

I'll Fly Away

This month, we've been talking about our spiritual inheritance. In his prayer in Ephesians 1:18-19, Paul prayed that the eyes of our heart will be enlightened so that we come to understand *the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints*. This inheritance has been given to the Christian. *God has made (us) an heir* (Galatians 1:7). This fact drives our hope. We know nothing here will last. Everything is temporary and will pass away. So there has to be more. We are all hoping for something better. And it is because of our need for hope that Paul writes what he does in 1 Thessalonians 4. Here, he teaches that our hope is inseparably tied to the return of Jesus.

I. What Is the Basis of the Inheritance?

A. Jesus died.

1. 1 Thessalonians 4:14: *For if we believe that Jesus **died** and rose again, in the same way, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.*
2. Jesus' death satisfied all the demands of God's righteousness, holiness, and justice.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 5:21: *He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the **righteousness** of God.*
3. By His death, we have been made acceptable to God.
 - a) Colossians 1:12-14: *giving thanks to the Father, who has **enabled** you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light. He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

B. Jesus was raised.

1. 1 Thessalonians 4:14: *For if we believe that Jesus died and **rose** again,*
2. Romans 3:26: *so that he would be **just** and justify the one who has faith in Jesus.*
3. Romans 4:25: *He was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our **justification**.*
4. Revelation 1:18: *I was dead, but look—I am **alive** forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades.*

II. Jesus is Coming Again.

- A. 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17: *For we say this to you by a word from the Lord: We who are still alive at the Lord's coming will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will **descend** from heaven with a shout, with the archangel's voice, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are still 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.*
- B. His coming will be unlike anything you can imagine.

III. Jesus is coming to raise us up with Him.

- A. 1 Thessalonians 4:14: *in the same way, through Jesus, God will **bring with him** those who have fallen asleep. One day, Jesus will give us what He has.*
- B. John calls it pure hope ... because what awaits is the experience of His revealing...
 1. 1 John 3:1-2: *See what great love the Father has given us that we should be called God's children—and we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it didn't know him. Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he appears, we will be like him because we will see him as he is.*
 2. Philippians 3:21: *He will transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of his **glorious** body, by the power that enables him to subject everything to himself.*

IV. As We Close...

- A. 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18: *Then we who are still 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.*
- B. To be with Him in the by & by, you must be *in Him* today.