



Static – Hope
Sermon Discussion Questions – Nov. 6

Scripture Passages:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NRSV) ¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 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. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Corinthians 15:17 (NLT) ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.

1 Corinthians 15:20 (NLT) ²⁰ But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

Matthew 24:30–31 (NLT) ³⁰ . . . And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send out his angels with the mighty blast of a trumpet, and they will gather his chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.

Warm Up:

This message talks about the theme of hope. What are a couple of things that you are currently hoping for? These may be hopes that you have for the holidays, for movies or music that you are waiting for, for experiences you are looking forward to.

Discussion:

1. Pastor Tom began his message talking about how raising children is one static season after another.
What are some other common life experiences that you would describe as static seasons?
2. Early on in his message, Pastor Tom introduced this truth: "The Gospel brings us hope."
What do you think he meant by this? What might it look like for the Gospel to bring hope in a season of static?
3. In his message, Pastor Tom shared this quote from William Styron, "It is hopelessness even more than pain that crushes the soul."
What are some of your reactions to this quote? How have you seen hopelessness crush a soul or hope sustain a soul?
4. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
How does the grief of believers differ from those who may not have a faith? As you read these verses, what hope does Paul give to people who are grieving? How might the truths in this passage encourage you as you face challenges or grief?
5. Throughout this message, Pastor Tom shares three truths from these verses that can give us hope:
 - Our Lord will return.
 - The resurrection is real.
 - A reunion is coming.As you look over this short list of truths, which one do you find most encouraging right now and why? How might that truth relate to a circumstance you are currently facing or have faced?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 15:17, 1 Corinthians 15:20.
How is our believe in the resurrection related to our faith? How does believing in the resurrection impact your life? How might the resurrection give you hope? (get practical here if you can)
7. Read Matthew 24:30-31, and 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
How do Paul and Jesus describe our reunion with Jesus and other followers of Jesus? What about these descriptions do you find the most exciting and why? How might a belief in a coming reunion impact the way we view our present circumstances?

8. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul ends that passage telling the believers to encourage each other with these words.
What truth or truths from this passage might you be able to use to encourage someone else this week? Who can you encourage and how might you encourage them?

Next Steps:

Take a few minutes this week to get somewhere quiet. Reread 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

As you read, do your best to visualize what Paul is describing in these verses. What might it look like when Christ returns? When the dead are raised? When we are reunited with those who have died before us?

How might understanding the truths of this passage change your perspective? What might God be saying to you about hope this week?