



More Than Words

Sermon Series on 1 Thessalonians

September - November 2009

This Book Belongs to _____



NOVEMBER 1

“After Life/After Death”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:11 • John 14:1-6 • Matthew 24:36 - 44

Introduction

One of the most difficult realities of life is death. It’s a blessing to be alive, but it comes with the curse of seeing more and more death. In my years of ministry and preaching, I’ve lost count of the numerous families that have asked for my help to say goodbye to a grandparent, parent or child.

The more friends and family you say goodbye to, the easier it becomes to lose hope. After all, death can be very depressing. Imagine, though, facing death with no belief in “life after death.” Imagine saying, “Goodbye,” while thinking, “This is it; there is nothing more.”

Paul wrote that people should not lose hope because this life and this flesh isn’t all there is to life. He also wanted Christians to understand what happened to the people who died before Jesus came back. In other words, they needed a dose of hope.

Sermon Notes

Christians shouldn't _____ like the rest of the world because we don't _____ like the rest of the world.

- We believe in the _____ of the resurrection.
- We believe in the _____ of the resurrection.
- We believe in the _____ of the resurrection.

Our hope is driven by our desire for a _____ - _____ - _____ relationship with the Christ.

No one knows _____ this will take place. The key is to _____ today so you are _____ for tomorrow.

Your Own Thoughts

Small Talk

1. Funerals are a place to grieve and hurt. However, every now and then some really awkward and funny things happen at funerals. This week we are talking about our home in heaven and the hope we have. So keeping things a little on the lite side...what is the funniest moment you have ever experienced at a funeral? Share it with your group.

Text Talk

1. According to Paul, why shouldn't Christians grieve like the rest of the world when it comes to death?

2. Scholars suggest that the early Christians would have been very worried about Christians who died before the return of Jesus. The early Christians believed Jesus' return would come soon and probably before they died. So, what if someone died before His return? Did they miss out? What does Paul say happens to those who die before the second coming of Christ and how does that differ from those who will be living when Jesus returns?

3. Describe the return of Christ in your own words (based on 1 Thessalonians).

5. According to this passage, how does our belief in the return of Christ – and the uncertainty of when he will return – affect the way we live day to day?

Life Talk

1. Paul wrote to a group of people who were struggling with hope and faith. They had faith...strong faith. However, each of us has concerns that weigh us down. Apparently, some of the Thessalonians were weighed down by grief and a lack of hope for those who had died before Christ had returned. When you are losing hope, how do you handle or cope with it? What/who has helped strengthen your faith in dark moments and how did they help?

2. When you are struggling with hope, do you tend to fall or fight? In other words, when faith and hope are a struggle, some people tend to hide or shrink back while others tend to fight through the questions and weakness. What is your tendency?

3. When you are losing hope or having to fight for faith, how can your friends in Christ help you best? Help them understand what is effective for you.

Beyond Talk

What can you do this week to increase hope and faith and fight back despair and weakness?

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