

Rapture Reunion

I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. Scott Madden Belize Trip
- B. **Slide#2 Concert Sunday night:** The City Harmonic, Shawn McDonald, & Royal Royal.
 1. **The City Harmonic** is a Canadian band. Style is Christian rock, worship music, alternative rock, piano rock, indie rock.
 2. **The Royal Royal** are 2 brothers from Canada. Style is worship, acoustic, pop rock.
 3. **Shawn McDonald** is a Guitarist from Eugene Oregon.
 - a) Doors open 6pm. Tickets \$15 & \$20 for VIP.
- C. **Prayer:** Jesus you first introduced us to this topic of *You returning for us. Let not your heart be troubled...promise to return again.*

II. **Intro:**

- A. **Slide#3 Title:** *Rapture Reunion*
- B. **Last Week:** The Thessalonians believed that since the Lord's return was *imminent*...some deduced, *why work?* 4:11,12.
 1. Still dealing w/the Lords return they wonder, *now that a few of our friends died, do they miss out on the Coming of the Lord? What happens to them?*
 - a) We will be **Reunited** to them at the **Rapture**. Thus the *Rapture Reunion*.
- C. Interesting so many get *stressed out* with this portion of scripture, when Paul's purpose to discuss the topic was for *comfort*.

III. **Slide#4 THE SLEEPING BELIEVERS (13)**

- A. Paul uses this formula **I do not want you to be ignorant** 5 other times. It means he wishes to introduce a new point.
 1. *I do not want you to be ignorant of Gods prophetic plan. Oh, so we can & are supposed to have understanding regarding the end times.*
- B. Our Subject, **Sleeping believers**.
 1. Paul doesn't want them to be **ignorant, sorrowful, nor hopeless**.
- C. **Slide#5a Sleep** = only used of the believers death.
 1. It means that to a believer, death is nothing more than sleep, a quiet resting, the idea of awaking again. When someone sleeps you have contact with them again.
 2. As sleep has its waking, so death has its resurrection.
- D. Jesus said to Jarius' daughter, **The child is not dead, but sleeping**. Mrk 5:39

- E. He said of Lazarus, **Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up. Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well."** However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, **"Lazarus is dead."** Jn.11:11-14
- F. **Slide#5b Don't sorrow** – Doesn't mean we are not allowed to grieve over loss.
1. Paul would have grieved over Epaphraditus in Phil. 2:27 if he died.
 2. Here is the **Heathens Hopelessness** in the face of death.
 - a) Listen to this letter from the 2nd cent. **"Irene to Taonnohris & Philon, good cheer! I was as much grieved & shed as many tears over Eumoiros as I shed for Didymas, & I did everything that was fitting, & so did my whole family,...but still there is nothing one can do in the face of such trouble. So I leave you to comfort yourselves. Goodbye."**
 - b) Grim Epitaphs were found on heathen tombstones. **"I was not, I became, I am not, I care not!"** [1st ½ is rt., now he wishes the 2nd ½ were true]
 - c) To the Greeks, **being rid of the body** was **their great hope**.
 3. We need not sorrow, for we have Hope. **What Hope?** (14)

IV. **Slide#6 THE SLEEPING BELIEVERS w/CHRIST (14)**

- A. Our resurrection is based on His resurrection.
- B. **Note**, the sleeping believers are **with Him**.
1. So, how are they **with Him** here & **not with Him** in vs.16?
 2. The Christian doctrine of **resurrection** assures us that **death** is not the end; the **grave** is not the end.
 - a) **Slide#7 The body goes to sleep, but the soul goes to be with the Lord** (Phil.1:20-24).
 - b) When the Lord returns, He will bring **the soul** with Him, will raise **the body** in glory, and **will unite body and soul into one being** to share His glory forever.
 - (1) **Man a 3 part being** – 1 Thes.5:23 [trichotomy, or dichotomy debate]
 - c) 2 Cor.5:1-5 **Msg For instance, we know that when these bodies of ours are taken down like tents and folded away, they will be replaced by resurrection bodies in heaven—God-made, not hand-made—and we'll never have to relocate our "tents" again. Sometimes we can hardly wait to move—and so we cry out in frustration. Compared to what's coming, living conditions around here seem like a stopover in an unfurnished shack, and we're tired of it! We've been given a glimpse of the real thing, our true home, our resurrection bodies! The Spirit of God whets our appetite by giving us a taste of what's ahead. He puts a little of heaven in our hearts so that we'll never settle for less.**
 3. **Slide#8** Paul also pointed out that the resurrection of the human body is like **the growing of a plant from a seed**.

- a) The **flower** is **not** the identical **seed** that was planted, **yet** there is *continuity* from **seed to plant**. The **dead body** is the “**seed**” that is planted in the ground; the resurrection body is the “**flower**” that comes from that seed.
- C. **Those who sleep in Jesus** - refers exclusively to church age saints. The Resurrection of believers of **this** dispensation.
 - 1. OT saints raised at end of Trib.

