

## OUR HOPE – OUR COMFORT – PART 1

--1<sup>st</sup> THESSALONIANS 4:13-18--

### INTRODUCTION:

Next to sharing the way of salvation and preaching and teaching on the gift of God's grace that is ours through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, my next favorite subject to preach on is this morning's subject. It is the next big event in world history, it is the event Paul calls the blessed hope in his letter to Titus.

I am talking about the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His bride, the church, which will include a resurrection and a rapture. Paul's purpose in writing this passage was to give the Thessalonian believers and us hope and comfort and to clear up some misunderstandings about Christ's coming. In this passage Paul gives a fourfold description of the Rapture: He gives us the building blocks of the Rapture, the beneficiaries of the Rapture, the blueprints of the Rapture and the benefit of the Rapture for us today.

### I. THE BACKGROUND TO PAUL'S TEACHING ON THE RAPTURE (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:13)

- a. There is more interest and discussion concerning the \_\_\_\_\_ than on any other end-time event.
- b. But there was some \_\_\_\_\_ concerning the Lord's return to gather all believers to Himself. (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:12; 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 3:1-4)
- c. The church's fear that they were in the Day of the Lord and had missed the Rapture implies that they had been taught by Paul that the Rapture \_\_\_\_\_ the Tribulation.
- d. The second concern and certainly a greater concern for the Thessalonians were for those in the church who had \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. Paul wrote this section in this epistle to \_\_\_\_\_ the Thessalonians' fear, and grief, and confusion.
- f. Since their greater concern was for those who had fallen \_\_\_\_\_, Paul addresses this concern first. (John 11; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23-24; Revelation 6:9-11)

- g. Paul wanted them to know the truth concerning those who had fallen asleep in Jesus, so they would not grieve like those who have no \_\_\_\_\_. (Ephesians 2:12; 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:1)

### II. THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE RAPTURE (1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 4:14-15a)

- a. This doctrine of the \_\_\_\_\_ is not based on Paul's own speculations or the speculation of others.
- b. Paul lays the first building block of this sure foundation of hope when he writes, "*For if we believe that Jesus \_\_\_\_\_*..." (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:14a, NASB95) (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:21)
- c. Paul does not use the metaphor of \_\_\_\_\_ to refer to Christ's death. (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:24)
- d. Not only do we believe that Jesus died, but Paul's second building block for this sure foundation of hope is the \_\_\_\_\_. (Roman 4:25; John 14:19; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:23; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:14; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:14)
- e. Paul seeking to remove their fears, reassures the believers that God will bring with Jesus Christ those who have \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus.
- f. Paul by demonstrating in this verse God's acceptance of the atoning sacrifice, the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ supports the first building block on which the Rapture is based, the death of Christ.
- g. Paul's final building block to make this foundation of our hope secure is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.
- h. The doctrine of the \_\_\_\_\_ sets firmly on the foundation of the death, resurrection, and revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### CONCLUSION:

We have looked at my first two points of this message. We looked at the background for Paul's teaching on the Rapture. Why did Paul choose to reveal this new revelation of the Rapture to the Thessalonian believers in this first letter. It was to encourage and comfort them in some fears that they had concerning the end times, a

misunderstanding or an ignorance that Paul wanted to clear out of the way and reassure them that they had not missed the Rapture, that the Day of the Lord was yet future and those who were asleep in Jesus would not miss the Rapture either and because of this we do not grieve for those who are asleep in Jesus like those who have no hope. Secondly, Paul gave three building blocks that make up the sure foundation on which our hope is established. The three building blocks are the death of the Lord Jesus, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and the revelation of the Lord Jesus. By giving us these three building blocks, Paul is making clear that what he is writing here is not for everyone, it is only written for those who have hope. Paul says the reason we have this hope is faith, our belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our hope is based on our salvation, that we have agreed with God that we are a sinner, acknowledging our own sinfulness and our helplessness to do anything about it, but we believe that Jesus Christ died in our place as our perfect, sinless substitute, and His death paid the full price required for our sin, and we believe that He was buried and on the third day rose from the dead triumphing forever over sin and death for everyone who believes in Him. This is the reason for my hope, this is why I do not grieve for those who are asleep in Jesus like those who have no hope. What about you? Do you possess this same hope? You can have this hope today if you do not have it, and you can know that at the moment that you die, your spirit will go directly into the presence of God in heaven, and you can know that because Jesus Christ rose bodily from the grave that one day you too will have a resurrection body like His own. If you already possess this hope, rejoice in it. Worship the One who died and rose again for you! Never get over your salvation!