

THE DEAD AND THE COMING OF JESUS
I THESS. 4:13-14

Introduction:

- A. The Thessalonians were grieving because they did not know the relationship of their dead to the appearing of Jesus.
 - 1. Timothy had probably brought word.
 - 2. Early in church history, some of their members had died since missionaries had left.

- B. Paul reveals to them the truth.
 - 1. "the word of the Lord." v15
 - 2. They are to be comforted. v18

I. IGNORANCE IS NOT GOD'S WILL.

- A. "I would not have you to be ignorant."
 - 1. ignorant = agnostic = no knowledge.
 - 2. These people had a reason, we don't.

- b. There is freedom in knowing.
 - 1. Ignorance is a slavemaster.
 - 2. Revelation and faith to accept the truth.

II. "CONCERNING THEM WHICH ARE ASLEEP."

- a. asleep = those sleeping, lying asleep, or those falling asleep from time to time.

- B. Jesus used this figurative speech.
 - 1. Mark 5:39 "And when He was come in, He saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."
 - 2. It reflects such a state as temporary.
 - 3. Early Christians called their burial places [kamateria] cemetery, dormitrony.

- C. The Bible plainly reveals the state of dead.
 - 1. Souls are in "paradise". Jesus and the thief.
 - 2. II Cor. 5:8 "present with the Lord."
 - 3. It is sown to be raised.
 - a. I Cor. 15:35-38.
 - 4. Phil. 1:23 "For I am in a strait betwix two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better..."

III. "THAT YE SORROW NOT."

- A. sorrow = grieve.
 - 1. There is a sorrow, but we should not grieve as though all were lost and over.
 - 2. "Not as the pagans." Four testimonies.
 - a. Cutting, flailing, mourning.
 - b. Aeschylus = "of a man once dead, there is no resurrection."
 - c. Theocritus = "hopes are among the living, the dead are without hope."
 - d. Catullus = "Suns may set and rise again but we, when once our brief light goes down must sleep an endless night."
 - e. Lucretius = "No one wakes and rises who has been overtaken by the chilling end of life."

IV. ASSURANCE CONCERNING THE DEAD. V14

- A. "if" does not imply doubt, it recognizes an assumed truth.
 - 1. "We do believe that Jesus died and rose again."
 - 2. "In the same manner the dead in Christ will be raised and Jesus will bring them back with Him."

V. "ASLEEP IN JESUS."

- A. Resting in Jesus.
- B. Adequately describes our faith in Him as Saviour.