

SCC Small Group Discussion
Be Ready! – 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Derived from a sermon on July 7, 2024 by Kristi Godwin

Getting Started:

What feelings or thoughts come over you when you think about Christians you know who have died?

Searching the Scriptures:

- A. Do you know any Christians who inspired you by how they faced death in their final days? How?

- B. In what ways is a Christian's grief different than a nonbeliever's? What are the spiritual dangers of ignorance about life after death?

- C. In 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, what reasons do you see here for Christians to have hope?

One of the questions people often ask is: where do we go when we die? In verse 14 Paul says that Jesus will bring back with him the believers who have died. It also mentions raising the dead from their graves, and having believers who are alive caught up in the clouds. It helps to see what Paul says about that interim state elsewhere in the Bible.

Philippians 1:21-24 (New Living Translation)

*For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don't know which is better. I'm torn between two desires: **I long to go and be with Christ**, which would be far better for me. But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live.*

2 Corinthians 5:8 (New Living Translation)

*We would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then **we will be at home with the Lord.***

D. Other places in the Bible describe this waiting state as “falling asleep in Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:18 NIV). What do you imagine that will be like?

E. Can you think of some reasons why the state of death could be compared to sleep?

F. As 1 Thessalonians 4:18 says, how can you encourage one another with these words?

Application of Scripture:

A. Who in your life are you concerned about right now, that they would have this kind of hope?

B. What might you do to communicate this truth to them?