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Discussion Questions

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Date: October 25, 2026

Preacher: Josh Ratliff

Sermon Outline

Talking Points

Good Grief **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

Jesus' resurrection transforms the believer's grief. (4:13-14)

- Christ's resurrection means we can be filled with hope even while we mourn.
- Christ's resurrection is a guarantee that believers will also rise again.
- **Question:** Do you give yourself space to mourn? Have you allowed the hope of the resurrection into your seasons of grief?

Jesus' return brings comfort to our hearts (4:15-18)

- Jesus' return will reunite the living and the dead.
- Jesus' return will bring about our full union with him.
- **Question:** What areas of your life have left you longing more for Jesus' return? Where is this hope bringing you comfort?

Bottom Line: Christ transforms our grief through the hope of His return.

* In what ways have you been grieving this past year? Have you brought that grief to the Lord?

* In what ways does Christ's resurrection offer hope even in your grief?

* Do you struggle more to mourn or to have hope in grief? How can you assist each other in letting both of these into your life?

* How does it change your approach to this passage if you view it as a pastoral conversation about hope instead of a roadmap to the end times?

* Do you ever think about the return of Jesus? What emotions come up when you do think about it?

* What shifts in how you face death when you remember that even believers who have died are "in Christ"?

* What does the return of Jesus mean to you? Where could you strengthen your view of union with Christ?

* Pray for the grief that the people in your group or in the church are facing. Acknowledge it plainly and then remember the hope of the resurrection.

Understanding Scripture

1. Read the passage aloud.

- Question: How would the original audience have understood this passage?
- Question: What was God's desire for them?

2. Reread key verse(s) aloud.

- Question: What does this teach us about the human soul, desires, or behavior?
- Question: What does this teach us about the nature, desires, or behavior of God?

3. Ask if anything is difficult to understand in the passage, or simply point it out yourself.

- Back up from the confusing verse and reread the whole section slowly—highlight the author's flow of thought.
- Ask everyone, "What are some possible interpretations?" Encourage curiosity!
- If needed, provide clarification, but admit if you don't have a satisfactory explanation, and volunteer to research answers. Share your findings over text or at the next meeting.

4. Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences to refocus the group ("Okay, so far we've seen in Amos...")

- Question: What does this say about our relationship with God and/or each other?
- Question: How do the teachings, actions, or person of Jesus shed light on this passage?

Prayer Requests

