

## ***What Happens to a Christians When They Die?***

### ***I Thess 4:13-18***

<sup>13</sup> But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.

### ***Introduction:***

*We come this morning to the long anticipated passage the is familiar to most Christians. I Thess 4:13-18 The Classic Rapture passage. Of all the verses in I Thess this is no doubt the most familiar and loved. It has been read and studied, preached, proclaimed, debated, written about, loved, hated, scorned, rejected, received and referred to in many ways more than any other passage of scripture.*

*It has been read repeatedly at the grave side of loved ones to give comfort.*

*It introduces us to one of the most comprehensive and pervasive doctrines in the Word of God... The Second Coming of Jesus Christ.*

*The amount of information that you need to comprehend to understand the depth and breadth of the is passage is staggering.*

*I will be my goal and my noble attempt to accurately give to you a Biblical understanding of this event so that you will have a better grasp on the events surrounding the Return of our Lord. In our Study of this passage and the subsequent passages in chapter 5 and 2 Thessalonians we will be able to answer questions like*

- 1. What happens to Christians who die*
- 2. What kind of Body does a Christian receive at the Resurrection*
- 3. Is there such a thing as Soul Sleep*
- 4. Where do you go at the moment of death*
- 5. If you die, will you come back to earth with Jesus when He returns*
- 6. Is there a Rapture taught in the Bible*
- 7. If so, why don't we see the word rapture in the Bible*
- 8. When does the Rapture take place*
- 9. Is the Rapture Pretrib, Mid Trib, Post trip, or something else?*
- 10. Who leaves in the Rapture,*
- 11. Who stays after the Rapture?*
- 12. Can anyone be saved after the Rapture*
- 13. How do you leave at the time of the Rapture*
- 14. Is the Rapture Imminent*
- 15. Are there any signs before the rapture and if so what are they?*
- 16. Does anyone know the exact time of the rapture. the Day and hour*
- 17. What is the Parousia*
- 18. Has some of this already been fulfilled in 70AD*
- 19. Is Preterism Heresy, What about Semi Preterism*

20. *What is the proper Hermeneutic when studying Prophectic literature*
21. *Are some of the events we see today fulfillments of Biblical Prophecy*
22. *Who are what is the Antichrist*
23. *Where will he come from*
24. *Will Christians be here when the Antichrist is on earth*
25. *Is the Antichrist on earth today*
26. *Are there signs to know who the Antrichrist is*
27. *What is the Great Falling away*
28. *Can the Antichrist do miracles*
29. *How will the world react to all of these events*
30. *Who will follow the Antichrist*
31. *Is the Rapture different from the Second coming*
32. *Are there really 2 comings of Christ in the future*
33. *Who will be here for the Great Tribulation*
34. *What happens to Christians who die during the Great Tribulation*
35. *Can a Christian follow the Antichrist and still be a Christian*
36. *Can a Believer receive the mark of the Beast*
37. *Can a Christian deny Christ and Go to hell*
38. *What happens to lost people when they die*
39. *Do the lost have a body in Hell*
40. *Is Hell eternal*
41. *Is the lake of Fire different from Hell*

*These are just some of the questions we will answers as we move carefully verse by verse thru the passages before us.*

*I pray that God may use this not only to answer our questions but to draw the lost sheep to himself, and to draw believers into a closer relationship with there Savior*

## ***Review:***

## ***Lesson:***

### ***I. The Explanation***

<sup>13</sup> But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep,

*be ignorant*

**agnoeó: to be ignorant, not to know**

**Original Word:** ἀγνοέω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** agnoeó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (ag-no-eh'-o)

**Short Definition:** I do not know, am ignorant of

**Definition:** I do not know, am ignorant of (a person, thing, or fact), sometimes with the idea of willful ignorance.

**Uniformed** (50) (**agnoeo [word study]** from **a** = not + **noéo** = perceive with the mind, to understand) (See study of noun **agnōia**) means to be ignorant, to not have information about, to not know, to be unaware of.

## Religions of the World have differing beliefs on the status of the Dead

Many religions, whether they believe in the soul's existence in another world like Christianity, Islam and many [pagan](#) belief systems, or in reincarnation like many forms of Hinduism and Buddhism, believe that one's status in the afterlife is a reward or punishment for their conduct during life.

