

Sermon Outline

WHEN DYING = SLEEPING ... | Geoff Lin

Readings: 1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:11

Q. How do you feel about death?

The story so far ...

How to live in order to please God (1 Thess 4:1)

1. Avoid sexual immorality (4:1-8)
2. Love all God's family (4:9-12)
3. Get informed about death (4:13-5:11)

1. Christians know that death is not the end (4:13-18)

(Q. What happens to Christians who die before Jesus returns?)

1 Thess 4:13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who **sleep in death**, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have **fallen asleep** in him. 15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have **fallen asleep**. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 *Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

- "in Christ/in Him"

- "God will bring"

- "According to the Lord's word"

- "And so we will be with the Lord forever"

Jn 11:35 Jesus wept.

- "Therefore encourage one another with these words"

2. Because we don't know when Jesus will return, make sure you're ready! (5:1-11)

(Q. When will Jesus return?)

1 Thess 5:1 Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, 2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. 5 You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. 6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. 9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. 11 *Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

Mt 24:36 But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

- what we know, what we don't know, what we can't know

- put on faith, love and hope

1 Thess 1:3 We remember before our God and Father your work produced by **faith**, your labor prompted by **love**, and your endurance inspired by **hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing ..."

Mt 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will **build** my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Q. What about those who are not in Christ when they die?

3. So what, for us?

Q. How do you feel about the fact that Jesus is coming back?

For discussion: how might knowledge of Jesus' return shape the way you live now?