

Hope Beyond the Grave

[1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)

Death—our greatest enemy—has been swallowed up by Jesus' death and resurrection, and we are free from its sting. Although our distracted culture is quick to dismiss thoughts of the realities of death, we have joyful hope beyond this life that allows us to think about death and to live and grieve differently.

Application

1. What does it mean to grieve with hope? Do you have any examples from your life or someone close to you who grieved with hope?
2. We are so afraid of being alone with our own thoughts that we distract and numb ourselves with our world, phones, and people. What can you do differently to cut out distractions and let yourself think about deeper realities? Where do you most often turn to numb your thoughts?
3. What are the kind of thoughts you try to avoid thinking about? Why do you think we avoid thinking deeply about those things?
4. How might you be leaning into your devices and earthly desires and not leaning into God to find comfort, life, strength, and hope in him? What does that specifically look like in some of your circumstances to lean into God instead of something else?

Key Points

- Grief is our natural response to loss.
- We don't grieve *less* because of our eternal hope; we grieve *differently* as hope helps shape our grief and gives us confidence that life is not over.
- Grief reminds us that this world was never supposed to be home and that our lives on this earth are temporary.
- We have a promise from God in John 14:3 that he is going to come get us, and we will be with him always.
- Even if we haven't been there yet, at *some* moment, we will be ready for Jesus to take us from this earth because of our suffering, and God will use suffering to dislodge us from our temporal hopes and comforts.
- Pursue people who have lost someone and do not avoid them.

- We will be with the Lord forever—we must control our cravings for the comforts of this world.
- We should be encouraging each other that:
 - God is unchanging and he came to bear the suffering of the loss you have.
 - Fear, anxiety, and fragility should not characterize God's people.
 - Jesus' second coming should drive our attitudes and behavior.
 - Things in this world are not as important, wonderful, or bad as we think they are.
- All of our cravings, addictions, sins, and desires for pleasure (good and not good) are really just manifestations of our deeper desire to be in heaven with God.
- Be wary of being so deeply involved in this world that you don't think of Heaven as home. Our culture is an anomaly in Christian history with the comforts and love for this world that we have that we rarely think of Heaven.
- Our circumstances here do not determine our stability.
- Our deepest craving, even when we can't label it, is to be with God always and forever.
- [The Great Divorce](#) and [Weight of Glory](#) by C.S. Lewis were two resources mentioned.

Scripture References

[John 14:3](#)

[2 Corinthians 5:8](#)

[1 Corinthians 15:50–54](#)