

## **Never Say Goodbye!**

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I know this title sounds rather odd and even heartless but hear me out. For Christians, we never must really say “goodbye” to our loved ones who have also embraced Christ as their personal Savior through simple faith in His death and resurrection (Acts 16:31). The reasons for this are obvious.

First, we never must say “goodbye” for we know that we will see them again someday in Heaven. Revelation 7:9 records this scene of saints gathered together in Heaven: “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.” The Bible teaches that all God’s children will meet again in the next life.

When our loved ones in Christ are struggling to take their last breath here on earth, and they look up at us, we can say to them: “I will see you soon,” “I will meet you later,” or “I will meet you in the morning just inside the Eastern Gate.” It really is not a goodbye. The old beloved hymn reminds us about the thrilling moment of being reunited with our loved ones in Christ.

“Meet me there, Meet me there,  
Where the tree of life is blooming, Meet me there,  
When the storms of life are o’er, On the happy, golden shore,  
Where the faithful part no more, Meet me there.”

There is a second reason why we must never say goodbye. Jesus is going to return for His saints someday. This means we may never be separated from our loved ones if they remain alive until Christ’s return. Paul taught that “we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together” (1 Thess. 4:17). This means we will never be separated from our Christian brothers and sisters who are still alive at the time of Christ’s coming. But if our loved one dies, we should not sorrow like those who have no hope of seeing their loved ones again (1 Thess. 4:13). This is because Jesus will bring our saved family and friends back with Him at His coming to be resurrected and reunited with us. The Bible says, “even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him” (1 Thess. 4:14).

Paul the apostle also looked forward to seeing his deceased Christian friends at the coming of Christ when he said, “are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ as his coming” (1 Thess. 2:19). He also stated that at the return of Christ we will be “caught up together with them” (1 Thess. 4:17) which means we will meet our saved loved ones who have gone on before us. It will be a great reunion! So, never say goodbye!

Yes, it really is true. For those of us who have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, we have the blessed hope of seeing one another again in Heaven, and if Jesus returns before we die, we will be taken to Heaven at the same time and meet our loved ones who have gone on before us. Therefore, it really is not necessary to say goodbye. We will be together again, and it may be sooner than we think!

Interestingly, the word "maranatha" is an Aramaic expression that means: "our Lord comes." It was used as a greeting by the early Christians (1 Cor. 16:22). When the early believers gathered together or parted, they didn't say "hello" or "goodbye" but "Maranatha!" This is because they actually believed Jesus could return at any moment and together they would be taken back to their heavenly home.

In conclusion, those of us who are Christians through faith in Christ (Gal. 3:26) possess the tremendous and blessed hope of seeing our loved ones again – *here* (on earth), *there* (in Heaven), *or in the air* (at Christ's coming). And yes, we will be together forever. It's not goodbye forever but together forever!