

Home Group Discussion Guide

Heartbroken & Hopeful - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

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The following questions are designed to help groups explore the message above by challenging participants to consider how God is wanting them to apply it to their lives.

The questions are a **guide** to help lead discussion.

Please don't feel that all questions need to be asked, instead respond to the needs of your group. If you have new people in your group, take the opportunity to introduce each other and clarify any expectations that are present in your group (such as confidentiality).

GETTING STARTED

1. When you receive sad or heavy news, what is your typical automatic reaction? Do you lean into feeling the feelings completely, or do you immediately try to find a way to shift your attention to something else?
2. Was there something in Sunday's message that gave you hope or expanded your understanding of what happens when Jesus returns?

REFLECTING ON THE MESSAGE

Consider 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

1. Dave described grief as involving the shattering of what was, wrestling with what is, and shaping what will be. How does this model of grief help you understand it better?
2. Paul does not tell the Thessalonians not to grieve. He tells them not to grieve as those who have no hope. What is the difference between avoiding grief and grieving with hope?

Consider 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

2. The word *parousia* (verse 15, to describe Jesus coming) originally described the arrival of an emperor where citizens rushed outside the gates to meet them. Knowing this cultural context, how does it change our understanding of Jesus' return?
3. Dave said, "Our hope is not in a future removal. It is in present and future renewal." What difference does this make to the way Christians respond to grief, injustice, and suffering now?

RESPONDING TO THE MESSAGE

1. Dave shared some tools and ways of helping to deal with grief in the moment. Have you used any of these in the past / did any of them resonate with you?
2. In the middle of grief how can you be reminded of *Immanuel* – God with us in the midst of pain?
3. Who might need you to move closer to their grief this week—not to explain it or fix it, but simply to be present with them?

OPPORTUNITY FOR PRAYER

Our Home Groups are the primary place for pastoral care to occur within the Church. We would encourage you to take the opportunity to pray for each other in this space.

