

1) **Handel's Messiah: Bringing Scripture to Life - Week 7 of 7**, John Kincaid, Autumn, 2018 →

2) We wait for the **blessed hope**, the glorious appearing of our great God & Savior Jesus Christ. When He returns, there will be no warning. We call this event the rapture: the sudden *catching away* of all Christians to meet the Lord in the air. This event includes all those who have died in Christ. "We shall not all sleep", means that any Christians who are *alive* at the rapture will not experience death. They will pass directly from life on earth to suddenly be with the Lord. →

3) The dead in Christ will rise 1st; then living believers will be caught up together with them. In 2 verses, we have 4 promised blessings: **Return** of the Lord; **Resurrection** (all Christians who died will be raised); **Rapture** (all believers, living & dead, will be with Jesus forever); **Reunion** (with departed believers). Believers **shall all be changed** instantly with new glorified bodies. Robert Lightner: "Every child of God will be made like the Son of God". We will be like Christ in the sense that we will be perfectly conformed to His image, in a resurrection body like His. →

4) 1 Pet.1:18-20 we were redeemed with the precious blood of the Lamb. He was *chosen* before the creation of the world, but was *revealed, in these last times, for your sake*. Whenever the rapture is mentioned in Scripture, it is always related to practical application: John 14:1-3 Jesus will come for us; don't worry. 1 Thes.4:13-18 we will *always* be with the Lord, so encourage one another. 1 John 3:2-3 when he appears we shall be like him, so be pure. 1 Cor.15:51-58 God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, be steadfast. We could be face to face with the Lord at any moment. This makes all the difference in how we *live* each moment. →

5) **Live a life worthy of God**, of the Gospel & of our high **calling** in Christ. Believers are called to walk as ambassadors. What does that mean, in the context of the rapture? 1 Thes.4:13 Paul doesn't want us to grieve like unbelievers, who have no hope. We know that the dead in *Christ* are *not* gone forever. Departed believers are asleep in Jesus; they will rise and we will see them again. This is a tremendous comfort in our grief. The God of all comfort gave us this blessing so that we can share comfort with others. God can use even death to lead others to salvation. →

6) **Jesus is coming soon**; maybe today. We don't know the day or the hour; God knows. We *do* know that He *is* coming. God's Word tells us to *expect* it at any moment. Jesus told his disciples to be on the lookout. Be *prepared* to meet Him at every moment (remain true to Him). Swindoll says "*Stay ready, so you don't have to get ready.*" The Lord wants to find us on duty at our post when He comes, faithfully serving Him. Be ready, be patient; don't lose hope. →

7) When we hope for Christ's return, there is no hint of uncertainty. Think about a child hoping they receive the right birthday present. They worry: did I drop enough hints? I'm not sure they will get the right one, I hope so. No, our hope as Christians is 100% certain. Christian hope means we *eagerly anticipate* some future event. God *promised* it will happen; He knows the future, He can't lie. *Nothing* can defeat His purposes; His plans *must* come to pass. A teenage girl can fill her hope chest with items to be used later in her own home. She does not know the date of her wedding, but that doesn't diminish her confident preparation for marriage. Our hope includes resurrection, eternal life, but even *more: we can live each moment* of each day with eager anticipation. **In the next heartbeat**, we could be with our Lord. →

♪ 8) **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. (0:35) →

♪ 9) (0:35) **The trumpet shall sound** and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality

**10) Paul dances on the grave of his enemy: death itself!** Death resulted when Adam rebelled against God's law. **The fatal sting that causes death** is *sin*. Sin would be powerless without laws; how would we know if we broke one? God gave the law to show how sin offended Him. Wiersbe: The Law *exposes* our sin. The mirror of God's Word shows we are dirty. The wages of sin is death; that's what we deserve for our works. Jesus took the penalty we deserved. →

**11) Rest for your souls.** God has promised to keep us secure forever. When we were saved, we were *sealed* with the indwelling Holy Spirit, who guarantees our inheritance. The Greek word for guarantee in Eph.1:14 is still used today. It is their word for engagement ring. We will be the bride of Christ; until then, we wear His ring. You can't do anything that would make your salvation either stronger or less secure. We still sin, but salvation rests on God's promises, and nothing else. Salvation is a gift from God; there is nothing we could ever do to deserve it. →

**12) How can I be sure I'm still saved?** What if I have doubts or bad days? Only God can save us, and only God can keep us saved. God is going to glorify all those He predestined, called & justified. All of the Greek verbs in Rom.8:30 are in past tense. I was already glorified with Christ when Paul wrote Romans, 19 centuries before I was born.

All believers are *already* glorified - *it just hasn't happened yet*. God tells us history in advance. God is outside of time, not constrained by time. He doesn't have to wait to see how it turns out. In fact, the sovereign God *controls* how it turns out. The outcome is certain, guaranteed - not even one will slip away from the group. Jesus the perfect Shepherd loses *none* of His flock. →

**13) Every blessing comes from God. Be thankful** in all circumstances. Count your blessings. A *Spirit*-filled life leads to thanksgiving (led/controlled by, yielded to Holy Spirit). A *Word*-filled life produces thanksgiving (study, memorize, pray Scripture). Thanksgiving is the key to resisting temptation & growing in holiness. Paul was thankful while he was in *prison*. God is protecting us, limiting our trials. He is always with us: comforting us, pouring out grace, strength, hope. When you give thanks, you stop thinking about all the things *you* are *unable* to do, and instead, you reflect on what *God* has *already* done.

