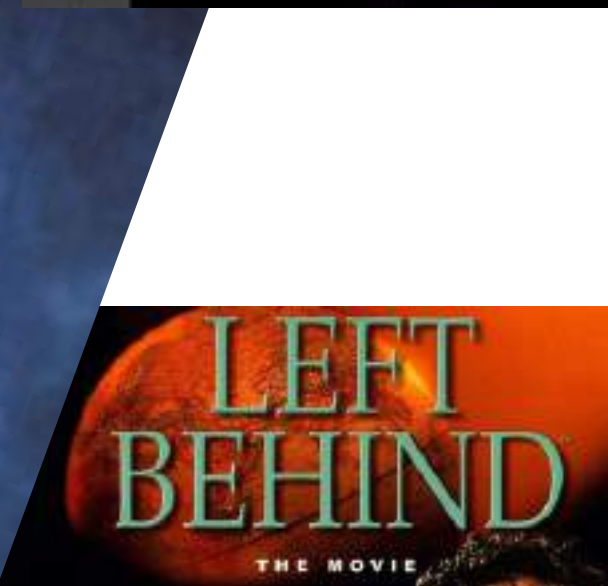
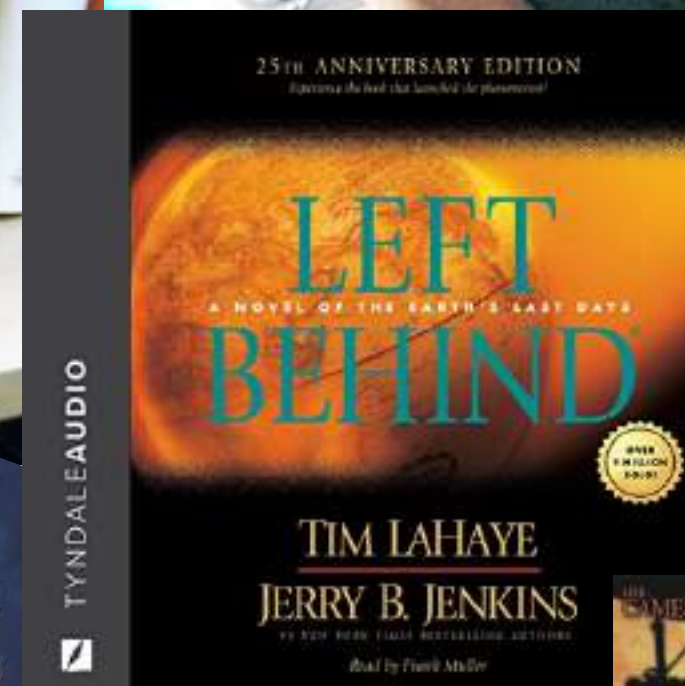
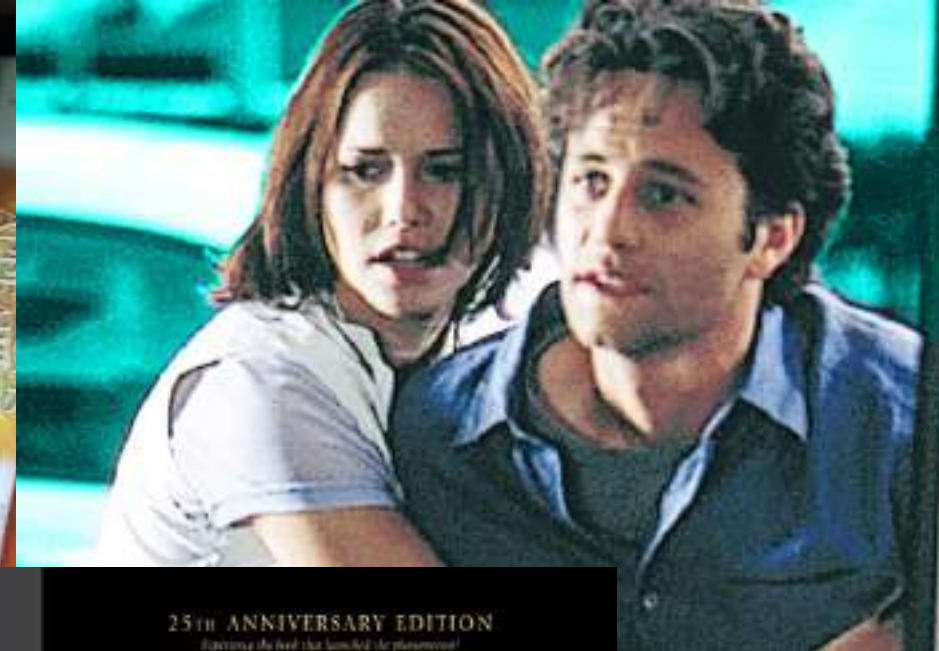
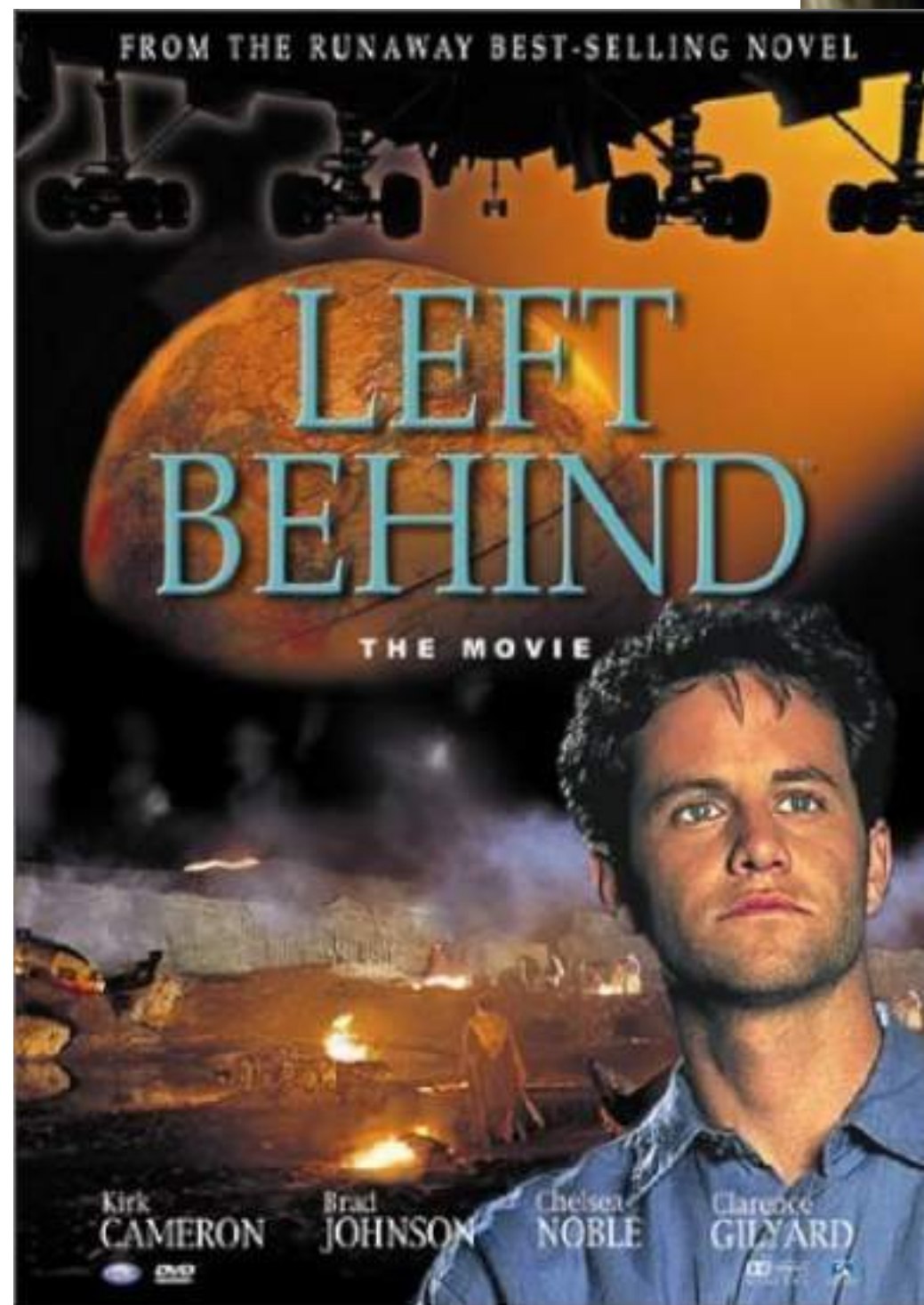


