of the trumpet at Christ’s return.

**I Thessalonians 4:16&17 - Study Guide page 35**

**Read:** I Thess. 4:13-18 Exodus 19:14-21 Exodus 20:18&19 Num. 10:2&10

Psalm 47:5 Isaiah 27:12&13 I Cor. 15: 50-58

**Do:**

1. What was the use of the trumpet in the old dispensation? (Q. 4.d.4) pg. 35)

Look up in a Bible dictionary

Ex. 19:16,17&19

I Cor. 15:52

1. What is the significance of the sound of the trumpet at Christ’s second coming? (Q. 4.d.5) pg. 35)

Continued…

\_Day 6 cont.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Food for thought:**

“As the trumpet was used to convene God’s people to their solemn convocations (Num. 10:2 & 10 and 31:6), so here it is used to summon God’s elect together, preparatory to their glorification with Christ.”

Jamison Fausset Brown

“At the sound of the trumpet the surviving believers are changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The trumpet blast, in this connection, is certainly very fitting. In the old dispensation, when God ‘came down’ as it were, to meet with his people, this meeting was announced by a trumpet blast and the sound of a trumpet exceeding loud… Hence, when the marriage of the Lamb with his bride reaches its culmination ( see Rev.19:7), this trumpet blast is most appropriate. Also, the trumpet was used as a signal of Jehovah’s coming to rescue his people from hostile oppression (Zeph. 1:16 & Zech. 9:14). It was the signal for their deliverance. So also, this final trumpet blast, the signal for the dead to arise, for the living to be changed, and for all the elect to be gathered from the four winds (Matt. 24:31) to meet the Lord, may well be interpreted as being also the fulfillment of the trumpet-ordinance found in Lev. 25, and, accordingly, as proclaiming liberty throughout the universe for all the children of God, their everlasting jubilee!”

Wm. Hendrikson

**To take with you today: Exodus 19:19&20**

**“By this trump of God the elect will be called from the four corners of the earth,**

**and they shall come forth to the resurrection of life to ever be with the Lord.**

**History will then be ended. The Omega shall then be reached.**

**The counsel of God fulfilled.”**

Rev. G. Lubbers in the Standard Bearer article: Exposition of I Corinthians 15

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**\_Day Seven\_**

**The Dead in Christ**

Today we see why the Thessalonians should not sorrow without hope over the death of their loved ones.

**I Thessalonians 4:16&17 - Study Guide pages 35-36**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18 I Corinthians 15: 35-58

**Do:**

1. What does it mean that “the dead in Christ shall rise first” (vs. 16)? (Q. 4.e. pg. 35)
2. What will happen to those living at the moment of Christ’s second appearance (vs. 17)?

see I Cor. 15:51-54 (Q. 4.f. pg. 36)

1. What is the meaning of “caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (vs. 17)?

See Rev. 11:12 (Q. 4.g. pg. 36)

**Food for thought:** “The meaning here is very clearly that those who departed from this life in Christ, and are here viewed as having remained in Christ, shall not be at a disadvantage. They will rise before the believers who survive on earth will ascend to meet the Lord. The survivors will have to wait a moment, as it were…There is complete impartiality: survivors have no advantage…The suddenness, the swiftness and the divine character of the power which is operative in this being snatched up are here emphasized. The survivors have been changed ‘in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.’ Wm. Hendrikson

Food for thought cont.

\_\_Day 7 cont\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Food for thought:** “For the dead shall rise first and then those who are remaining will be changed in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump! These shall be changed after the dead have been raised, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Such is the Mystery of which Paul here speaks. Paul also reveals the manner in which those, who will then be living at Christ’s coming shall be changed. It will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The term in the Greek for moment is…an indivisible moment. We can divide years into months, and months into days, and days into hours, and hours into minutes, and minutes into seconds, and even seconds into parts of seconds on the clock of time! But the time limit wherein this change shall be effected by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit will be indivisible. To accent this miraculous and super-time miracle of grace, this Mystery, Paul adds ‘in the twinkling of an eye.’