### **Reincarnation**

*Main article: [Reincarnation](#)*

Reincarnation refers to an afterlife concept found among Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, [Rosicrucians](#), [Theosophists](#), [Spiritists](#), and Wiccans. Reincarnation is also a belief described in [Kabbalistic](#) Judaism as gilgul neshamot (Reincarnation of Souls).<sup>[1]</sup> In reincarnation, spiritual development continues after death as the deceased begins another earthly life in the [physical world](#), acquiring a superior grade of consciousness and [altruism](#) by means of successive reincarnations. This succession leads toward an eventual [liberation](#).

One consequence of reincarnationist beliefs is that our current lives are both afterlife and a beforelife. According to those beliefs events in our current life are consequences of actions taken in previous lives, or Karma. [Rosicrucians](#),<sup>[2]</sup> in the same way of those who have had [near-death experiences](#), speak of a [life review](#) period occurring immediately after death and before entering the afterlife's [planes of existence](#) (before the [silver cord](#) is broken), followed by a [judgment](#), more akin to a Final Review or End Report over one's life.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **Heaven and hell**

In [Abrahamic religions](#), the view is generally held that one goes to [hell](#) or [heaven](#) depending on one's deeds or [faith](#) while on Earth,<sup>[4]</sup> or [predestination](#) and [Unconditional election](#), or to the [intermediate state](#) to await the [Resurrection of the Dead](#). In most denominations, heaven is a condition of reward for the righteous to go after they die, traditionally defined as eternal union with God. Hell in comparison is a condition of punishment and torment for the wicked, traditionally defined as eternal separation from God and confinement with other sinful souls and fallen angels.

## Limbo

*Main article: [Limbo](#)*

Despite popular opinion, Limbo, which was elaborated upon by theologians beginning in the Middle Ages, was never recognized as a [dogma](#) of the [Roman Catholic Church](#), yet, at times, it has been a very popular theological theory within the Church. Limbo is a theory that unbaptized but innocent souls, such as those of infants, [virtuous](#) individuals who lived before [Jesus Christ was born on earth](#), or those that die before [baptism](#) exist in neither Heaven or Hell proper. Therefore, these souls neither merit the [beatific vision](#), nor are subjected to any punishment, because they are not guilty of any personal [sin](#) although they have not received baptism, so still bear [original sin](#). So they are generally seen as existing in a state of natural, but not supernatural, happiness, until the end of time.

In other [Christian denominations](#) it has been described as an [intermediate place](#) or state of confinement in oblivion and neglect.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Purgatory

The notion of [purgatory](#) is associated particularly with the [Catholic Church](#). In the Catholic Church, all those who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven or the final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The tradition of the church, by reference to certain texts of scripture, speaks of a "cleansing fire" although it is not always called purgatory.

[Anglicans](#) of the [Anglo-Catholic](#) tradition generally also hold to the belief. [John Wesley](#), the founder of [Methodism](#), believed in an [intermediate state](#) between death and the [resurrection of the dead](#) and in the possibility of "continuing to grow in holiness there", but Methodism does not officially affirm this belief and denies the possibility of [helping by prayer](#) any who may be in that state.<sup>[6]</sup>

**Ignorance is not bliss in regard to what happens when a believer dies!**

**Ray Stedman** says that to help understand this account we must remember that...

the Thessalonians had clearly been expecting the return of Jesus before any of them died. This was a moment-by-moment expectancy in the early church. First century Christians never entertained the thought that death would occur for them. They believed the Lord was coming within days, or weeks at the most. In the first chapter of this letter Paul commends the Thessalonians for "waiting for God's Son from heaven," {cf, note [1Th 1:10-note](#)}. That is what they were looking for. (See his sermon [Comfort at the Grave](#))

**MacArthur** explains that...

Their concern for those who had died shows that the Thessalonians believed the return of Christ was imminent and could happen in their lifetime. Otherwise, there would have been no reason for their concern. The Thessalonians' fear that their fellow believers who had died might miss the Rapture also implies that they believed in a pretribulational Rapture. If the Rapture precedes the Tribulation, they might have wondered when believers who died would receive their resurrection bodies. But there would have been no such confusion if the Rapture follows the Tribulation; all believers would then receive their resurrection bodies at the same time. Further, if they had been taught that they would go through the Tribulation, they would not have grieved for those who died, but rather would have been glad to see

them spared from that horrible time. (MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos)

