

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18^{iv}

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. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.

^{iv} **About 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

The expectation of the Lord's imminent return has raised a concern: What is the fate of Christians who die before Christ's second coming? Although the followers of Plato believed in immortality only for the soul, and the initiates of the mystery religions expected to survive death, most pagans did not believe in life after death.

Paul claims that all Christians have been united with Christ in his death and resurrection. Those who are alive at the Lord's return do not "precede" (v. 15) or have any special advantage over, those who have died. Christian hope is centered in Christ and in union with him. "We will be with the Lord forever" (v. 17).