It will be so swiftly. Not a long process of time at all… And that change at that time is a ‘must.’ This mortal must put on immortality, and this corruptible must put on incorruption. Thus, it is planned by Almighty God in His love for the world so that He gave His only begotten Son, that eternal life may be fully received by all the believers, those given to Christ by the Father from before the foundation of the earth, and nothing shall stand in the way of this divine ‘must.’ Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.” Rev. G. Lubbers in the S.B. article: Exposition of I Corinthians 15

**To take with you today: I Corinthians 15: 51&52**

**“Our whole life as believers can be described from this point of view:**

**it all has as its goal and purpose the appearing of Jesus Christ.**

**Nothing else should matter to us so much as that.”** Rev. R. Hanko

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**\_\_Day Eight\_**

**Then We Shall Be Caught Up**

Today we will look at the idea of a rapture.

**I Thessalonians 4:16&17 - Study Guide page 36**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18 Matthew 24: 36-51

**Do:**

1. What is the premillennial theory of the “rapture”? (Q. 4.g.1) pg. 36)
2. What is the significance of being “caught up together… in the clouds”? (Q. 4.g.2) pg. 36
3. What do the ‘clouds’ symbolize (vs. 17; Acts 1:9-11)? (Q. 4.g.3) pg. 36)

**Food for thought:** “By ‘the rapture’ is meant the sudden, secret coming of Christ to take unto Himself in the air the living saints and the saints who are resurrected at this time. The wicked dead remain in the grave. They call this rapture the coming of Christ for His saints… After ‘the rapture’ comes a seven-year period of great tribulation which the church escapes because she is with her Lord in the air. Then Christ comes again to the earth with His saints. At this time there is a second resurrection of saints who have died during the tribulation. This ushers in the millennium when Christ rules over the Jews from earthly Jerusalem. This ‘rapture’, this sudden, unannounced disappearance of thousands of saints from the earthly scene, can happen during the next decade. It can happen tomorrow. It can happen today!”

Rev. Dale Kuiper in the Standard Bearer article: The Illusory Hope of the Rapture

Food for thought cont.

\_Day Eight cont\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

“A Rapture? Yes, but it will be both with and for ‘the saints’…They are caught up; hence, it is by the power of God through Christ that they ascend, for Jesus has come for them, to be with them forever and they with him…A Rapture? Yes, but definitely not a thousand years before the resurrection of the wicked…those (believers) who are still alive on earth will have to wait a moment until the souls of those who died have re-inhabited their bodies. In that moment of waiting the survivors will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Then together as one large multitude, those who formerly constituted the two groups will go forth to meet the Lord….A Rapture? Yes, but not secret and silent…For with a shouted command, with a voice of an archangel and with a trumpet of God the Lord himself will descend from heaven…A Rapture? Yes, but not with a view to any seven-year wedding. We read, ‘And so we shall always be with the Lord.’”

Wm. Hendrikson in The Bible on the Life Hereafter

“The word ‘rapture’ is not in Scripture, but it can be used without objection to describe the sudden, visible appearing of Christ in the heavens when his saints will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Of this the Word of God speaks in I Thessalonians 4:15-17. We reject as unbiblical, however, the teaching that this rapture is secret, that it takes place prior to the final great tribulation so that God’s people do not go through the tribulation, and that it comes one thousand years before the end of the world (a premillennial rapture). These ideas have no support in I Thessalonians 4, nor in the rest of Scripture. The rapture is not secret. The events described in Thessalonians are anything but secret. We read of a shout, of the voice of the archangel, and of the trump of God. It could safely be said that this will be one of the noisiest and least secret events in all history. I Corinthians 15:51&52 undoubtedly is describing the same thing as I Thessalonians 4:15-17: that there will be two groups of saints who will be raptured: those who have died already and those who have not. The latter are described in Corinthians as those who are ‘not asleep’ and in Thessalonians as those who are alive and remain to the coming of Christ. The Corinthian verses, too, describe an even that is public and not secret…These same passages make it crystal clear that the rapture takes place at the end of all things and after the final tribulation… Furthermore, I Thessalonians 4 speaks of the resurrection of our bodies, something that Scripture everywhere says shall take place at the last day. Surely the last day is not followed by 365,000 other days. So, too, we are specifically told in John 12:48 that the last day is also the judgment day.” Rev. Ron Hanko in Doctrine According to Godliness

