

October 17th – Life After Death

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.” (1 Thess. 4:14)

Each year since 1994, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research has asked American adults what they believe about life after death. In 2014, 73% of American adults said they believe that there is life after death. When you ask those same Americans to get more specific about heaven, hell, and the other details of the afterlife, responses vary tremendously. Simply stated, there is no consensus among Americans when they think about life to come.

Paul told his Thessalonian readers, “I do not want you to be ignorant brethren” (13). In other words, he didn’t want his brothers and sisters in Christ to be uninformed about what happens to a Christian when he/she passes away. At the moment of their death, all Christians will be in Paradise with Jesus (Luke 23:43). In another passage, the Apostle Paul said “we are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8).

In today’s passage, Paul is talking about the order of events when Jesus comes back. One day, there is going to be a shout from heaven, accompanied by the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God (16). When that occurs, those who have died in Christ will be resurrected. Their souls were already in Paradise with God, but now their souls will be reunited with their perfect bodies. Those believers who are alive when Jesus comes back will be “caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (17). Praise God, “we shall always be with the Lord” (17).