

“With Him”: 1 Thess 4:13-18

Sunday, November 12, 2023
Covenant Church
Pastor Zack Phillips

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

I. Grieving

4:5: “not in lustful passion as do (καθάπερ) the Gentiles”

4:13: “so that you may not grieve like (καθώς) the rest”

New Jerusalem Bible: “Make sure that you do not grieve for them.”

Knox Bible: “You are not to lament over them.”

Phil 2:27 [Epaphroditus] was indeed so ill that he nearly died. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, so that I would not have one sorrow after another.

John 11:35 Jesus began to weep.

II. Rapture?

1. Our passage, like the rest of Scripture, envisions one Second Coming: “the” “coming of the Lord” (v. 15)
2. “Meeting” (ἀπάντησις) was a common, even technical, term for going out to greet someone important *and then accompanying them back in.*

Matt 25:6 [Parable of the ten bridesmaids] But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’

Acts 28:15 The believers from [Rome], when they heard of us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us...

3. Our passage says the Lord “will descend from earth.”

Reading recommendations

Barbara R. Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation* (New York: Basic Books, orig. 2001)

Question: What is one thing that God may have said to you through this sermon?