### To take with you today: I Thessalonians 4:17

#### **“We look, therefore, not for a secret rapture**

**one thousand years before the end and prior to the great tribulation,**

**but for a public rapture of saints at the end of all things,**

**the result of which shall be our continued presence in glory with the Lord.”** Rev. Hanko

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**\_\_Day Nine\_**

**We Shall Ever Be With The Lord**

Today we will look at the significance of being forever with Christ.

**I Thessalonians 4:17 - Study Guide page 36**

**Read:** I Thess. 4:13-18 Daniel 7:13&14 Matt. 26:63&64 Acts 1:9-11 Rev. 1:4-7

Exodus 19:16&20 Psalm 97:2 Nahum 1:3

**Do:**

1. How is verse 17 related to I Thess. 3:13 and 4:14? (Q. 4.g.4) pg. 36)
2. What is the meaning of “so shall we ever be with the Lord” (vs. 17)? (Q. 4.g.5) pg. 36)

Questions cont.

\_\_\_Day 9\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cont.

1. Why is being with the Lord so important to us? (Q. 4.g.6) pg.36)
2. What is your favorite passage about being with the Lord everlastingly?

**Food for thought:** “The raised and the changed are caught up together in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Although those clouds may well be taken literally, nevertheless they also have a symbolical meaning. They are associated with the coming of the Lord in majesty for the punishment of the enemies of his saints, hence for the salvation of his people.” Wm. Hendrikson

To take with you today: Acts 1:11

**“As He was taken in a cloud at His ascension, so at His return with clouds,**

**(we) shall be caught up in clouds. The clouds are His and (our) triumphal chariot.**

**Caught up into the region just above the earth,**

**where the meeting shall take place between (us) ascending,**

**and (our) Lord descending towards the earth.”** Jamison, Fausset. Brown

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**\_Day 10\_**

**Ever With The Lord**

Today we will look at what God’s Word tells us it means to be forever with the Lord.

**I Thessalonians 4:17 - Study Guide page 36**

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-18 Psalm 16 Psalm 17:15 Psalm 49:15

Isaiah 60:19-21 John 14:1-3 John 17:24 Rev. 7:14-17

Rev. 21: 3-7 Rev. 22:3-5

**Do:**

1. What do you learn about being with the Lord in Psalm 16:11?
2. What additional truth do you learn about being with the Lord in Psalm 17:15?
3. When more do you learn about the Lord and yourself in that life from Isaiah 60:19-21?
4. How can we be assured that we have a place with the Lord in eternal life? John 17:1-3?

**Food for thought:** “Now we know that essentially we are not able to see God’s face, for He is spiritual and we are earthly. That will also be true when we arrive in heavenly glory. To see God would imply that we are essentially like Him. This is impossible, for He is Creator, we are creature; He is eternal, we are temporal; He is infinite, we are finite. Thus, there is between us an infinite gulf that can never be spanned… So what does the text mean? (“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” Psalm 17:15). We must be reminded that God’s face is God revealed. The revelation of God is in our Lord Jesus Christ. Here on earth we see God’s face in a mirror, the mirror of God’s Word. Food for thought cont.

\_Day 10\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cont.