V. Slide#9 **THE SLEEPING BELIEVERS PROMISE (15)**

- A. We (living bel's) aren't going to arrive ahead of them.
- B. **Note:** Paul includes himself in this group *we*. He believed so much in the imminent return of Jesus, as he's called us to.
 - 1. Phil.4:5 **Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.**
 - 2. Titus 2:13 **looking for** the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.
- C. **The Coming of the Lord** – is obviously a series of events.
 - 1. **A dramatic beginning. An even more dramatic ending.**
 - 2. Rev.19:11-16 **Msg Then I saw Heaven open wide - and oh! a white horse and its Rider. The Rider, named Faithful and True, judges and makes war in pure righteousness. His eyes are a blaze of fire, on his head many crowns. He has a Name inscribed that's known only to himself. He is dressed in a robe soaked with blood, and he is addressed as “Word of God.” The armies of Heaven, mounted on white horses and dressed in dazzling white linen, follow him. A sharp sword comes out of his mouth so he can subdue the nations, then rule them with a rod of iron. He treads the winepress of the raging wrath of God, the Sovereign-Strong. On his robe and thigh is written, King of kings, Lord of lords.**

VI. Slide#10 **THE SLEEPING BELIEVERS RESURRECTION (16)**

- A. **So how will this all take place?**
- B. **The Lord Himself** – Not Michael, not Gabriel, not Peter, not a billion angels... **The Lord Himself will descend.**
 - 1. That should warm your heart.
- C. **3 Sounds:**
 - 1. **Slide#11a SHOUT**
 - a) A cry of command is addressed to the dead.
 - b) This was used in a variety of ways: **The cry made by the ship's master to its rowers. The cry made by a military officer to his soldiers. The cry made by a hunter to his hounds. The cry made by a charioteer to his horse.**

- c) “It was a loud authoritative cry, often one uttered in a thick of excitement.” Morris
 - d) Jn.5:25 **Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.**
 - e) Jesus stood as Lazarus’ tomb & shouted, ***Lazarus come forth!*** [if he didn’t call him by name, he would have emptied the graveyard]
 - f) **So**, this was addressed to all those who had fallen asleep in Jesus.
2. **Slide#11b VOICE**
- a) **Maybe Michael?** Jude 9
 - (1) **Or maybe another arch angel?** Dan.10:13 **Michael, one of the chief princes.**
3. **Slide#11c TRUMPET**
- a) I believe this is only heard by those to whom it is addressed.
 - (1) 1 Cor.15:51,52 **Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**
 - b) **Slide#12 Trumpet - The Jewish people** were familiar with trumpets, because trumpets were used **to declare war, to announce special times and seasons, and to gather the people for a journey** (Num.10).
 - (1) When God gave the Law to Israel, the event was preceded by a trumpet blast (Ex.19:18-20)
 - c) **In the Roman Empire, trumpets** were used to **announce the arrival of a great person.**

VII. **Slide#13 THE LIVING BELIEVERS SNATCHED AWAY (17)**

- A. Next, the **living saints** are caught up with the **deceased saints**.
 - 1. **Where?** In the clouds. **Why?** To meet Jesus. **Where?** In the air. **Result?** Forever to be with Jesus.
 - 2. **It was just like how Jesus left earth...while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.** Acts 1:9
- B. **Caught up** – (Gk. *αρπαζω/harpazo*) To snatch up, to seize, to carry off by force. Latin *rapturo/rapto* rapture.
 - 1. Greek scholar, Dr. Kenneth S. Wuest
 - 2. **Slide#14a To catch away speedily.** This is the translation in Acts 8:39, where the Spirit **caught away Philip** after he had led the Ethiopian to Christ.
 - 3. **Slide#14b To seize by force.** Jn 6:15 **Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.**

- a) I hope this doesn't suggest that some of the saints will be *so attached to the world* that they must literally be dragged away, Like Lot being delivered from Sodom.
4. **Slide#14c To claim for one's own self.** This views the Rapture from **our Lord's point of view** as He comes to claim His bride.
 5. **Slide#14d To move to a new place.** **Paul** used this word when he described his visit to heaven (2 Cor.12:1-4). Jesus Christ has gone to prepare a home for us (Jn14:1-6), and when He comes, He will take us to that glorious place.
 6. **Slide#14e To rescue from danger.** **Acts 23:10** this is when Paul was rescued from the mob & brought into the barracks. This suggests that the church will be taken home **before the time of Tribulation.**
- C. **Slide#15blank Together with them - Death** is the great separator, but JC is the great Reconciler.
1. This suggests that our Lord will have the happy ministry of **reuniting broken families** and friendships. :)
- D. **And thus we shall always be with the Lord** – **The place where** Christians will be was not so important to Paul as **the Person w/whom** they will be.
1. The entire content and worth of heaven, the entire blessedness of life eternal, is for Paul...embraced in the 1 thought of being united w/Jesus, his Savior and Lord.

VIII.Slide#16 THE LIVING BELIEVERS COMFORTED (18)

- A. We shall all be together as the great family of God & forever be w/the Lord.
1. Here the thought is continued upon **the reunion** of those who have gone to be w/ Christ & of those who are living when He returns.
- B. **So, what do I do with this info?**
1. **Comfort - Who?** Those who have lost believing loved one's, & those awaiting the Lords return.
 - a) Repeating these truths will bring assurance to the heart.
- C. **Slide#17 Rapture vs. coming for His saints:**
1. **At Rapture** Jesus comes **for** His saints. **At 2nd Coming** Jesus comes **with** His saints
 2. **At Rapture** we **meet** Christ in the air. **At 2nd Coming** we **return with** Christ.
 3. **At Rapture** saints are changed. **At 2nd Coming** no change to saints.
 4. **The Rapture** is imminent. **The 2nd Coming** is preceded by definite signs & is calculated to the day.
 5. **Slide#18 At Rapture** deals with the saved. **At 2nd Coming** deals with the saved & unsaved.
 6. **At Rapture** Satan is not bound. **At 2nd Coming** Satan is bound.
 7. **At Rapture** the world is not changed. **At 2nd Coming** the world is radically changed.

8. **The Rapture** no one sees Jesus. **The 2nd Coming** all will see Him.

D. **Slide#19** Sundays teaching in Mark 13:28-37...**watch therefore...**

E. **Slide#20** 1 min video (rapture)