



# Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



## Episode 168 - Let Me Get This Straight (1 Thessalonians)

### I Thought You Said

The Thessalonians were confused about what was going to happen to their dead loved ones. We are surrounded by people who are in the same boat.

- Describe some of the false notions people have about death and what lies beyond.
- What dark fears and doubts do these false notions lead them to?
- How can we use Paul's words to shatter these false notions and comfort them?

### The Dead Will Rise First

Paul clarifies the confusion about what will happen to the dead when Christ appears. In the process, he gives us valuable information about what we will experience on that great day as well.

- Discuss what you would be seeing, hearing and experiencing if Jesus returned this very moment.
- How does carrying around the realization that Jesus could return at any moment impact the way you carry on your day-to-day life?

This passage not only clears up the Thessalonians' confusion about what will happen to dead believers, it also exposes the false teaching known as the rapture. In Matthew 24:36-44 Jesus is describing what will happen on the day He returns. Those who espouse the rapture pull verses 40-41 out of their scriptural context concerning Judgment Day, teaching that on an *earlier day* Jesus will remove believers from among unbelievers and take them to heaven, leaving unbelievers behind on earth to carry on with their lives. This directly contradicts Jesus who says these things will happen *on the Last Day and not before*.

Consider this verse from Matthew 24: "Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left."

Now join these two passages with 1 Thessalonians 4:17: "Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord."

We have a complete picture of what will happen on Judgment Day. Jesus will appear with the angels in the clouds; He will command the dead to rise; the newly raised believers will meet Jesus in the air. Then the believers remaining on earth will be glorified instantly; they will be separated from unbelievers and taken up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air also.

(continued on page 2)

- What is the danger in believing the rapture? (Hint: it suggests there will be a “second chance” for unbelievers. By the time believers are taken up from them it will already be too late for unbelievers to repent and believe.)

### **At a Loved One's Grave**

Paul's words bring great comfort and hope, even in the middle of our deepest grief and pain.

- What other Bible passages have given you great comfort at your loved one's graveside?
- As we go on with our lives after a loved one's death, why does the future resurrection and reunion often slip away from our thoughts?
- Why is it important to keep reminding ourselves of God's promise to raise our loved ones and bring us together into His eternal Kingdom?