

and it hasn't happened. Paul said in 1 Thess. 4 that when the Lord comes "we which are alive and remain ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ to the coming of the Lord will not precede those which are asleep. He thought then He was going to come pretty soon.

But now years went by and Paul had many missionary joyrnies, and he had great activities in the service of the Lord and he suffered many things. And he was sent to Rome as a prisoner. And eventually he felt that the end of his life was drawing near. Then he wrote those Pastoral epistles. Titus was certainly one of the last epistles that Paul wrote. Did Paul still have this hope after all those years or had he given it up by that time? Did he think that was a nice enthusaistic thing in the early days but now we've come on to where we are building for this life and we're thinking of making this a better world to live in and we're forgetting ~~that~~ this idea about Christ coming back.

Well, let's look at Titus, and see the similarity between what he says in one of his very last epistles, the Epistle to Titus, ch.2: 12,13, and what he said there in Thessalonians. In Tit. 2:11-13 very shortly before his death he says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Sounds like what he said to the Thessalonians years before isn't it? To turn from idols to serve the living and true God! It's a little bit enlarged - "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts" we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Has he given up these thoughts of the future? ---"in the present world"? Look how he goes on. "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

The very same two objectives he put before the Thess. at the beginning of his writing ministry he put in his Epistle to Titus, near the end of (his ministry). You see how very important hope was then in the life and testimony of the Apostle Paul and in his idea as to what place it should have in the life of the Christian.

Now look again at 1 Peter at this verse with which we started. Peter says, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, hope to the end . . ." You notice, "gird up the loins of your mind, be sober." We have many people today who are spreading the idea that if you just beime anything, you just believe something and it will do you good. If you are going to be healthy, wealthy, and wise. If you are going to be a great millionarie, if you are going to be a great power, you just think it enough and you'll get it! Whatever you believe you think long enough and you're going to get it! That's a kind of hope that rests on human fancy. Is that the sort Peter said we should have? Things look bad, they look dark, but let's just hope. Keep our eyes on the bright side and it will come out all right. No, Peter said, gird up the loins of your mind and be sober, and think through ~~XXXXXXX~~ things and see what the real situation is.

I remember a story I read when I was in college. I took a course in French, and we read a story in French which was very beautifully told. I don't remember now who wrote it. I think it was one of the