

Paul said, "We who are still alive will meet Him in the air." I don't think Paul meant that there will be those who are still alive and that he for all he knew might have been one who would meet the Lord in the air. You don't love something that is way off somewhere. You can love Christ, He is near* you. Christ is with * us all the time. We can love him. But Paul didn't say, all who love Christ. He said, All who love His appearing. Paul meant this then to be a very vital part in the life of the believe, that he love, long for the return of Christ.

vivid

This is a very ~~different~~ Picture that Paul gave in this first epistle, a very vivid picture of how the Lord will come down from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God and the ddead in Christ will rise first and we who are still alive, the rest will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. There are many who say this can't happen now. It could not happen for a long time (they say). There is a large group of people in this country now who say every single man, woman and child in this world is going to be converted to Christ! and then the Lord will come back! But that's not what Paul said. Paul spoke as if it was something that might * happen in his day.

Someone say*, Oh it couldn't come in Paul's day because Peter was ~~to~~ still living and Jesus= had told Peter what would be the manner of his death. That is what John tells us in the 21st chapter. Well lhe didn't come in Paul's day, but I don't know how many in Paul's day knew whether Peter was still living or not! And I don't know how many of them were aware of that last chapter of the Gospel of John. It may very well be that Peter had died before Paul wrote this epistle to the Thessalonians. We don't ~~day=because~~ know precise dates in those regards.

Oh, but Jesus predicted persecution. There's going to be persecution. He won't come back till there has been persecution. Well, there was persecution within a year after the resurrection (of Christ.) There was tremendous persecution under the Romans. There was tremendous persecution under th inquisition. There is tremendous persecution of Christians today. We don't have to say He can't come until there has been persecution!

Oh, someone says, He can't come until there has been an apostasy. Right in Paul's day, Demas left him having loved this present world. Right in Paul's day the Judaizers led many astray. There have been fallings away, fallings away, apostacies and apostacies. There many be many more. He many not come for a long time. But when * he (Peter) says we are looking for and hastening unto the return of Christ, when he says there is a crown of righteousness for all who love His appearing, ~~this~~ is it not a part of our lives as Christians? Is it not an important part of our lives as Christian ministers? That we should keep our eyes upon Him and look for and long for His coming.

q In Matthew 24 and 25 our Lord says repeated that we should be