**Sermon Notes**

**“Our Posture Towards Death.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

**13Brothers 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. 14For 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. 15According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18Therefore encourage one another with these words.**

1. **We \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Matthew 5:4

4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

John 11:35

35 Jesus wept.

1. **We \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

See 1 Corinthians 15:22–26

*“A very strong proof of this destruction of death and its conquest by the cross is supplied by a present fact, namely this. All the disciples of Christ despise death; they take the offensive against it and, instead of fearing it, by the sign of the cross and by faith in Christ trample on it as on something dead. Before the divine sojourn of the Savior, even the holiest of men were afraid of death, and mourned the dead as those who perish. But now that the Savior has raised His body, death is no longer terrible, but all those who believe in Christ tread it underfoot as nothing, and prefer to die rather than to deny their faith in Christ, knowing full well that when they die they do not perish, but live indeed, and become incorruptible through the resurrection.*

*“There is proof of this too; for men who, before they believe in Christ, think death horrible and are afraid of it, once they are converted despise it so completely that they go eagerly to meet it, and themselves become witnesses of the Savior's resurrection from it. Even children hasten thus to die, and not men only, but women train themselves by bodily discipline to meet it. So weak has death become that even women, who used to be taken in by it, mock at it now as a dead thing robbed of all its strength. Death has become like a tyrant who has been completely conquered by the legitimate monarch; bound hand and foot the passers-by sneer at him, hitting him and abusing him, no longer afraid of his cruelty and rage, because of the king who has conquered him. So has death been conquered and branded for what it is by the Savior on the cross. It is bound hand and foot, all who are in Christ trample it as they pass and as witnesses to Him deride it, scoffing and saying, "O Death, where is thy victory? O Grave, where is thy sting?”* St. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*

**Questions for Discussion**

1. What new insight or idea within this sermon did you find most helpful? Where were you most challenged personally?

2. What does it teach us about i) God and ii) ourselves that Jesus freely wept when confronted with the consequences of sin and death?

3. Notice the command given to us in Romans 12:15. What do you think it means to “mourn with those who mourn”? How can Christians do this with one another? Brainstorm practical ideas.

4. Does mourning/grief come easily to you, or is it difficult? Why?

5. What do you think is meant by Walter Brueggeman’s idea that “without grief there can be no newness”?

6. Read Revelation 21-22. Is there anything about these chapters that stands out to you? How does the certainty of this future change how you view and respond to death and loss?