

## RESURRECTION LIVING.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

April 16, 2006 Sunday A.M.

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. Mixup from flowers sent by florist.
  - 1. To a business that had moved – “My deepest sympathy during this time of sorrow.”
  - 2. To a family that lost a loved one – “Best Wishes In Your New Location.”
- B. What happens when we die? How will we change locations?
  - 1. A 2005 poll, conducted by Newsweek asked: "What happens when we die?"
    - The soul goes to heaven or hell - 67 percent.
    - There is no heaven or hell, but the soul lives on in some kind of spiritual realm - 13 percent.
    - It's all over; there is no soul - 6 percent.
    - The soul is reincarnated into another creature - 5 percent.
    - Don't know - 9 percent.
  - 2. The people of Thessalonica were confused about what happens when a person dies. Therefore, Paul thought it necessary to instruct them about what they can expect.

### I. WE HAVE A HOPE THAT IS SURE-V.13.

- A. Philip Yancey describes a unique funeral custom conducted by African Muslims. Close family and friends circle the casket and quietly gaze at the corpse. No singing. No flowers. No tears.

A peppermint candy is passed to everyone. At a signal, each one puts the candy in his or her mouth. When the candy is gone, each participant is reminded that life for this person is over. They believe life simply dissolves.

Philip Yancey, *Where Is God When It Hurts?* (Zondervan, 1997).
- B. In verses 14-15 Paul lists three reasons for the hope he expressed in verse 13.
  - 1. First, Jesus died and rose again. This is the core of the gospel message-v.14a. (I Corinthians 15:1-4).
  - 2. Second, those who died in Christ (believers) will return with Him-v.14b.
  - 3. Third, both those who have died in Christ and those who remain alive will be united with Him when He returns-v.15, 16b-17a.

Neither the Christian dead nor the Christian living will be disadvantaged in any way.
- C. A kindergarten Sunday School class showed a cartoon video of the crucifixion and resurrection. When Jesus was buried, one little boy who had already seen the video turned to a buddy and said, 'He's dead now, but he'll be back.' "

Robert Russell, "Resurrection Promises," *Preaching Today*, Tape No. 151.

### II. WE HAVE A LORD WHO IS COMING AGAIN.

Notice Four Things About Jesus' Second Coming.

- A. The Return: Jesus is coming personally-v. 16a (John 14:1-3a).
- B. The Resurrection: The Christian dead will rise first-v. 16b.
  - 1. Those who died in Christ can never be separated from Him.
  - 2. They died in (in his presence) Him- v. 14 & John 14:3b.

They will rise with Him-v. 16b.

They will come with Him, too-v. 14b.
- C. The Rapture-v. 17a.
- D. The Reunion- v.17b.

Natalie Portman, the actress who plays Padme Amidala in the Star Wars movies, *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones*, is uncomfortable with the notion of life after death. She says, "I don't believe in that [the concept of the afterlife]. I believe this is it, and I believe it's the best way to live."

Rolling Stone (6-20-02), p. 58; submitted by Derek Chinn, Portland, Oregon.

### **III. WE HAVE A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT (V. 18).**

Katie Couric, NBC's Today show host, lost her husband, 42, to colon cancer in 1998 following a six-month battle. She also experienced the death of her sister almost four years later. Katie shared with an interviewer about an inner yearning:

"I'm very interested in exploring a more spiritual side of me, and I'm in the process of doing that, both formally and informally. I really envy those who have a steadfast, unwavering faith, because I think it's probably so comforting and helpful during difficult times."

Cable Neuhaus, "Whatever Katie Wants," AARP (November/December 2005).

### **CONCLUSION.**

Best Wishes In Your New Location!