*have fallen asleep,*

**koimaó from NG2749: sleep, fall asleep, die**

**Original Word:** κοιμάομαι

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** koimaó from NG2749

**Phonetic Spelling:** (koy-mah'-o)

**Short Definition:** I fall asleep, am asleep

**Definition:** I fall asleep, am asleep, sometimes of the sleep of death.

**Are asleep** (2837) (**koimao** related to **keímai** = to lie outstretched, to lie down) literally refers to normal sleep but is used figuratively in the present context referring to those who are dead and specifically those who are "dead in Christ" ("those also who have fallen asleep in Christ")

**Robertson** comments that the...

**Present tense** (of koimao) gives idea of repetition, from time to time fall asleep. Greeks and Romans used this figure of sleep for death

In other words Paul is referring to those are continually falling asleep as a regular course of life in the church. The believers in Thessalonica had grown increasingly concerned as their fellow believers continued to die.

ere are other uses of **koimao** which help us understand that it was a "euphemistic" reference to death in certain contexts.. (After **Stephen** had been stoned Luke records) And (Stephen) falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he **fell asleep** (koimao) ([Acts 7:60](#))



For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers, and underwent decay ([Acts 13:36](#))

**1 Corinthians 7:39** A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is **dead** (koimao), she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

**1 Corinthians 11:30** For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number **sleep** (have died)

**1 Corinthians 15:6** After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have **fallen asleep**...**18** Then (if Christ was not resurrected) those also who **have fallen asleep** in Christ have perished...**20** But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits (see [Christ the First Fruits](#)) of those who are **asleep**...**51** Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all **sleep**, (not all believers will die - specifically those who alive when the Lord returns will not die a physical death) but we shall all be changed,

**2Peter 3:4** (note) and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers **fell asleep**, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.

**Hiebert** notes that **sleep** was a well known euphemism for death and...

did not originate with Christianity. It was a common metaphor among the Jews and was current even among pagans. The figure was apparently suggested by the stillness of the body and its apparent restfulness upon death; it was used even where there was no hope of resurrection. Having been used by the Master Himself ([Mark 5:39](#); [John 11:11](#)), Christians readily accepted the

term as a witness to their faith concerning death. The figure is not distinctively Christian, yet, as Morris well remarks, it is "much more at home in a Christian context than elsewhere." (Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996)

Sleep was used as a euphemism for death in Homer's poem The Iliad, when at the death of a young warrior the lament sounds forth...

So there he fell, and **slept a sleep of bronze**, unhappy youth, far from his wedded wife. (Iliad 11.241-243)

The Roman poet Catullus appeals for the devotion of his lover by reminding her that life is short and that an unending night follows. Suns may set and rise again. For us, when the short light has once set, remains **to be slept the sleep** of one unbroken night. (Poems 5)

Jacob as he anticipates his own death makes this request of Joseph...

**When I lie down** with my ancestors, carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place. ([Ge 47:30](#))

The death of King David is described as sleep...

Then David slept with his ancestors ([1Kings 2:10](#))

**Stedman** adds that **koimao**...

is never used in the New Testament of anyone but believers. It never says of a non-believer when he died that he "fell asleep." There is a wonderful lesson in that. It shows that death, for the believer, is nothing more than sleep. When your loved ones fall asleep you do not run to the phone and dial 911 for emergency service for them. You know that they are quietly resting, that they will awaken again, and that you will have contact with them again soon. That is why the New Testament

regards the death of believers as nothing but sleep.  
(See his sermon [Comfort at the Grave](#))

**Koimao** is the root of our English word **cemetery** (*koimeterion*) which was adopted by the early Christians as their optimistic name for the **graveyard**, being used this way first in Christian burials in the Roman Catacombs. The **Koimeterion** literally meant "a **sleeping place**" and was used by Greeks to describe a place of rest, a room for sleeping (bedroom), or a rest house for strangers. **Koimeterion** was also a synonym for a dormitory or place where people sleep.

There is a false teaching known as "**soul sleep**" that says that souls of the dead are in a state of unconscious existence. They claim that after a long period, God will awaken the soul. This is not the teaching of Scripture. In the NT "sleep" in the context of death applies only to the **body** and never to the **soul**.

**Hiebert** adds that...

The theory of soul sleep is inconsistent with Paul's assertion in [1Th 5:10](#) (see note) that God's purpose for us is that whether we live or die we should live together with Christ. (Ibid)

**MacArthur** explains why "**soul sleep**" is a false teaching writing that...

In [2Corinthians 5:8](#) Paul wrote that he "prefer[red] rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord," while in [Php 1:23](#) (note) he expressed his "desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better."