TO THE CHURCH OF THE

THESSALONIANS,

GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE





Will our loved ones who have died
miss out on the *return of Christ*??

Paul's Five Lessons on the Return of Christ

1. Christians ought not to grieve the loss of Christian loved ones *in an unchristian way.* (v.13)

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, ***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 fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.”

1 Thessalonians 4:13-15

TO THE CHURCH OF THE

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2. Believers can rejoice that Christian loved ones live with Jesus and will come back with him *when he returns.* (v.14)

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, 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 fallen asleep.*** ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.”

1 Thessalonians 4:13-15

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3. Christians alive at the return of Christ will have *no advantage* over those who have already died. (v.15)

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, 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 fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, ***will not precede those who have fallen asleep.***”

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4. Christians alive at the return of Christ will be “*caught up together*” with those accompanying Christ to “*meet the Lord in the air.*” (v.16-17)

“For ***the Lord himself will descend from heaven*** with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be ***caught up together*** with them in the clouds ***to meet the Lord in the air***, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.”

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

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*It is interesting, however, to observe that the term used in this passage for “meeting” the Lord in the air (Gk. *Apantēsis*) is the same word that was often used for a welcome and escort provided for a returning king or visiting dignitary to an ancient Greco-Roman city. The two other appearances of this word in the New Testament match this usage exactly.*

DR. CRAIG BLOMBERG

“

⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

MATTHEW 25:5-7

“

¹⁵And the brothers there (Rome), when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.

ACTS 28:15



“For ***the Lord himself will descend from heaven*** with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be ***caught up together*** with them in the clouds ***to meet the Lord in the air***, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.”

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

TO THE CHURCH OF THE

THESSALONIANS,

GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE

5.
Paul's message is meant to *encourage*
and comfort, not divide. (v.18)

“For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore ***encourage one another with these words.***”

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

TO THE CHURCH OF THE

THESSALONIANS,

GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE

LIVE THE TEXT

1. **Build your hope by looking to the return of Christ.**
 - Read the text for yourself; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18
 - Read it at dinner with family and have a conversation. (**Beginner**)
 - Read it with friends from church and have a conversation. (**Intermediate**)
 - Read it with non-believers and have a conversation. (**Advanced**)
 - **Pray**, thanking God for the promise of Jesus's return!

2. **Don't allow the rapture to become the focus of your theology.**
 - Have you studied the beginning (Genesis) as much or more than the end (Revelation)?
 - Have you studied the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels?
 - Does your discipleship and disciple-making focus on the gospel message?

LIVE THE TEXT