

February 7, 2010

Caught up in the Clouds

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15

There's an old hymn called, "When the Roll is Called up Yonder". The second verse needs some updating, if we are to believe this writing to the Thessalonians. Naturally, there is always some curiosity about the 2nd coming of Christ. If we surveyed the room today, I'm sure there are some questions about the 'how' and 'what' of that glorious event. We will be given a small amount of information from Paul's writings today.

Some concepts about the return of Jesus. **Matt 24:30-31, 36. Acts 1:7-10. Rev 20:11-15.** These should provide some context for what we study today.

1. 1Thess 4:13. Asleep? What is Paul indicating? Is he saying that grief is a bad thing? Do you grieve over the death of a loved one? How does your hope in Christ affect your grieving?
2. vs. 14. Again, is Paul really talking about sleeping people? Do you really believe that Jesus died and rose again? Do you believe that those who die in Him are with Him somehow or somewhere? Is there someone that you look forward to seeing when you get to heaven? What do you think you'll say to them? What is the significance of the fact that God will bring them *with Jesus*?
3. vss. 15-18. Is there something about this event that you need more information about? Is it wrong to be curious? Is it wrong to declare you know exactly what will occur? What part of God's promise gives you hope when you're grieving? Do you use this message to encourage others?
4. 1Cor 15:12-15. Do some deny the resurrection of the dead in today's world? Do you cling to faith in Jesus' resurrection as central to your faith? Why? What is the danger if we forsake that kind of faith?
5. vss. 16-20. Christ is alive! He will come again, just like He said. How important is that fact? Do you have hope for something beyond this life for yourself? How important is it?
6. vss. 35-44. A new body? How important is it to you to have a new body? What are some of its attributes listed in these verses? **1Thess 2:19** indicates what about our new body?
7. vss. 50-58. What do these verses tell you that encourages you? How does a knowledge of these verses help you face struggles today? What is the difference between *standing firm* and stubbornness? What does it mean to *let nothing move you*? Does that indicate a hard heart? Do you have a faith that cannot be shaken? What does it mean to give yourself *fully to the work of the Lord*? Does everybody have to be a

preacher? Does everyone have to work in the church? Can you work for the Lord when your heart is not in it?

Paul seemed to think that Jesus would return in his own natural lifetime. (1Thess 4:15)
Do you think Jesus will return in *your* natural lifetime? Why or why not?

2Pet 3:3-4, 8-10. Is the timing important? What is more important? **Luke 12:40**

When this glorious event occurs, whether in our lifetime or later, we will be ushered into the presence of Jesus forever. Vs 17 and John **14:3**

Do you know someone who is dying? (Think about this: who isn't?) Comfort them by speaking about the promises of God.

What is the “therefore” about this lesson? Did Paul write this to let us know about the process God will use to bring this world to a close? What is the purpose of Paul’s writing this to the Thessalonians and to us? Did they need more information on what God was going to be doing when Jesus returns? Or did they need this information for another purpose?

What is your take home bullet point for today?