Those statements teach that believers go consciously into the Lord's presence at death, for how could unconsciousness be "very much better" than conscious communion with Jesus Christ in this life?

Jesus promised the repentant thief on the cross, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise [heaven; cf. [2 Cor. 12:4](#); [Re 2:7](#){note}]” ([Luke 23:43](#)).

Moses’ and Elijah’s souls were not asleep, since they appeared with Jesus at the Transfiguration ([Mt 17:3](#)), nor are those of the Tribulation martyrs in [Revelation 6:9, 10, 11](#) (see notes [Re 6:9](#); [10](#); [11](#)), who will be awake and able to speak to God. After death the redeemed go consciously into the presence of the Lord, while the unsaved go into conscious punishment (**Ed note**: Read this passage about a "certain rich man" and a "poor man named Lazarus" who both die and end up in different "compartments" of Hades, the temporary abode of the dead. - [Lk 16:19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31](#)). (MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos)

Death raises many questions: *When will it happen? What will it be like? What is the soul's destiny?* Chuck Swindoll addresses that last question in *Growing Deep in the Christian Life*:

When the *believer* dies, the body goes into the grave; the soul and spirit go immediately to be with the Lord Jesus awaiting the body's resurrection, when they're joined together to be forever with the Lord in eternal bliss.<sup>1</sup>

Sadly, many fear their souls will have to wait indefinitely for heaven. "Soul sleep"—the belief that the soul rests after death in an unconscious state, or ceases to exist, until the final resurrection—finds its roots in the common "sleeping" metaphor for bodily death. Although this metaphor appears in Scripture, a thorough study shows that the metaphor of *sleep* refers only to the earthly body's inanimate state after death, not to the soul. Scripture assures believers of their souls' destiny at death: Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight—we are of good courage, I say, and

prefer rather to be *absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord*. (2 Corinthians 5:6–8, emphasis added)

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. (Philippians 1:21–24)

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last. (Luke 23:46)

Jesus, as God's Son, knew He would be spiritually present in the Father's "hands" at the very moment of His death, not asleep in the grave.

Other biblical events make clear there is no soul sleep for believers but rather a conscious, immediate presence with God after death:

- The stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:54–59)
- The transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–8; Mark 9:1–8; Luke 9:28–36)
- Rachel's soul departing when she died (Genesis 35:18)

Two more passages bear further discussion. First, John 11:23–27: Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."

Notice Jesus corrected Martha's belief that her brother would only "live" in the resurrection. In contrast, Jesus revealed that believers will live even if they die, and in fact, they will never die in the way that our bodies do.

The second passage comes from Peter's pen:

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit. (1 Peter 3:18)

Believers, at the moment of salvation, are "crucified with Christ," and yet they live ([Galatians 2:20](#)). When the earthly body of the believer dies, he or she lives on spiritually. Through faith in Christ, believers have been made alive in the spirit just as Jesus lives in the spirit. We who profess Christ are not destined for soul sleep or the grave!

We can resolve many of the interpretation conflicts that surround the issue of death by simply keeping *the earthly physical body's inanimate state after death* completely separate from *the soul's spiritual life and location apart from the body*.

One key scriptural event that supports this, but is sometimes misunderstood, is Jesus's exchange with the thief on the cross. Jesus tells the thief dying next to Him that their spirits would be together, alive, and conscious on that day. Yet some argue the punctuation is misplaced in [Luke 23:42–43](#). Instead of, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise," they argue Jesus really said, "Truly I say to you today, you shall be with Me in Paradise." But Scripture includes no other instance of Jesus saying, "I say to you today." This adds to the likelihood that, as every English translation indicates, Jesus was emphasizing that *today* was the time He and the thief would be together in paradise. And even Jesus's statement, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit," points to His being spiritually in God's presence *immediately* upon death.

Another scriptural event that is sometimes misinterpreted is Saul's visit to the medium of Endor. Some believe that Saul summoned the spirit of Samuel, that Samuel's spirit ascended from the ground, and that Samuel was angry because his sleep had been disturbed. However, sleep is not mentioned in the passage. The text only says, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" ([1 Samuel 28:15](#)). Further, as Thomas Constable noted, "This passage does not say that the witch brought up Samuel from the dead. God revealed Samuel to Saul."<sup>2</sup>

We don't know exactly where Samuel was before he was disturbed, but we do know he told Saul that the king and his sons would be with the prophet the very next day (28:19). This wouldn't be very meaningful if their souls were just going to be



sleeping after they died. Rather, it's more likely Samuel meant they would all be conscious of their spirits meeting one another the next day.

