



# UNLONELY

DYING TO BE TOGETHER : RISING TO THE OCCASION

04/12 • Un-Lonely

CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN, INDEED, HALLELUJAH!

Loneliness is an empty feeling; hence the expression, “Lonely as the grave.” Strange how you can be lonely in a crowd. Equally strange: the word lonely doesn’t have an antonym. You can be social, affable, even beloved, but still lonely. How can we cure loneliness? Paradoxically, the solution is an empty grave! **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.**

**Icebreaker:** Who was the first family member you recall dying? What effect did that have on you?

1. *“we do not want you to ... grieve like others who have no hope” (v. 13).*

a) What would be the difference between grieving with hope and grieving without hope?

b) Pastor Joe said, “grief without hope is the ultimate loneliness—persistently feeling isolated and concluding, ‘This is my fate.’” Based upon when you’ve felt lonely, how would you describe ‘loneliness’?

2. *“about those who fall asleep” (v. 13).* Euphemisms about death abound (e.g., passed away; kicked-the-bucket). How is the Bible’s (and Jesus’—cf., John 11:11) use of “asleep” to refer to death more of a promise than a euphemism?

3. *“we who are still alive” (v. 15 & 17).* The apostle Paul demonstrates confidence that he and the those to whom he writes will still be alive at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus. So ...

a) Do most believers today live expecting to die eventually, or expecting Jesus Christ to come back in their lifetime?

b) Why do people tend to doubt the imminent return of Jesus (e.g., 2 Peter 3:4)?

c) What needs to happen for us to so internalize this way of thinking (i.e., that Christ will return any moment—cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:2) that we would be as expectant as the apostle Paul was?

d) What would Christians’ lives look like if they lived as if they never expected to die—that is, like they expect to be alive at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus? (cf., 1 Corinthians 15:58 for one application).

4. *“we will always be with the Lord” (v. 17).* This is the Bible definition of eternal life—to know God and be with Him forever (cf., John 17:3). Therefore, discuss the following:

a) What are popular ideas of heaven you’ve heard/had?

- b) What specifically do you look forward to when Jesus returns?
  - c) How does 1 Thessalonians 5:10 make a case for heaven on earth?
5. *“since we believe that Jesus died and rose again” (v. 14; cf. John 12:24).* The basis for our hope is Jesus’ own death and resurrection. How do these popular funeral verses flesh-out what to expect in the resurrection?
- 1 Corinthians 15:42-44
  - 1 Corinthians 15:51-53
6. *“encourage one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:18; 5:11)*—this verse serves as another answer to question 4.d above. Therefore, brainstorm a list of ways you can share what you’ve learned in this study with other people to encourage them in this world of loneliness and grief:
- a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) \_\_\_\_\_
  - e) \_\_\_\_\_
  - f) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Pray**

Pray for our world, our nation, our leaders, our church, family, and friends. If you are using this discussion sheet with others, take time to share your own prayer requests and then talk to Jesus on behalf of one another—that’s another application to question 4.d.

**Praise List**

This week’s praise list is provided by Terri & Dan Baumbach.



Go to YouTube and search for these titles and you will have music and lyrics to use for your praise:

- Covenant Worship – Risen (Official Lyric Video)
- Planetshakers | Only Way | Official Music Video
- Resurrecting | Official Lyric Video | Elevation Worship
- Elevation Worship – Only King Forever -Lyrics
- Forever | Kari Jobe (Lyrics)