

ENDINGS

1. Death

Start off with feedback from Sunday's message. What did those that were there - or those that have caught up online - take away from it? What encouraged them, what informed them and what challenged them?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18

¹³ Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

- Why is death a taboo subject for so many people? Why don't we like talking about it – and is this a problem?
- How do you feel about death? Is it something that scares you, confuses you, or worries you? Be honest.
- v13 'you do not grieve'. Is Paul saying that when loved ones die we shouldn't grieve full stop, or is that we grieve in a different way? Why is grieving important? What experience have you had with grief?
- Do you agree people without faith in Jesus grieve without hope? What does grieving *with* hope look like? Is it more than just reciting platitudes?
- Rob read the passage at the beginning of Ecclesiastes 3 that says that there's "a time to die". Does that mean that God's okay with death, that it's just a natural part of life and nothing to get too worked up about?
- Rob also quoted 1 Corinthians 15.55 "Where O death is your sting?" How has Jesus taken the sting out of death and how does that change how we view life and death?
- Sometimes Christians are mocked for believing in 'pie in the sky when you die'. Is it ridiculous to believe in something that you cannot see or hope to experience in this life? Do we have anything more solid to base our faith on?

Break down into twos and threes and pray for each other. Pray for comfort for those who mourn and pray that we would provide comfort to our unchurched friends in their times of grief.

Pray for the rest of the series. Pray for a new clarity and insight into the Bible's teaching on where we're heading. Pray that God reveals things to all of us that help us live as people of hope. Pray for friends that you can invite to engage with these topics.