

WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED AND ROSE AGAIN AND IS COMING BACK

TEXT: I THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

INTRODUCTION:

1. In John, chapter 14, verses 1-3, the Lord Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."
2. Our Lord told the disciples that He was soon going to leave them, and that He would go back to heaven. And that He would prepare a place for them in heaven, and that He would come back to receive them unto Himself.
3. Our Lord is coming back for us and taking us up to heaven before the tribulation begins here on earth.
4. This truth was not completely understood by the early Christians, and it is not completely understood by many Christians today.
5. Most Christians understand "that Jesus died and rose again (I Thess. 4:14), but many do not understand that He is coming back, and that it could be very soon.
6. Though the apostle Paul had been in Thessalonica a relatively short time, it is quite clear that he taught the Thessalonian Christians this important truth (cf. 5:1, 2).
7. The Bible teaches that Jesus died, and rose again, and that He is coming again (I Thessalonians 4:14-18).

I. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED (4:14)

1. This past week, the whole world was reminded that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. However, many people do not like to be reminded.
2. So, they push bunny rabbits and hard-boiled eggs. Anything to keep people from thinking about the old rugged cross.
3. Romans 5:6 says, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."
4. Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

5. First Corinthians 15:3 and 4 says, “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”
6. Luke 23:33 says, “And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him...”

Every year in the Philippines, mixed-up Roman Catholics whip their backs to a bloody pulp, and then nail themselves to crosses. A news article said a man, named Ruben Enaje, 56-year-old, underwent his 31st crucifixion!

“Half-naked men showed their devotion in a cemetery by flogging their backs that had earlier been sliced by a razor as part of their vow to God.”

“I’ve been doing this for 15 years. I do this so my sins will be forgiven,” said Sammy Matre. But this is not how you get your sins forgiven!

Organizer Raymond Nepomuceno said they were now encouraging children to take part in the bloody floggings.

A news article said, these “extreme acts of faith have become tourist attractions.” It is extreme but it is not an “act of faith.” It is unbiblical.

7. Historians say that crucifixion was a practice that originated with the Persians and was later popularized by the Romans.
8. The Romans crucified criminals because it caused maximal pain and suffering over a period of time.
9. The Jews did not crucify criminals, yet one thousand years before Christ, David wrote, “they pierced my hands and my feet” (Psalm 22:16).
10. Nearly 500 years before Christ, the prophet Zechariah prophesied, “and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced” (Zech. 12:10).
11. The cross of Christ is the center of human history. Today’s date is April 16, 2017 AD (*Anno Domini*, Latin for “in the year of our Lord”).
12. Our Lord was hung between two thieves. On one side of the cross was the repentant thief, and on the other side was the impenitent thief.
13. The cross of Christ separates mankind. On one side are those that believe, and on the other side are those that do not believe.
14. “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18).

15. The repentant thief was not condemned. Though he was condemned to die by the Roman government, Jesus said to him, “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43).

In a message that D.L. Moody preached about the cross, he said,

Sinner, look at him being led up that hill, his back all bleeding and bare! His disciples have left him. He is forsaken. Now he threads that path alone. The soldiers guard him. They take up that bleeding body of Jesus, and lay him out upon the cross. They fasten each hand to the arms of the cross. A Roman soldier comes up, and he puts a spike into the hand of the innocent Jesus; that hand that had ever blessed the people; that hand that had ever been ready to touch the sick and make them whole. The soldier took nails and drove them into the palms of his hands; and then he put nails in his feet. See him, as with blow after blow he drives them into his feet, and then they take the cross and put it up, with the Son of God hanging between heaven and earth. Oh, gaze upon that scene! Look into that lovely face; look at that blood trickling down from his side. I beg you tonight to gaze upon him, and look into his face. Hark! He speaks. While the crowd are mocking, bespeaks. What does he say? Like the prophets of the old days, he could have called down fire from Heaven and consumed them. Does he call down legions of angels to beat back that crowd? No. He says, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!”

16. Isaac Watts wrote,

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.
See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?
Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;*

*Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

II. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS ROSE AGAIN (4:14)

1. The Bible teaches Jesus had a bodily resurrection. Liberals and cults talk about a “spiritual resurrection,” but that is foolish talk because a spirit cannot be resurrected.
2. After He arose from the dead, our Lord said to Thomas, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27).
3. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached, “This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses” (Acts 2:32).
4. R.A. Torrey said, “The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the corner-stone of Christian doctrine. It is mentioned directly one hundred and four or more times in the New Testament. It was the most prominent and cardinal point in the apostolic testimony.”
5. First Corinthians 15:3, 4 says Christ, “died for our sins according to the scriptures...was buried...and rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”
6. Paul goes on to say, “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain” (I Cor. 15:14).
7. And Paul says in Romans 10:9, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”
8. The death and resurrection of Christ is the focus of history. Christians are identified with Christ’s death. When Christ died, we died with Him – we are dead to sin.
9. Since Christ died as our substitute, we were on that cross. Galatians 2:20 says, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”
10. And because Christ is risen, we have new life in union with Him.
11. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:1-3).
12. Paul goes on to say, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:4). Christ shall “appear.”

13. And this brings us to my third point – we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and is coming again! (I Thessalonians 4:14-18).

III. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS COMING AGAIN

1. *Coming again, coming again;
Maybe morning, maybe noon,
Maybe evening and maybe soon!
Coming again, coming again;
O what a wonderful day it will be–
Jesus is coming again! -- John W. Peterson*

2. Titus 2:13 says, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

1. So, we see it is a “blessed hope.”
2. Furthermore, it is a purifying hope. First John 3:3 says, “And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”
3. George C. Needham said, “As linen bleaches under the sun, the light of this hope cleanses the life from the world-stains. It loosens the grasp from the things of earth.”
4. Also, it is a patient hope. James 5:8 says, “Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”
5. It is a well-informed hope. First Thessalonians 4:13 says, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”
6. And it is a comforting hope – “that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” “Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (4:18).
7. It is a glorious hope. Colossians 3:21 says Christ “shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (cf. I Cor. 15:51-58).

CONCLUSION:

1. A couple of weeks ago, I read an article about a company in Sweden that is giving its employees the option of implanting microchips on their hands.
2. At Epicenter, a high-tech office complex in Sweden, employees do not need to carry keys or I.D. cards or credit cards because they have been “chipped,”

that is, they have had microchips implanted under the skin of their hands (cf. Revelation 13:16-18).

3. The Lord is coming back, and it could be very soon.
4. Newspapers are saying that all of the trouble in the Middle East and with North Korea and with Russia could lead up to World War III.
5. A headline from a British newspaper yesterday: “Kim Jong-un vows WWIII as he threatens to pulverize US bases and South Korea capital.”
6. Actually, these conflicts could actually lead up to the Battle of Armageddon.
7. D. L. Moody said, “I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel. Its ruin is getting nearer and nearer. God said to me: ‘Moody, here is a lifeboat, go out and rescue as many as you can before the crash comes.’”
8. The Lord is coming back.
9. Are you ready? (II Thess. 1:7-9).