“Jesus stands, as it were, behind us, and we see Him as He is reflected in the mirror of the Scriptures… However, when we awake in heavenly glory we shall see the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the face of God, the eternal image of the Godhead. Christ is the revelation of all of God’s attributes. The matchless goodness of God will be seen in the new heavens and the new earth where there shall be no night, sin, or death. That goodness will radiate from Christ as merited by Him and as shining forth from Him unto the glory of the Father. He is the Sun that shall enlighten all and who Himself receives His light from the living God. Thus, in Christ, the face of God, we see the likeness of God…Now we see it only in principle…We also have to contend with our sin and imperfection. Our eye of faith is often dim and our longing for Gods communion so sadly lacking. Sin does not cause us to long for eternal glory, and we are attracted to the things that are below. We are therefore satisfied only in principle while in the earthly house of our tabernacle. However, when we shall awake with His likeness we shall be perfectly satisfied. We shall see God face to face in Christ and feast ourselves as we look upon Him. Then we ourselves shall be perfect, beholding Him in righteousness. Then we shall be like Him in the measure of the creature. Eternally we shall see God in the highest revelation of Himself.”

Rev. Rodney Miersma in the S.B. article: Beholding God’s Face in Righteousness

### To take with you today: Psalm 17:15

**“Even as the love of God is inexhaustible,**

**so will our souls be forever satisfied.**

**Indeed, most blessed is the expectation of the church of the living God**.” Rev. Miersma

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##### \_Day Eleven\_\_

##### The Purpose of Christ’s Return

###### Today through many verses, we will look at the purpose of Christ’s Return.

##### I Thessalonians 4:17 - Study Guide page 37

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4:13-28 Matthew 25:31-46

**Do:**

1. What is the purpose of Christ’s return? (Q.5. pg. 37)

Matthew 25:31-46

II Cor. 5:10

II Thess. 1:7-9

II Tim 4:1

Rev. 19:7-9

Rev. 21:4&5

1. Of what great danger did Jesus warn his disciples concerning his second coming? (Q. 6.pg. 37)

Matthew 24:42-44 and Matthew 25:1-13

**Food for thought:**  The second coming is the literal, bodily, visible descent from heaven to earth of Jesus Christ. With that comes the end of history, the end of creation, the punishment of the ungodly and the reward and resurrection of the godly. It is the heart and soul and central truth of the last things… The center of the counsel of God. God’s goal with everything beginning with creation is the glory of Himself in Christ when He will return and show visibly to every human that God is God and Jesus is the Messiah.”

From notes taken at Prof. D. Engelsma’s lectures on Eschatology

To take with you today: Matthew 25:34

**The second coming is the goal of all things,**

**To punish the wicked**

**and for the purpose of our salvation.**

**He brings the realization of God’s covenant.** Prof. Engelsma

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**Day Twelve**

**Comfort One Another With These Words**

Today we will see what comfort we can have by believing these truths.

I Thessalonians 4:18 - Study Guide page 37

**Read:** I Thessalonians 4

**Do:** 1. What should be our attitude toward the second coming of Christ? (Q.6.a. pg, 37)

2.How do our attitudes toward the second coming of Christ control our lives in the world? (Q. 6.b. pg. 37)

1. What comfort do you derive from Christ’s return? (Q. 6.c. Page 37)

Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day 19 Q.&A. 52

1. Does the command to the Thessalonians in verse 18 hold true for us?
2. How can we comfort one another?

**Food for thought:** “The believers were sorely in need of comfort! And this is the comfort we need! Sorrow not as those who have no hope! Though sorrow we will! It is expected! Are not those who have fallen asleep very precious? Do they not have a place in our hearts? Do they not make up an important part of our lives? Were we not accustomed to walk the path of life together?... Did we not lean on each other as we walked together in life? Yea, more, were not the ties more than earthly? Were we not together in Jesus? Were there not only ties of flesh and blood, but was there not also a unity of life, of love, of faith and hope? Did we not together serve one Lord, and was not one God our Father, and did not His Spirit dwell in both of our hearts?…And now that loved one has left you to enter the house not made with hands, while you still dwell in the tabernacle of this flesh! Should we not sorrow because of this pain of separation? Should we not feel it when the arm that supported us is taken away? Should we be wholly unaffected when we cannot see or hear our dear one any more? O, indeed, we may sorrow! Never could we possibly act as the stoic or cynic, who claims to be insensitive to pain! But we are not to sorrow as those who have no hope! Nor are we to sorrow for those who are asleep through Jesus! Rather let it be the sorrow of those whose hearts are filled with hope! Hope! Blessed balm for all our sorrow…Yea, rather, we will rejoice in the triumph we have through Jesus over death and the grave! Through Jesus we are more than conquerors!

