

FINISH STRONG

A Strong Finish Requires a Focused Trust
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- **Why** is there a Rapture?
 - Daniel's 70th week Daniel 9:24-27
 - $7 + 62 + 1 = 70$ weeks = 490 years
 - Completion of CHURCH era Acts 2
 - God's FORGIVENESS requires our rescue
- **What** is the Rapture? 1 Thess. 4:13-18
 - Jesus steps out of HEAVEN
 - Jesus is ANNOUNCED to the world
 - Jesus awaits us in the CLOUDS
 - The resurrection of DEAD Christians
 - The transformation of ALIVE Christians
 - We are 'CAUGHT UP' to Jesus in the air
 - We are with Jesus FOREVER after
- **When** is the Rapture?
 - Before the Great WRATH 1:10, 5:9
 - Before our RETURN with Jesus 3:13

Life Group Discussion Questions – September 27, 2020

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.*

DISCOVER (read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

1. What is Paul's stated intention in v. 13? Why was he compelled to write about this issue?
2. What does Paul mean when he says "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord..."?
3. What does "fallen asleep" mean? How do we know that God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus? (see 1 Corinthians 15)

EXPLORE

1. Describe the mood of a funeral you attended. Why do you think that mood prevailed? Was the funeral any different than a "Celebration of Life" event? Are they the same thing to you? What fears do you personally have about death?
2. Re-read v. 16. Why did Paul take the time to reference this imagery? Can you think of other places in the Bible that will help you to understand this imagery? (i.e. Who is the archangel mentioned?) (see Matthew 24:31, 1 Corinthians 15:22-23)
3. What is the core of the gospel as mentioned in verse 14? Why are these two facts so important to the gospel?

EXPERIENCE

1. How does not knowing the exact time of Jesus' return impact our Christian journey? If you knew that Jesus was returning in the next seven days, how would you respond? Are there people in your life that you would finally approach with the gospel message? Who are they? Why are you still waiting to reach out to them?
2. In v. 18, we read, "Therefore comfort one another with these words." Having the hope that you have in Christ and His return, how can you use this passage to comfort those who don't have the hope you have? In what ways can you "improve" your witness for the next funeral or Celebration of Life you attend?

PRAY

Pray that you would wholeheartedly grab on to encouragement that comes from this passage; that God would give you a sense of urgency to reach the lost; that God would give us boldness and gentleness to share the gospel with the elderly and the terminally ill who are close to death; that we would be a source of comfort, not only to believers, but to our hurting and broken world.