

Series: *Why We Do What We Do*

Waiting for Christ's Return
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

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1. The word "eschatology" refers to the study about the second coming of Christ.
 2. Today, we have many different beliefs about the second coming of Jesus.
 - a. There are three basic interpretations.
 - b. Postmillennialists envisioned a 1,000-year golden age of peace and prosperity.
 - c. Premillennialism sees the world getting worse until Jesus returns.
 - d. Amillennialists don't look for a literal 1,000-year utopian age here on earth.
- I. The Message About Christ's Return. 1 Thessalonians 4:13, "Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope."
- A. Paul is answering one of the most important questions for many people.
 1. Ephesians 2:12, "remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world."
 - B. Paul's concern is that these new Christians refrain from grieving like those with no hope.
- II. The Method of Christ's Return. 1 Thessalonians 4:16a, "the Lord himself will come down from heaven."
- A. The word for "coming" was one used for a visit of a person of high rank.
 - B. There is a Sudden Descent. Acts 1:11
 - C. There will be a loud command.
 - D. The voice of the archangel.
 - E. Then there is the trumpet call of God.
 - F. There will be a great resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:35
 - G. Those left will be caught up together with them in the clouds.
 - H. Then there is a grand reunion. 1 Thessalonians 4:17
 - I. God's timetable means that the Return of Jesus will come as a surprise. Matthew 24:43
- III. The Meaning of His Return.
- A. First, knowing that Jesus will come again is a warning to be ready.
Mark 13:33-34
 - B. Second, the pending return of our Lord is motivation for our devotion.
1 John 3:2-3
 - C. Third, the fact that Jesus is coming again is the ground for confidence in the face of whatever is giving you the greatest challenge today. John 14:1-3