

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of May 26-June 1, 2024
"THE COMFORT OF THE RAPTURE"

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: Use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

In the past few weeks, what was your average hours of sleep per day? Why?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

1. What clues can you find about the audience in the text? What had Paul taught them about the end times (cf 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10)? What does Paul's opening statement in verse 13 suggest about the concerns/questions of the Thessalonian church?
2. Many believers today are afraid of death and/or the rapture. Why do you think this is so? Is this an issue of lack of knowledge, of weak faith or a lack thereof? What are possible reasons?
3. How do you interpret the encouragement to not grieve like those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13)? What does it mean to "grieve with hope?" Does your faith in Christ shape your response to loss and sorrow?
4. In light of verse 14, what are your thoughts about burial versus cremation? How does this statement strengthen your hope of the certainty of a believer's resurrection?
5. In the message, we are told that when Jesus returns, our bodies will be transformed into glorified, incorruptible bodies like that of Christ (cf 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; Philippians 3:20-21; Luke 24:34-39; John 20:19-20). How do you respond to that?

6. What details about the rapture do you read in verses 16-17? Were you ever afraid of being "left behind" in the rapture? Does the idea of this event happening unexpectedly bring you anxiety or a sense of peace?
7. Who are the people in your life that you would hope to be "caught up" with? Does this passage influence how you value those relationships? Spend some time to pray for the salvation of these loved ones and friends to the Lord.

NEXT STEPS

The good news of the rapture is: I'll be there. You'll be there. We'll all be there if we believe in him.

- I will live as one who has hope because of Christ's finished work.
- I will cultivate a sense of anticipation for the future and the joy of life to come.
- I will prioritize and align my life with an eternal perspective.
- I will encourage other believers with the hope of Christ's return.
- I will pray for unsaved loved ones and friends; I will share the gospel to them.

Don't forget to:

- Go through the devotionals every day this week.
- Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God's Word.

CLOSING THE SESSION

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray for hearts that is prepared for the glorious day of Jesus' return.
- Pray for relationships to grow with other Christ-followers, that you will encourage and care for one another.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends, and loved ones.
- Pray for protection, provision, healing and comfort for everyone who's going through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual pain.

BIBLE READING GUIDE

May 27 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
May 28 1 Corinthians 15:20-28
May 29 Psalms 34:1-10
May 30 John 5:1-8
May 31 1 Corinthians 15:35-49
June 1 Psalms 9:1-20
June 2 Romans 11:25-36