

A Hope Filled Future
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
September 21, 2025

Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Icebreaker

Question: When you hear the phrase "*the end of the world*", what comes to mind? (Movies, fears, hopes, confusion, etc.)

- ☐ Movies
- ☐ Fears
- ☐ Hopes
- ☐ Confusion
- ☐ Other: _____

When you think about the future, do you tend to feel hopeful, fearful, or cynical? Why?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Hope in the Resurrection (4:13-14)

Why does Paul describe Christians who have died as "asleep"?

- ☐ He is afraid to talk about death.
- ☐ He is probably feeling sleepy.
- ☐ It's a useful metaphor to describe what death is like for believers.
- ☐ He doesn't believe that death is real.
- ☐ Other: _____

What does this metaphor of "sleep" teach us? Can you think of other places in scripture where this metaphor is used?

How does Jesus' death and resurrection change the way we view our own death or the death of loved ones?

Paul says we should not “grieve as others do who have no hope.” How is Christian grieving both honest and hope-filled?

- ☐ Grief allows space for real sadness.
- ☐ We don't have to pretend everything is actually OK.
- ☐ We can look forward to better days.
- ☐ Death is real and its sad, but its not the end of the story.
- ☐ Other: _____

Where do you most need the comfort of resurrection hope in your life right now?

Hope in the Return of Christ

If you have been in church for awhile, where did you learn about the return of Christ? Did it sound like good news?

What stands out to you about the way Paul describes the return of Christ?

Why is the return of Christ good news, even though it is also a day of judgment?

What does it mean for us to “encourage one another with these words”? What might that look like in our church or small group?

- ☐ This is good news when life isn't going our way.
- ☐ We can remind one another of the big picture.
- ☐ When life looks scary or it feels like there is nothing going well, we can hold onto hope.
- ☐ At the very least, it means we can talk about the reality that Christ is coming again!
- ☐ Other: _____

How would your daily life look different if you lived more fully in light of Christ's return?

- ☐ Less moping
- ☐ More hope
- ☐ I'd feel more secure when I watch the news.
- ☐ Do more good works
- ☐ Other: _____

Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:
