

## ULC Sermon Study Resource

*Face to Face: Christ to Return*

*Pastor Marcus Lane*

*May 24, 2020*

**Prayer:** Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

**Icebreaker:** What's the best advice you've ever been given?

**Reading:** 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

### Outline:

- I. What we believe about the future... (14:15-18)
  - a. Paul describes the way we will receive Jesus when he returns using imagery that reflects the way great political leaders were received in the Roman world.
  - b. God's creation is *good*. Our faith is not about abandoning this world, but what God intends to do *for* this world.

**Q: Does Paul say we'll literally "meet the Lord in the air" like a rapture?**

- II. ...shapes how we live in the present. (5:4-8)
  - a. Our future hope in what God will do is reason to be engaged with this world. We have confidence that Jesus will return and bring God's kingdom fully with him, so we start working for it now!
  - b. Everything from big works of the church to the simple daily lives of God's people gives the world a glimpse of what God's future holds.

**Q: What does it mean to "keep awake and be sober"? Is it literal?**

### Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) Do you think about "just getting to heaven"?
- 2) When you think of heaven, what do you picture?
- 3) Does what you do in this life matter in the long run?
- 4) How does the knowledge that Jesus is returning to rule affect your work?
- 5) What work might God be doing for the kingdom through you?

### Suggestions for further study:

- 1 Corinthians 15:50-58                      **Q: What happens to our bodies at the last day?**
- Matthew 11:4-6                              **Q: Does Jesus' ministry disregard creation?**

**Closing Prayer:** *"Gracious God, we are daily confronted with the brokenness of this world. Lord, so often that brokenness can be a cause for us to desire to disengage, to step back, to simply wait around biding our time until you return. But Lord, remind us again of what our hope truly is. Our hope is that your return, the return of our resurrected Lord Jesus means healing, restoration, and recreation of the world you called 'good' at the very beginning. God, fill us with that hope that we might more deeply engage in this world as you've called us to. Remind us of that hope so that we would seek to make it known and tangible right here in the present. Lord, fill us with your hope, so that we would point the world to the only hope, Jesus. We pray this in his name by your Spirit. Amen."*