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# “That ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”

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*— Keith R. Blades*

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A few weeks back my older sister died, succumbing to complications from a disease that took a terrific toll on her body. She had trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as her all-sufficient Savior when she was a child, being fully persuaded by the effectual working of “the gospel of Christ” that “the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” was her only hope for the forgiveness of her sins and justification in God’s sight. God, therefore, had completely forgiven her sins and He had justified her unto eternal life with Him. Therefore she died a justified woman, a child of God; who being now “absent from the body” is “present with the Lord.”

I unceasingly marvel and thrill at the effectual working of God’s word in all that He has designed for it to do. And in connection with my sister’s death I have particular reason to rejoice in its capacity to enable me to do just what I Thessalonians 4:13 says — “sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”

When death occurs, those “which have no hope” must seek for comfort and consolation in one or more of the naturalistic and/or philosophical remedies that this world makes available. For example, they may seek solace in the evolutionary thinking and fatalistic attitude of our time, (‘Death comes to us all, you know.’) Or they may try to comfort themselves by turning death into a blessing, (‘He’s out of his misery now.’; or, ‘He lived a full and meaningful life.’; or even, ‘God took him.’) Or, as a last resort, they will resign themselves to waiting for the eventual dulling of their sorrow and mitigating of their

grief that will take place to some degree as time move on, (for as the saying goes, ‘Time heals all wounds.’)

Yet as Christians we do not have to operate upon the feeble comfort of any of these remedies, not even the natural sorrow reducing effects of the passing of time. Instead we have the excellency of the power of God’s word to operate upon. We have the living words of the Living God designed by Him to live in us, which not only provide effectual comfort, but immediate assuaging comfort as well.

In I Thessalonians 4:13-18 God has the apostle Paul put together for us in one doctrinal package all of the issues that He has designed to effectually work within us to produce the Godly comfort that He wants us to possess. There are several of them and they range from the issue of the understanding and appreciation we should have for what it means to “sleep in Jesus,” to the issue of knowing the thrilling details of what it will be like when both “the dead in Christ” and us with them participate in the victorious activities of the Lord’s coming at the end of this present dispensation.

Now each of these issues effectually produces comfort on its own. Yet when packaged together, and taken together, God has designed for all of them to effectually work within us to the *n*th degree, so to speak. They have the power to work within us to such a degree that our response to death not only glorifies God, but is also to the chagrin of the Adversary, and can even have a profound impact upon ones “which have no

hope.”

It is indeed a wonderful thing not to be “ignorant...concerning them which are asleep,” so that we “sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” Moreover in connection with the comfort from “these words,” it is an additional privilege of God’s grace that by being so comforted we glorify “our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”  
— *Keith R. Blades*