

Living and Dead When Christ Returns

Martin Luther

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 · Church Postil

Text: <520413>1 Thessalonians 4:13 18.

13 But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; 17 then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Paul writes these words to comfort Christians who were troubled about what would take place at the resurrection of the dead. Shall all rise together? Shall those living on the earth at the last day meet Christ before others? These and like thoughts worried them. Here Paul answers them by saying that Christ would take all his believers to himself at the same time, etc. This epistle text you will find richly expounded in “The Explanation of Certain Epistles,” which appeared on special occasions. [The Miscellaneous Sermons of the Year 1532.]

SOURCE

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(https://martinlutherpostil.com/25th%20and%2026th.%20Sunday%20After%20Trinity%202Thess_1_3_20.pdf). That file holds two sermons; this is one of them.