

**“ARE YOU STILL AN ADVENTIST?!”**

**“And they came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”**

**CAMPMEETING SERIES #2, GGSDA, 8/15/15**

**INTRO.** A. Have you ever thought how it would be to be a **recruiter for the Catholic Church**, to recruit priests and nuns? Go into high schools on Career Day, set up your booth, seniors come by, give them a brochure—“Want to spend your life serving Christ?” “What do you have to do?” “Well, uh, you have to be celibate.” What’s that?” “Well—it means—no sex. No marriage, no family, no children.” How do they ever get any 18-year-old kids to sign up for that? Have to wear black robes for the rest of your lives, Spend most of their lives reading ancient books, singing 15<sup>th</sup> century Gregorian chants. Spend many days fasting and praying. How do you ever get anyone to sign up?

B. But if you think about it, that’s about what we tell young people about heaven. No sex, no marriage, families get split up. You have to all wear white robes, lose all your individuality, sit on clouds playing harps all day, standing on the Sea of Glass singing “alleluia,” all day. No TV, no sports, no clothes. No more time, just sit, you and God staring at each other. One junior high **music teacher** at a Catholic school, boys being terrible, “You better start singing like I’m telling you, because if want to go to heaven, all you’re going to do up there.” **Mark Twain** made terrible fun of heaven, said, all the things you want to do down here, can’t do any of them in heaven, and all the things you hate—going to church, practicing music, singing, praying, gardening—going to do all the time forever.

C.. **LSU**--Tried to think—What if they called me to do chapel for La Sierra University this Fall—kids are mad about the vote against women, talking about leaving the church. Come back, help us keep these kids in church--What would I say—Walk in, chapel, 1000 kids—besides what I said last week--

D. One verse—**REVELATION 20:4b** “**They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**” Verses around it talking about Satan being bound in bottomless pit for 1000 years, saints, beheaded for Christ, going to sit on thrones. Reign for 1000 years. Here at the end of the Bible—After all the talk about gold and Sea of Glass and glory—now God throws in His final offer—**TIME**. 1000 years. **I. THE TRADE:** A. Here’s the **OFFER**—**If you’ll just choose Me over that Dragon over there, I’ll let you come stay at My House—for 1000 years. Here’s the TRADE: You can party.** Keep all your money—if give \$15,000 a year, 60 years—Million dollars. Glass of wine, every dinner—10,000 glasses of wine. Read book Missoula, kids in college drinking, partying, sleeping around—can have all that. No church, no Sabbath, say all the 4-letter words you want, look at all the pornography you want.

B. **On the other side**—Church. Great music, standing and worshiping God. Friends who are full of God. Mission trips, When you don’t know what to do, you can pray—God will whisper to you what to do. God who loves you, no hangovers, no abortions, no guilty conscience in the morning.

\*\*\*AND, oh, yeah--this one little verse—**get to reign with God for 1000 years.**

C. What going to do—paragraph wrote 20 years ago—Bible says, heaven will be beyond wildest imagination. Grant us the desires of our heart. If I could win the lottery—Retire tomorrow. House on the **ocean, pool, Jacuzzi, basketball court, tennis court, putting green**, world-class **sound** system. Fantastic **landscaping**, but I never have to do any of the yard work. Be able to **dunk** the basketball. Vacations, can take my family anywhere around the world, take best friends along, play golf Pebble Beach, **St. Andrews. Hawaii**. Best hotels, swim with dolphins. Winter, **skiing** in Austria. No watch, no calendar. **Eat whatever I want**—ice cream, snickers, ice cream would be the **WORST** thing I would ever eat. Once a week, get **band** of great Christian musicians, do great music together like **HARVEST** at Anaheim stadium. Move all my **family** onto my street, all best friends move onto my street. Long dinners, great discussions, lawn chairs on the beach. **HEAVEN PRETTY CLOSE TO THAT.**

D. But it is not just what we will do, mansions, food, pleasure—It’s just the **TIME**. When my Dad died—would have loved—**5 more minutes**. Just 5 minutes, tell Him how we all felt. Promise take care of Mom. **Beesting—Thailand**—knew could die any minute, hour and a half from Hospital. Scared to death, die on the boat, never see Hilda and boys again. Made it, didn’t die, saw them the next day—**one more day**. More time. **Taking tests, to get into medical school**—whole life depends on this test, can’t get it done—just wish—had more time. **Football, Basketball**—get behind, came racing back, last 2 minutes, whole crowd standing, run out of time—just needed another minute. **Hawaii**—most

people get a week. One time, when wrote book—30 days. Every day—go to the beach, walk, swim, boys boogie boarding, watch kite surfing, read, sunset, wash up, get shave ice, go home. 29 more days. But then came last day. It's over. **CRUISE SHIP. Week. But then they make you get off. PHILIPPINES,** Old aunt had died, in casket, wake, uncles sitting around drinking, knocking, all ran out, scared to death, came back, glass over the face, moisture, still alive, ripped top off, she sat up, lived 5 more years. **Dutch cousin—heart surgery, my age. Quit drinking. Told him, science crystal clear—no smoking, no drinking, good diet—live 10 years longer. Has 11-year-old son. You're going to wish you had those extra years.** I'm 62. Feel like 22 inside, look in mirror, 62. How'd I get here? Maybe, if lucky, good health—20 more years with Hilda, boys. Pretty nice, walking with Hilda, river in Paris, sunset, gelato ice cream. 20 more years—long list of what we want to do, places to see. Scared—not enough time. **AND GOD SAYS—I'LL GIVE YOU AN EXTRA 1000 YEARS.**

E. Not nursing home years, not tubes and canes and walkers and doctors and hospital years-- These are motorcycle racing, whitewater rafting,, bungee jumping years, honeymoon making love years, These are not sitting on clouds, playing harps, white wings, staring at God for 1000 years. This are days like your best favorite days here, only 1000 times better, 1000 times more intense—every day—for 1000 years. **Never bored—never embarrassed.** Never miss anything down here. With your favorite people. With everybody who has ever died. Crazy good food. Music inside your head and everywhere without head phones. Never hurt. Never criticized or put down. Never thrown under the bus.