In [Luke 16:19–31](#), Lazarus and the rich man were in "Abraham's bosom" and "Hades" after their deaths. But some readers conclude that those "waiting places" indicate that our souls will wait for heaven in similar places. Actually, this story, told by Jesus himself, teaches that the soul is not sleeping but alive and conscious after death and *before* bodily resurrection. Incidentally, this is the only time the phrase "Abraham's bosom" appears in the Bible. "Abraham's bosom" was an expression referring to the "paradise" Jesus anticipated following His death.

Some wonder if we will recognize our loved ones in heaven or if our spirits will be without form like a ghost or a wispy cloud, but these passages suggest we will have a bodily form. The Bible doesn't give us details, but several passages suggest we will have recognizable *intermediate bodies*.

Lewis Sperry Chafer refers to [2 Corinthians 5:1–5](#) when he explains "the concept of an intermediate body between death and resurrection":

At the present time believers are in an "earthly tent" (v. 1), but they long for their "heavenly dwelling" (v. 2). References to believers after death but before resurrection all seem to suggest that they have a body, as in the case of Lazarus ([Luke 16:19–25](#)). When Moses and Elijah met with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, they were represented as having bodies ([Matt. 17:1–3](#); [Mark 9:4](#); [Luke 9:30](#)). In [Revelation 6:9–11](#) [and [7:13–17](#)] the martyred dead . . . are represented as wearing robes and being before the throne of God. Though full revelation was not given in Scripture concerning the exact characteristics of these bodies, apparently they will not be suited for eternity for they will be replaced by resurrection bodies.<sup>3</sup>

This conscious, intermediate state is *not* an intermediate cleansing place between heaven and earth, like purgatory, a concept that is never found in the Bible and contradicts the gospel. Rather, *it's a temporary body, intermediate between the time of our death and the resurrection*, which will take place when Jesus returns.

Scripture not only assures us of our souls' destiny; God's Word also offers insight on the future of our earthly, physical bodies, which will be resurrected at the Rapture. Paul wrote that we "wait eagerly for . . . the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved" ([Romans 8:23–24 NIV](#)). Unfortunately, many who believe in soul sleep have confused the resurrection of our earthly bodies and spiritual life after death. Regarding the earthly body and its significance after death, Scripture says, "It has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" ([1 John 3:2](#)). The exact details of that will remain a mystery; however, we know that we will be *physically* resurrected at the Rapture ([John 5:29](#); [Acts 24:15](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13–18](#)). We also know that our resurrected bodies will be different in some ways than our current bodies ([1 Corinthians 15:45–49](#)) and suited for eternity.

We can learn about our resurrected bodies by considering Jesus's body after His resurrection. We know that Jesus ate and drank, that the disciples could touch Him, and that He had flesh and bones yet could move at will without physical limitations. "See my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have" ([Luke 24:39](#)). If Jesus's resurrected body could do all these things, our resurrected bodies likely will too.

Fears and questions about death are natural, but the Bible offers peace. Believers can take courage in the knowledge that the rest God provides for us after death is so much better than any so-called "soul sleep." While death is sorrowful and painful, for those who know Christ, the time beyond death carries with it marvelous hope. For Christians, death means we will finally, *immediately* be face-to-face with our Father.

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- 1 Charles R. Swindoll, *Growing Deep in the Christian Life: Essential Truths for Becoming Strong in the Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 308.
- 2 Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on 1 Samuel* (Dallas: Sonic Light, 2013), 115, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/1samuel.pdf> (accessed May 28, 2013).



3 Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, abr. ed. (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor, 1988), 507.

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## ***II. The Exception***

*lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.*

*lest you sorrow*      *PRESENT TENSE*

**lupeó: to distress, to grieve**

**Original Word:** λυπέω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** lupeó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (loo-peh'-o)

**Short Definition:** I pain, grieve, vex

**Definition:** I pain, grieve, vex.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**Cognate:** 3076 *lypéō* (from 3077 *lypē*, "deep grief") – to experience deep, emotional pain (sadness), i.e. severe sorrow (grief). 3076 (*lypéō*) is very intense and hence even used of *the pain of childbirth* (see Gen 3:16, LXX). See 3077 (*lypē*).