Rev. M. Schipper in the Standard Bearer article: Intended Comfort for the Bereaved

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\_\_\_\_Day 12\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cont.

To take with you today: I Thessalonians 4:17&18

**“In this knowledge of your hope rests all the comfort you need in the midst of your sorrow!**

**And this knowledge is grounded in the faith that Jesus died and rose again!”** Rev. Schipper

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**\_\_\_Day Thirteen\_**

**Review of I Thessalonians 4:13-18**

**4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.**

**4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, (**Paul did not want the saints without knowledge) **concerning them which are asleep,** (about those of their company that had already died since they were converted) **that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.** (he did not want them to sorrow that since they had died before Christ’s return they would have no hope of the resurrection.)

**4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.**

**4:14 For** (Because there is hope!) **if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,** (and we do!) **even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.** (Just as surely as Jesus died and rose again, God will bring those who died in Jesus with Jesus when He comes again.)

**4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.**

**4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord,** (by revelation) **that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord** (that all believers who are alive when Christ returns) **shall not prevent them which are asleep**. (shall not come before, or have advantage at all over those who have died in the Lord)

**4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first**.

**4:16 For the Lord himself** (Christ Himself, in person, in all the majesty of His presence) **shall descend from heaven with a shout,** (shall descend from heaven with a signal shout, a war shout of final victory over sin, death and Satan) **with the voice of the archangel,**  (along with the voice of the angel especially committed to be guardian of God’s people) **and with the trump of God:**  (along with the trumpet blast which usually accompanies God’s manifestation in glory. As the trumpet was used to convene God’s people to their solemn convocations so here it is used to summon God’s elect together in preparation for their glorification with Christ.) **and the dead in Christ shall rise first:** (and the bodies of those who died in Christ will be raised first and then…)

**4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

**4:17 Then we which are alive and remain** (and then we who are alive at His coming – the living redeemed) **shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, –** (shall be taken up together - the raised dead and the changed living forming one body) to **meet the Lord in the air:** (shall be taken up into the air – caught up into the region just above the earth where the meeting shall take place between them ascending and their Lord descending towards the earth) **and so shall we ever be with the Lord.** (and so shall we ever be with the Lord – forever – no more parting ever, never to be separated from Him again.)

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**\_\_\_Day 13\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, cont.**

**4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**

**4:18 Wherefore** (For these wonderful reasons) **comfort one another with these words.** (comfort and encourage one another with these words, in order not to mourn for the dead in Christ.)

**Food for thought:** “Asleep through Jesus! Not for all is death a sleep! The ungodly die in night that never ends! They sink away in death into everlasting destruction! Only for those who die through Jesus, is death a sleep. That means, to be in Jesus, and then die. To be hidden in Jesus, and so to enter into temporal, bodily death, that is to sleep! To belong to Him in body and soul, for time and eternity; to become one plant with Him, so that all He is, He is for us; that is, His righteousness is our righteousness, His life is our lie…so as the text has it in the original…through Jesus asleep! It is by reason of Him alone that death’s darkness is made beautiful. It is for His sake that our death is no longer eternal separation from God, but the sudden removal of the soul into His glorious presence, and the entering into the rest of sleep as far as the body is concerned.” Rev. M. Schipper in the Standard Bearer article: Intended Comfort for the Bereaved

**To take with you today: I Thessalonians 4:13&14**

**“Just as I close my eyes and separate myself from the world about me,**

**with a view to opening them again after the rest of sleep,**

**so is death of the body for the Christian!**

**Asleep through Jesus!”** Rev. Schipper