

## Jesus Is Coming Again 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

In **John 14:1-3** Jesus said, *“Do not let your hearts 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. 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.”* Jesus went to the Father in heaven to prepare a place for His followers and will one day return for them. What a precious promise.

As believers of Jesus Christ, we live with the knowledge of the Lord Jesus coming again to receive His own. We’ll meet Him in the air and live with Him there eternally. It is indeed a precious promise to know that He cares enough to come for us and to take us to a place that He’s been preparing for us in the Father’s house. We have no scriptural basis for thinking that the Lord will come back to earth and remain here with us for a thousand years. That was not his promise – rather His promise was to welcome us to that place that He has prepared for us – and therefore we need to be prepared for Him.

In **Mt. 24:35-36** Jesus said, *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”* Mark’s version adds, *“And since you don’t know when that time will come, be on guard! Stay alert!” (Mark 13:33).* No one knows the time when Jesus will come again; many have prophesied, but failed. From as early as 70 AD till today, men have boldly said the Lord would come and the world will end, but they didn’t know and they proved to be false prophets.

**1 Thess. 5:1-2** says, *“Now as to the times and the epochs, you have not need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.”* **2 Peter 3:10** echoes this statement and give us a little more information, *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.”*

What will happen when Jesus comes again? While we do not know when He will come, we can be confident of what He will do when He comes again. The Scripture reveals several things that will occur when Jesus returns. **First**, *a great sound will mark his arrival at the end of time.* **1 Thess. 4:16** says, *“For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.”* The Lord will descend with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God – we will hear it when He comes.

**Second**, *when Jesus comes again, He will not be alone.* We are told in **Mt. 25:31** that he is coming with all His angels. He is also coming with those who are *“in Christ”* but who have died. **1 Thess. 4:13-14** says, *“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that*

*Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.”*

**Third**, *the dead will be raised!* While the *“dead in Christ will rise first,”* this doesn’t mean they’re the only ones who will rise on that day. In **Jn. 5:28-29** Jesus promised, *“Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.”* The resurrection of the righteous will take place at the same hour as the resurrection of the wicked. There is only one general resurrection hour. In Acts **24:15** Paul preached, *“there shall be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.”* Some think the wicked will simply cease to exist, but the Lord says the wicked will face a resurrection of judgment.

**Fourth**, *those still alive on earth at his coming will be changed.* **1 Cor. 15:50-52** says, *“Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”* The physical body that you now have, was not designed for heaven but was designed for this earth. We will have an imperishable and glorified body in heaven. **Phil. 3:20-21** says, *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to himself.”*

**Fifth**, **1 Thessalonians 4:1-17** says, *“the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.”* Some think the Lord will set up a thousand-year reign on this earth at His second coming. But that is not what the Bible teaches in plain teaching. The text says we will meet Him in the air and will always be with Him. This planet will be destroyed by fire (**2 Peter 3:10**). And we are to look for something new, that is, that which the Lord is preparing for us – unlike this one in which we are now living.

**1 Peter 1:3-4** says, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.”*

**Sixth**, *the final judgment will occur.* This is an appointment that we must all attend. Some will stand before the judgment seat of Christ with confidence, while others will have great dread, because they know they have rejected the Lord. **2 Cor. 5:10** says, *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he’s done, whether good or bad.”* We cannot escape this judgment.

The apostle John reveals what will happen at the judgment. **Rev. 20:11-12** says, *“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life:*

*and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”* The basis of our judgment will be the written word of God. You see the Scriptures will outlast culture and popular opinions to judge us on the last day. As we saw in **Mt. 24:35** the words of Jesus will last longer than heaven or earth. The Lord Jesus said in **John 12:48**, that, *“He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.”*

**Seventh**, *the righteous and the wicked will be separated and assigned their eternal destinies.* **Mt. 25:32-33** says, *“All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.”* Now, some will enter into a resurrection of life, while others will enter a resurrection of judgment.

**Mt. 25:34** says, *“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’* You see they cared for others and were obedient to the Lord. Then in **Mt. 25:41** we read, *“Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.’* And those on His left will enter the same place that God prepared for the devil and his angels. Jesus put it this way in **Mt. 25:46**, *“These will go into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

**Eighth**, *on Judgment Day the righteous will enter heaven to life with God eternally.* **Revelation 21:3-4** says that God Himself will dwell among His people; *“and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”* Only the righteous will dwell in heaven. God promised in **Rev. 21:7** that, *“He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.”* The apostle Paul showed confidence in 2 Tim. 4: 7-8. He said, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.”*

Those who are unrighteous will enter a place of outer darkness, a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Rev. 21:8** says, *“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”* This is nothing to doubt or ignore. The Lord Jesus said in **Mt. 10:28**, *“Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*

The Lord doesn’t want anyone to be lost or face eternal punishment. **1 Tim. 2:3-4** says, *“This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth.”* Again, **2 Peter 3:9** tells us, *“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”* You don’t have to be lost; instead you can put your faith in the Lord and follow Jesus. **Hebrews 5:8-9** says, *“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those*

*who obey Him the source of eternal salvation.”* You don’t have to be lost, according to the scriptures we have just read, He wants all men to be saved, he is patient with us and this is why He has not yet returned. He seeks repentance and obedience, and to those who are He give eternal salvation.

**2 Peter 3:11-13** warns and encourages us, *“Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, (He is speaking of heaven and earth) what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.”* Since we have this hope; we ought to live godly and righteously.

To become a Christian, one must believe, if he wishes to please God (**Hebr. 11:6**). He must repent of his sins (**Lk. 13:3**). He must confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Lord (**Romans 10:10**); and he must be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins, just as Peter said in **Acts 2:38**. Biblical baptism is an immersion in water; but baptism in Christ is also a baptism into His death (**Romans 6:3-4**). In baptism the blood of Jesus washes away sin (**Acts 2:38 and 22:16**) and it also give us newness of life. If you have not obeyed the Lord in faith and have been immersed in water for the forgiveness of your sins, today I will give you that opportunity. Just give me a call and I will arrange it this very day! Why wait, you never know the day you will leave this earth.