*having no hope*      *Present Tense*

**elpis: expectation, hope**

**Original Word:** ἐλπίς, ἰδος, ἡ

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** elpis

**Phonetic Spelling:** (el-pece')

**Short Definition:** hope, expectation

**Definition:** hope, expectation, trust, confidence.

### **HELPS Word-studies**

**1680** *elpís* (from *elpō*, "to anticipate, welcome") – properly, expectation of what is sure (certain); *hope*.

**Vincent** comments that...

in Christian speech and thought, as the doctrine of the resurrection ([1Corinthians 15:1-58](#)) struck its roots deeper, the word **dead**, with its hopeless finality, gave place to the more gracious and hopeful word **sleep**. The pagan burying-place carried in its name no suggestion of hope or comfort. It was a burying-place, a hiding-place, a *monumentum*, a mere memorial of something gone; a *columbarium*, or dove-cot, with its little pigeon-holes for cinerary urns; but the Christian thought of death as **sleep**, brought with it into Christian speech the kindred thought of a chamber of rest, and embodied it in the word **cemetery** (*koimeterion*) — the place to lie down to sleep.

The Christian's unique **hope** that is not shared by non-believers is the **Blessed Hope** ([Titus 2:13-note](#) cp [1Jn 3:2-3](#); [1Pe 1:13-note](#)) of the return of Christ for His own just as He had promised ([John 14:2-3](#)). That will be the great resurrection day when living believers will be reunited with all their loved ones who have died. Believers then and now have this promise **by the word of the Lord** ([1Th 4:15-note](#)) Himself Who declared to His disciples...

Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way where I am going." ([John 14:1-4](#))

**You may not grieve** - The negative particle (*me*) with the **present tense** indicates that the goal of the truth in this section is

to stop the grieving of the readers. They are not to go on grieving **as the rest**. Paul's goal is to cure their grief by removing their ignorance.

**Grieve** (3076) (**lupeo** from **lupe** = sadness, sorrow, grief) means to feel pain, of body or mind and so to experience severe mental or emotional distress. It can also refer to physical pain which may be accompanied by sadness, sorrow or grief.

The **present tense** also speaks of the continual lot of those (**the rest**) who do not intimately know Christ as Lord and Savior (those with "no hope").

We should not misunderstand what Paul is saying here about **not grieving**. He is not saying that believers are not to experience and express the normal sorrow that accompanies the death of a loved one which brings with it the pain of separation and loneliness. Even our Lord Jesus grieved over the death of His friend ("*Jesus...was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled...Jesus wept*" [John 11:35](#)). Although Jesus expressed sorrow, He did not despair over ever seeing His friend again. Normal human beings grieve over the physical death of their loved ones ([Php 2:27-note](#)). Paul is not saying Christians are to be dehumanized by removing grief from the realm of their experience. He goes on to qualify that the believer's grief is not **as the rest**, for the believer's goodbye is only temporary and our sure hope of reunion with our believing loved ones is forever!

**Rest** (3062) (**loipos** = pertaining to the part of a whole which remains, the rest of the whole from **leípo** = to leave, lack) means the remaining, the remnant, the residue, the rest. Although **loipos** is an adverb, the NT uses it as a noun here and in other passages ([Mt 22:6](#), [Re 11:13](#), [12:17](#), [19:21](#))

**Have** (2192) (**echo**) means to hold on to. It means **the rest** (continually = **present tense**) have **no hope** to cling to. Christians

should not grieve over their dead loved ones like pagans do, as if they have no hope of ever seeing them again. There is such a profound difference between a Christian funeral and a pagan funeral because believers possess this sure hope.

**Hope** (1680) (**elpis**) (see also the [Believer's Blessed Hope](#)) is a desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it. Hope in Scripture is the absolute certainty of future good. In [He 6:11](#) (note) hope is full assurance. In [1Timothy 1:1](#) hope is not some abstract concept but is embodied in the Person and atoning world of Jesus Christ Jesus our Hope.

In marked contrast, in the face of death the pagan world stood in utter despair and abysmal hopelessness which "enshrouded" them as it rightly should. They vainly attempted to meet the certainty of death with grim resignation and bleak outlooks as stated by the pagan **Aeschylus** who wrote (incorrectly) that Once a man dies there is no resurrection (**Comment:** Wrong! There is a resurrection for unbelievers but it is unto death, not life [see [Order of Resurrection](#)], see [Jn 5:28,29](#) below)

Addressing the Athenians on Mars Hill **Paul** declared that... having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man Whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by **raising Him from the dead.**" Now when they heard of the **resurrection of the dead**, some began to sneer (this word stresses insulting another by contemptuous facial expression, phrasing, or tone of voice), but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this." ([Acts 17:30, 31, 32-note](#)).