**III. PROUD TO BE AN ADVENTIST.** A. Here's what I would say to 1000 students at La Sierra: Yes, I can get disappointed with the Church sometimes. But I'm not leaving. Still has the **best picture of God. Still Jesus and the Sabbath. But I'm also proud to be an ADVENTIST!** Nobody even knows what the word means anymore. Means "Coming." Most churches believe it today, but 150 years ago, we were like alone, preaching in tents, Daniel, Revelation, beasts. Everybody else thought, we can fix the world, make our own heaven down here. No we cannot, God is going to have to come, take us away.

\*\*\*And we are still the only church in the world—teaches—**1000 years IN HEAVEN. They say, down here. Jesus said—JOHN 14:2-3 "In My Father's House are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you."** They think, just a few years in heaven, after you. We say—no, 1000 years.

B. And we're the only ones who say, God doesn't burn you, torture you, with burning hellfire, every day, forever. And only ones who say—Everybody goes into heaven at the same, nobody gets more heaven than anybody else. And—Nobody is up in heaven waiting for 50 years for their husband, wife to show up. There's no waiting in heaven, the moment you wake up, now my mother has to wait, but the split second my father wakes up—there she is. \*\*\***I'm proud to be an Adventist.**

**IV. REVELATION 20:** A. **"REIGNING." REVELATION 20:4b "They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years."** Obviously they used the pictures and words from their time. The highest world around them—kings. Castles. Saying—you will never be under anybody any more. You will be the top and not the bottom. Kings. Kingdom. Better than all the palaces and castles we've seen. Reigning.

B. **"With Christ." REVELATION 20:4b "They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years."** Yes---Heaven will have pleasure. Parties. Beyond you can imagine. But heaven is not just the ultimate Disneyland, the ultimate beach, mansion, food, music, sports. It's Jesus. God. Which means—all the good people, who think, don't need God here, don't need church—won't be there. Only for people—who want to be with God down here will be there. **REVELATION 21:3 "Now the dwelling of God will be with men." REVELATION 22:3-4 "The throne of God will be in the city, and they will see His face."** Why your picture of God is so important. Want to be with God—for 1000 years.

C. **TIME--**Aren't we going to be beyond time, isn't God outside of time, and when we go to heaven, time will just stop. No. No. No. No. No. God says right here—going to be there—with Him—for 1000 years. He's in time, we're going to be in time—with Him. We're going to do things, talk, worship, fly around the universe. If you're doing something, then you're in time. **WITH GOD.**

D. **COCOON—**Someone told me about old movie, science fiction, only seen 1 minute—aliens come down here, but look like people, Jack falls in love with Kitty, they're in a swimming pool, she says—want me to show you how we express love to each other? **YES!** They begin to come together—then she stops—we don't touch? Don't touch. Makes him go back to the other side of the pool. And then she casts

out this aura, this glow—and he is just covered with love, better than anything physical he has ever felt. What it will be like—with God—every second—for 1000 years.

E. What else do we need to hear here? **REVELATION 20:5** “**The rest of the dead lived not again for 1000 years.**” There’s one group—then there’s the rest. Not everybody is going up the first time. Yes, Jesus died for everybody. They are all forgiven. They have life. The door is open. You can always go home again. They don’t take it. Going to be groups. First Resurrection. Second Resurrection. **How can you tell if you wake up in the wrong resurrection?** No Jesus no angels. You can see the City. You can see Satan and all his demons for the first time. And the greatest sign? You won’t see me!

**APPEAL: A. GRACE**—Where’s grace in all this? Night before Jesus dies, knows they’re all going to run, one going to deny Him—people are going to nail Him, whip Him—still says—I’m going to go prepare a place for you, come back, take you to be with ME—**JOHN 14:3** “**That where I am, there you may be also.**” Doesn’t matter what you’ve done. Rotten stuff you’ve done, skeletons in you closet. Still wants you to be with Him—for 1000 years. Grace.

B. That last day in Hawaii—**ERIC—time to go**. Didn’t come, lying on surfboard. Thought, life was over, never be here again. Bought cheapest time share we could find—someday will pass it on to him, can go for the rest of his life. All paid for. All has to do—stay in the family. **WWII**—doctor healed a German, later got caught, going to be taken to prison, German looked at him—was one he had healed, took him to a back door, let him out—go, I’ve paid my debt to you. American, wounded, out of bullets, German crawling towards him, closed eyes to die—nothing. German helped me back to his line. Lived another 50 years. **ORTBERG**—Doctor called pastor, 35, 3 kids. Cancer. Had treatments, went for lab work, hoped, cancer-free—filled with cancer. Called pastor, going to die, not see kids grow up. Next morning, called 6 in the morning—not going to die. Lab switched results. Cancer free. Can’t stop hugging kids. Bible says—Somebody switched lab results with us—get to live 1000 years.