

13But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14For if we believe that Yeshua died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Yeshua. 15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

### I. CONTRASTS & CHOICES

#### A. It's Your Choice: Love or Hate (thanks to Mike Bickle for his thoughts related to this)

1. Love Grown Cold: In that day, the love of many will grow cold
- 9 *“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. 10At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. 11Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.12Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. 13But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.14This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:9-14*
2. Supernatural Love: Embracing Yeshua’s exhortation to love will usher us into a supernatural lifestyle as we love those who mistreat us by failing to honor us. Yeshua is not addressing self-defense against one who harms you physically. Acting in the opposite spirit of our enemies by actively loving them causes us to face our weakness.
  - 23 *...that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. John 17:23*
  - 44 *I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good... Matthew 5:44-45*
    - a. The call to love our enemies includes our **words** (bless), **deeds** (do good), and **prayers** (Mt. 5:44). It is an act of our will that transcends negative feelings. As we obey this, our feelings will change.
    - b. Our natural mindset is: “If you do something bad to me, then I will do something bad to you. If you do something good to me, I will do something good to you.” Our natural way is to give a reward for favors or to take revenge on those who trouble us. *“To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human, and to return good for evil is divine” (Alfred Plummer, 1852-1916).*
3. Did You Learn to Love?
  - 8 *And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” 1 Peter 4:8*
    - a. **“Above all**—you must grow in love that covers a multitude of sins. The Lord is watching you, and it is essential for you to respond in this way for the rest of your life.”

#### B. Accuser or Intercessor: Accuser of the Brethren or Intercessor for the Brethren

1. Yeshua’s Role: Yeshua’s at the right hand of the father interceding for us
2. Satan’s Role: Satan is before the throne accusing the brethren
3. It Takes Two to Tango: **two sided** accusation is destructive. If we’re not participating it doesn’t escalate as significantly

#### C. Suffering and Exaltation: Yeshua suffered before He was exalted and so will we

### II. APPLICATION

#### A. Our Choice: Awake or Asleep

4But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; 5for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6

#### B. He’s Coming: Let’s prepare and practice and be found faithful on that day.