In John 5 **Jesus** declared...

Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all (how many? all without qualification as to spiritually dead in Adam and sin or spiritually alive in Christ and salvation) who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds (deeds don't save but they do indicate one is genuinely saved as James taught - [James 2:14-26-notes](#), see [Re 2:5](#), [6](#) - note) to a resurrection of life (see **notes** on first resurrection in [Re 20:5-note](#)), those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment (see **notes** on the second death - [Re 20:11](#), [12](#), [13](#), [14](#), [15](#)-notes [Re 20:11](#); [12](#); [13](#); [14](#); [15](#)). ([John 5:28](#), [29](#))

**Paul** writing the converted Gentiles in Ephesus exhorted them to...

remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, **having** (present tense = continually) **no hope** and without God in the world. ([Ep 2:12-note](#))

Only believers have a sure **hope** (absolute certainty that God will do them good in the future) of life after death. The speculations of pagan philosophy do not amount to a hope but "I hope so". The "odds" are eternally against this type of hope, for the only sure, steadfast hope of eternal life with God is a hope that is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness...

**Christ Jesus our Hope** (Literal rendering of [1 Timothy 1:1](#))

**Milligan** wrote that...

The general hopelessness of the pagan world in the presence of death is almost too well-known to require illustration (St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians. 1908)

**Theocritus** rightly summarized the the hope of all outside Christ and still "in Adam" (and responsible to pay for the wages of sin which is death) wrote

There is hope for those who are alive, but those who have died are without hope.

**Catullus** echoes the tragic refrain...

When once our brief light sets, there is one perpetual night through which we must sleep. (**Comment:** Unfortunately, this is only partially correct, for in hell there is full consciousness not perpetual sleep, read [Luke 16:19-32](#))

**Lucretius** wrote that...

No one awakes and arises who has once been overtaken by the chilling end of life

On pagan tombstones we read the hopeless carvings of their grim epitaphs

**I was not**

**I became**

**I am not**

**I care not**

An inscription has reportedly been found on a pagan tomb at Thessalonica which read...

After death there is no revival, after the grave no meeting of those who have loved each other on earth

As **Paul** so powerfully proclaimed in his last letter (just before he "fell asleep") God...

has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity ("*before the beginning of time*" - NIV), but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, **Who abolished death, and**

**brought life and immortality to light through the gospel** ([2Ti 1:9-note](#); [2Ti 1:10-note](#))

**John MacArthur** comments that...

Even though Paul's ministry in Thessalonica was brief, it is clear the people had come to believe in and hope for the reality of their Savior's return (cf [1Th 1:3](#), [9](#), [10](#), [2:19](#), [5:1](#), [2](#)-notes [1Th 1:3](#), [1:9;10](#); [2:19](#); [5:1](#); [5:2](#); [2Th 2:1,5](#)). They were living in expectation of that coming, eagerly awaiting Christ. This verse (v13) (cf. [2Th 2:1](#), [2](#), [3](#)) indicates they were even agitated about some things that were happening to them that might affect their participation in it.

They knew Christ's return was the climactic event in redemptive history and didn't want to miss it. The major question they had was "What happens to the Christians who die before He comes? Do they miss His return?" Clearly, they had an imminent view of Christ's return and Paul had left the impression it could happen in their lifetime. Their confusion came as they were being persecuted, an experience they thought they were to be delivered from by the Lord's return (cf. [3:3,4](#)). (MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos)

The **Hope** (Certainty) of **Christ's Return** at His Glorious Second Coming is a...

living hope ([1Pe 1:3-note](#))

blessed hope ([Titus 2:13-note](#))

joyful hope ([1Th 2:19-note](#))

comforting hope ([1Th 4:13](#), [14](#), [15](#), [16](#), [17](#), [18](#)-see note [1Th 4:13](#); [14](#); [15](#); [16](#); [17](#); [18](#))

hope of glory ([Col 1:27-note](#))

anchoring hope ([He 6:19-note](#))

purifying hope ([1John 3:3](#))

### ***III. The Expectation***

<sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.