

1Thessalonians 4:13-18

Big Idea: The Rapture is an event that should be anticipated and hoped for by followers of Jesus Christ.

2 Funerals

The funeral of a devoted Christ-follower is very different from others. The peace is real. The calm is authentic. The grief is obvious too, but as Paul wrote, Christ-followers "do not grieve like the rest who have no hope." Stronger faith produces greater peace.

The NT authors wrote letters to churches filled with Christ-followers. That is why the NT letters address the Rapture more than the Glorious Appearing. These were churches made up of Jews and Gentiles who had decided to embrace authentic faith in Christ.

The Thessalonian Confusion

Christ-followers in Thessalonica believed that the return of Jesus would happen in their lifetime. Obviously, it didn't. This led many to wonder about their loved ones who had already died. They were confused. "What happens to the dead in Christ?" They wondered if their loved ones who had died were at some sort of disadvantage. Paul explained they weren't by giving them a crash course on the Rapture.

- 1. Jesus will return with believers who have died (v.14).** All of our relatives and friends who died as followers of Jesus will return with Him when He comes for the church. When we say, "I will see them again", the Rapture is when that's going to happen.
- 2. Dead believers will receive new bodies (v.16).** The dead in Christ are at no disadvantage when Jesus returns. They rise first. Their spirits are reunited to their eternal bodies. Paul calls these resurrection bodies "glorified, imperishable, eternal" (1Corinthians 15). This happens in a split second. It happens at the Rapture.
- 3. Living believers will be transformed (v.17).** Our mortal bodies will not last through eternity. They must be transformed. In 1Corinthians 15:50-52 Paul explains this process. He uses a Greek word meaning "metamorphosis." Some will be alive at the Rapture. That is when we are changed.

Family Night – Read 1Thessalonians 4:13-18

People who follow Jesus go to be with Jesus when they die. We will see them again. Remind your kids that when we see Jesus, our happiness will be unimaginable. No more sadness. No more crying. No more pain and sickness.

- **Preschool/ Elementary** – Ask, "What is going to be the best part about seeing Jesus in heaven? Who do you want to meet in heaven?"
- **Middle/ High School** – Ask, "Who do you most want to meet when you get to heaven? How might a focus on the imminent Rapture benefit us every day? How does knowing what happens next benefit Christ-followers?"

Prayer: "Father, help us look forward to your return. Help us live each day for You. Amen."

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: This Wednesday, October 14 at 6:30.

Gravity: Gravity today in both services.

Today's Songs

Open the Eyes of My Heart Paul Baloche

Good Good Father.....Chris Tomlin

Your Love Never Fails.....Jesus Culture

Work Day

Rescheduled due to the weather. We need you, men, this coming Saturday, October 17, starting at 9am.

Boo Bash

Our annual fall celebration is October 25th. Pancake Supper, Trunk or Treat, Costume Contest, and Fun and Games. Participation and Donation sign-up sheets are at the Welcome Desk. Come join the party!

Trunk or Treat

Help! We need 50 or more cars in the parking lot at 4:00 on October 25th. You don't have to decorate your trunk! We are asking everyone in the church to donate one bag of candy to help with the expense of this event.

The Chosen Adventure for Kids, Weds. in October.