♪ 14) **Then shall be** brought to pass the saying that is written; Death is swallowed up in victory!

♪ 15) (0:25) **O death, where is thy sting?**

O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law

♪ 16) (1:23) **But thanks be to God** who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ

**17) When we sin, Satan accuses us before God.** We often feel guilty & accuse ourselves. But **we have an Advocate** who always makes intercession for us; He is our High Priest. When we sin, Christ defends us before God the Father. Jesus already paid for that sin. Case dismissed. Resist Satan and he will flee. When Satan reminds you about your past, trying to make you feel guilty, remind *him* about his *future*. Rev.20:10 Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire forever. →

**18) How can we know?** Christ displayed perfect love for us on the cross. He freely sacrificed His life, to pay our infinite debt. But His love did not end 2000 years ago. Christ *still* loves us, today & forever. God knows us completely, all our thoughts & secret sins, yet He still loves us. We are not worthy. But *God's* love is willing to sacrifice for us, with no limit. His love never *changes*, no matter what, and it never *ends*. →

**19) But what if I've done something bad?** Maybe I pushed God too far this time. If I ruin my life, does God still care about me? Yes, *God's* power can keep us secure. *Nothing* can separate God's child from God's love. God's grace is greater than all our sins. The hymn "O Love That

Will Not Let Me Go” describes this unbreakable love. Nothing can snatch you from His hand. No situation, no force in the universe can make God stop loving a believer. →

**20) Why does God keep loving us?** Exo.2:3 describes the basket that saved baby Moses as an “ark of bulrushes”. There are 2 Hebrew words for ark. Both mean “container to protect what’s inside.” The common word is used for treasure chests, even for the Ark of the Covenant, which held the stone tablets with the 10 Commandments. →

**21)** But the special Hebrew word is only used for 2 containers in the Old Testament: Noah's ark in Genesis & the ark of bulrushes that saved baby Moses in Exodus. What did these 2 arks have in common? They were both covered **with pitch**. Moses wrote both books, Genesis & Exodus under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Moses used a special word, reserved for these 2 arks. Why? In Gen.6:14, God told Noah: Make an ark... cover it inside and out with pitch. →

**22) Through faith in His blood.** In Gen.6:14 the Hebrew word translated as *pitch* is not the usual word for waterproofing. The word appears in the Old Testament over 70 times; this is the only place it is translated *pitch*. In all the other verses, it is translated as *atonement*, a covering / shelter (as in “pitch” a tent). *Atonement* is a ransom, the price which must be paid to save a life. When a sinner stands before God, the price required is the death of a perfect sinless sacrifice. We know that “Nothing but the blood of Jesus” can satisfy God the Father. →

**23) In Him.** As believers, *we* are painted with pitch, inside and out. Just like Noah’s ark, just like the basket of baby Moses. Christ is the ark who saves every believer; He rescues us from our sin. The waters of judgment cannot harm us now. There is no reason to fear a Flood (God’s wrath); no need to fear Pharaoh’s Nile river (the wrath of men). When God looks at a believer, He sees the blood of the Lamb. We are in Christ, and Christ is in us. →

♪ **24) If God be for us (Rom.8:31,33,34)** who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us.

**25)** Only 1 sinless person ever walked the earth. Christ is the only person who deserves to be in heaven. But Christ loved us, so He welcomes us to His home, not as a guest, but as His *bride*. Sinners will receive *perfect* bodies, with no scars. Only 1 resurrection body in heaven will have wounds. And by *His wounds*, *we* are *healed*. **He bears the scars** that *we* deserved for *our* sins →

**26)** When Christ returns, every believer will receive a **new body**. Our glorified body will be perfectly conformed to the image of Christ. This body will have no pain or diseases that plague our flesh bodies due to sin. Each believer will be completely **redeemed** from sin forever. →

**27)** Someday the final believer will come to Christ. His work of redemption will be complete in every child of God. But Christ will stay in His resurrection body, to be with His bride forever. We belong to Him. He said, “**I will never leave thee**, nor forsake thee.” →

**28)** Christ humbled Himself; our Creator became a **servant** to save us. Immediately after the 10 Commandments were given, Exodus 21 says that servants were given an opportunity to go free, after serving 6 years. But if a servant loved his wife even more than going free, he could *remain* with her. They would stretch his ear against a doorframe & pierce it with a spike. The servant’s shed blood & permanent scar would serve as a testimony of his undying love for his bride. →

**29)** Christ will bear our scars forever. His scars will always remind us of the price He paid to save us: His wounds have paid my ransom. On the road to Emmaus that 1<sup>st</sup> Easter, 2 disciples

recognized Jesus when He broke bread & stretched out His arms to them. They saw His wounded hands. So did Thomas, Matthew, Peter and John. They all did.

The scars will also be how *we* recognize Him. 1 Pet.1:8 Peter wrote, Though you have not seen him, you love him; & even though you do not see him now, you *believe* in him & are filled with an inexpressible & glorious joy. If this is our joy today, our joy will be *unimaginable* when we see Him face to face. But even *beyond* our joy at the rapture, there is more, *much* more. Our greatest joy is yet to come: We will worship our Christ, our Messiah – forever →

♪ 30) **Worthy is the Lamb - Revelation 5:12-13**

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.