

Hope has a name, His name is Jesus, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Christopher Howard

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of mankind do, who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.

15 For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive, who remain, 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, comfort one another with these words.

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1 Thessalonians 3:10

"as we keep praying most earnestly night and day that we may see your faces, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?"

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of mankind do, who have no hope.

Acts 17:1-3 (NASB)

Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 And according to Paul's custom, he visited them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."

1. We have hope

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.

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (NASB)

"For they themselves report about us as to the kind of reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is, Jesus who rescues us from the wrath to come."

- If we are to be waiting for the Lord's return, then what happens to those who have already died?

Paul uses the term "asleep" to refer to physical death

- We know this because Paul compares in verse 14 Jesus' death with those who have fallen asleep. Also, in verse 16 he refers to those who are asleep as the dead in Christ.

Acts 7:59-60 (NASB)

59 They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep.

John 11:11 (NASB)

"Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep"

Philippians 1:21-24 (NASB)

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sakes."

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

"Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight—but we are of good courage and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."

Romans 6:23 (NASB)

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. "

- Our Hope is wrapped up in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NASB)

"Now I make known to you, brothers and sisters, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, by which you also are saved, if you hold firmly to the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NASB)

For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NASB)

and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NASB)

then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also."

- We Have Hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.

2. Jesus is the reason for our hope.

- Jesus' death and resurrection changes everything.

C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*:

The New Testament writers speak as if Christ's achievement in rising from the dead was the first event of its kind in the whole history of the universe. He is the 'first fruits', the 'pioneer of life'.

He has forced open a door that has been locked since the death of the first man. He has met, fought, and beaten the King of Death. Everything is different because He has done so. This is the beginning of the New Creation: a new chapter in cosmic history has opened. – C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*, 237.

John 10:17-18 (NASB)

"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it back. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it back. This commandment I received from My Father." -Jesus has the authority to lay down His Own life and take it up again."

- Jesus has the authority to lay down His Own life and take it up again.

John 6:40 (NASB)

"For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

- Jesus is the reason for our hope.
- If we are to be waiting for the Lord's return, then what happens to those who have already died?

15 For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

3. Our hope will one day be realized through Christ's return.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Acts 1:9-11 (NASB)

"And after He had said these things, He was lifted while they were watching, and a cloud took Him up, out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, then behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them, and they said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

Matthew 24:23-27 (NASB)

"Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'He is over here,' do not believe him. For false christs and false prophets will arise and will provide great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

Matthew 24:23-27 (NASB)

Behold, I have told you in advance. So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out; or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be."

17 Then we who are alive, who remain, 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.

- Once this meeting takes place, we will no longer be separated from the Lord. From this moment on, we will always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore, comfort one another with these words.

1. Our assurance in the resurrection of the saints is essential to our hope and confidence in Christ Jesus.
2. God will reunite His family through Jesus Christ at His coming.
3. We must be confident in our hope of the return of Christ, His promise of our resurrection, and our eternal union with Him.