

Jesus' Return

Knowing things about the future helps us live with wisdom in the present. If we know that rain is coming, we grab an umbrella. If we know that company is coming, we clean our house and prepare some snacks. If we know that headquarters is coming, we make sure everything is neat, tidy and running according to protocol. Knowing the future has bearing on the present. In the spiritual realm, we don't know WHEN Jesus is returning, but we do know THAT He is. And this truth about the future should help us live with wisdom in the present.

Opening Discussion: What is a future event that you are excited about?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

1. How does Paul describe the events of Jesus' return?

2. How would you summarize Paul's main point(s) in this section?

3. What kind of hope do we find in the promise of Jesus' return?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

4. What are the contrasts that you see in this passage? And what is significant about those contrasts?

5. According to Paul, how should the knowledge of the return of Jesus (or the day of the Lord) affect us in our daily lives?

Brian said:

Are you living in a way that is consistent with the return of Jesus? Are you living in a way that will cause Jesus to say to you, "Well done good and faithful servant?" Or would you say that you have not been alert and sober; that there are things in your life that you would be embarrassed by or feel shame over if Jesus were to come back now? Jesus' return should motivate us to live watchful and godly lives.

6. How do you respond to these questions?
7. If you tend to struggle to be regularly motivated by Jesus' return (you just don't think about it much), why do you think this is?
8. What might you do to grow in being more regularly motivated by this truth?
9. Paul urges the Thessalonians to comfort (4:18), encourage (5:11) and build up (5:11) one another in light of the things he says. What might this look like for us as a group?