

## What About Those Who Have “Fallen Asleep?”

May 19, 2024

Pentecost Sunday

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

*“...And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it.”*

1 Peter 3:15 (NLT)

People are fascinated with eschatology...the study of end-times. And Peter tells us that we are to be prepared to give an answer when they ask us what we believe.

The return of Jesus Christ is not only a truth of Christianity, it is essentially the ultimate truth of Christianity.

Every other doctrine ultimately consummates in Christ returning for his people, judging the ungodly, and setting up his kingdom where we will dwell with him forever.

### **The end of the story is the whole point of the story.**

The Bible is clear on what is to come in the future, and this is our hope. The final chapter of human history has already been written in Scripture.

We are waiting for our Messiah to return and take us to be with Him; to the new heaven and the new earth where we will worship him forever in perfect joy and peace. That is what the Bible promises those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Whenever you hear someone predict the timing of Christ’s return, you know, without a shadow of a doubt, that this is a false prophet. This person is a liar and deceiver.

Jesus clearly states in Scripture that no one but the Father knows the hour when these things will happen.

The next event of our Lord’s prophetic timetable is intended to comfort us. It is given to us as an encouragement. It is the event often referred to as the rapture of the church.

Paul says, *“Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of humanity, who have no hope.”*

There is no gap; there is no waiting; there is no “soul sleep” as some call it. There is no purgatory. There is nothing but a believer leaving this realm and instantaneously being consciously in the realm of the presence of the Lord.

Our spirits are in the presence of God even as our bodies lie in the grave. And when this event we call the rapture takes place, the sleeping bodies, the dead, will be raised.

No matter how long we have been in the ground (or in a jar) there will be a new resurrection body coming to meet our eternally glorified spirit. *“And the perishable will put on imperishable, and the mortal will put on immortality.”*

Notes:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---