

Read: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Death is Like a Nap

1 Thessalonians 4:14

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.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Do you ask your parents a lot of questions? Did you know that asking questions is actually a good thing? That's how we learn as kids. But it's also important to understand that your parents can't answer every question. Sometimes a parent has to say, "I can't answer you now. Wait until I have more time." Or "I just don't know the answer to that."

Here's today's difficult question: "What do I say to someone at a funeral when their loved one dies?" What about a friend in school who loses a grandparent to death? How can you find the words? What should you say to yourself when death makes you cry?

Don't believe everything you see in movies. People don't wander the earth when they die or cross over to the land of the dead and live there... so long as people remember them in the living world. That's just not true.

The Bible tells us the truth today. The apostle Paul says, "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." God tells you that death is a sleep and Jesus will one day wake us up from that nap. Do you know why? Because Jesus woke up! He took a three-day nap after his death on Good Friday's cross and woke up early Easter morning. And guess what? He's never going to sleep again! So don't be afraid to nod off at the end of your life. Jesus will gently wake you up in time so you won't be left behind to miss a thing!

So, the next time you're wondering what to say, don't overthink it. Say this, "We believe that Jesus died and rose." Remember what that means. It means that your grandpa, your mom, your friend, or anyone who died in Jesus isn't actually dead. They're taking a nap and they are safe. Someday, Jesus will wake them up. And one day, he will bring us all to be with him.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- In today's devotion, what is death like?
- What do you think heaven is going to be like?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why do plants, animals, and people die?
- Why don't we need to be afraid of death?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Name two things that make death kind of scary to think about. How does Jesus overcome those fears?
- Life on earth is pretty short (70-80 years is average). Heaven is for eternity. Why is that important to remember as we go about our days on this earth?

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to die and rise so that I can have certainty that when I die, I will be in heaven. Please give me the simple words of truth and comfort to speak to others when they lose someone they love. Amen.