

The Rapture

1 Thessalonians 4.13-18

The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

We believe in “that blessed hope” which is the personal, visible, pretribulational, premillennial and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:14-17; Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:2-3).

In the past few weeks, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, we have studied,

- The Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ – Christmas Sermon
- The Cleansing Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ – Communion Sermon
- The Propitiatory Death of the Lord Jesus Christ – Communion Sermon

Today we begin to consider the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In two separate events,

- The Rapture of the Church
- The Day of the Lord – The Second Advent

[The Rapture is, and ought to be, the Born Again believers hope and expectation. The Rapture focuses Christian’s upon the eminency of Jesus Christ, or the immediate expectation of His return and our transformation. As a Christian expects and anticipates the immediate return of Christ his or her life will be dynamically and eternally changed.]

[In our Christian Journey, if we are watching and waiting for the return of our Lord and our personal evaluation (Judgment) at the Bema of Christ then our daily walk will be undeniably affected. Those who are not expecting will demonstrate a more casual and carnal approach to their daily spiritual walk.]

[So the question arises, does your life in Christ declare that you are watching and expecting Christ’s return and our rapture, or does your life demonstrate a different anticipation.]

[Various positions concerning the Rapture include:]

- **[The Mid-Tribulation Rapture Theory** – This position teaches that the Rapture occurs but it occurs half way through the Tribulation Period. These folk are looking for evidences that would reveal the Tribulation Period all around them. The Anti-Christ’s revelation and many of the signs that will accompany the Tribulation Period. These folk can relax because they will have sure indicators preceding the rapture that have not manifested themselves yet. Therefore, there is no reason to get overly excited in our lives and testimony.]
- **[The Post Tribulation Rapture Theory** – These folk believe that the rapture occurs at the end of the Tribulation Period, and that it is most likely that we will die under the sever persecution of the Anti-Christ, therefore, there is no reason to get overly excited in our culture. We will certainly see the Rapture coming.]
- **[The Preterist and A-Millennialist** – These folks declare that the prophecies of the Bible have already been fulfilled, and that Christ has already returned, spiritually speaking, and we are already living in either the millennium or on the New Heaven and New Earth. Therefore, what you see is what you get, just lay back and enjoy yourself.]
- **[The Pre-Tribulation Rapture Theory** – **This is the only correct, Biblically based position;** and it is the position of this sermon. This theory looks for the soon, could be immediate, taking of the Church of Jesus Christ out of this world. Every other position is simply wrong.]

A The Texts of the Rapture (1 Thess 4.17; 5.1-3; 1 Cor 15.51-52; Luke 17.34-36) [- Is there really a Rapture? Does the Word of God really reveal a coming Rapture?]

[There is a broad and growing teaching today that there is **“NO” Rapture** taught in the Bible. Many Bible teachers declare today that the Word Rapture never appears in the Bible. And they are partially right! The Word Rapture never appears in the English Bible, nor in the Greek original languages.]

[**The Word Rapture** is a Latin Word, so a Latin Word would only appear in a Latin Bible. The Word Rapture does appear in the Latin translations of the Bible. So, they are very wrong in stating that the Word Rapture never appears in the Bible. Because the word does appear in Latin Bibles using the language that the word comes from.]

[**The Word Rapture means “To be taken up, or to be caught up.”**]

[**Caught up** - *harpazo har-pad'-zo (gk)* - 1) to seize, carry off by force 2) to seize on, claim for one's self eagerly 3) **to snatch out or away**]

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1 Thessalonians 4.13-18

A. The Texts of the Rapture

[**Look at verse 17 in our text,**

*[1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.]*

[Clearly, the principle of being **“Caught Up”** is present in the Word of God in English. So, without any doubt, the Rapture is taught in the Word of God. Now, **I stress in the Word of God**, because modern translations are not the Word of God and may change that language. But they are and always have been the devil’s religious books. **But the Word of God the King James Bible clearly reveals the Rapture.**]

1 Thess 5.1

[**Other passages that reveal the Rapture include,**

- *[1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 ¹ But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. ² For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh **as a thief in the night.** ³ For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.]*
- *[1 Corinthians 15:51-52 ⁵¹ Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, **but we shall all be changed,** ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, **and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**]*

1 Cor 15.51

Luke 17.34

- [Luke 17:34-36 ³⁴ I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; **the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.** ³⁵ Two women shall be grinding together; **the one shall be taken, and the other left.** ³⁶ Two men shall be in the field; **the one shall be taken, and the other left.**]

1 Thess 5.1

[These are just a few passages of many that undeniably reveal a coming Rapture.]

[The Rapture is revealed over and over again in the New Testament and is undeniable **if you hold and study the Word of God literally.**]

B The Terror of the Rapture (1 Thess 5.1-3; Jer 30.7; Mark 13.19; Matt 24.21-22) [**For those who are Left Behind** there will be terror in this world.]

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A. The Texts of the Rapture
B. The Terror of the Rapture

[1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 ¹ But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. ² For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. ³ **For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.**]

Mark 13.19

[All who are not Born Again Christians will be Left Behind after the Rapture and all HELL will break loose in this world. This world will step immediately into the **Great Tribulation Period** and the next seven years on this earth will be the worst that this world has ever seen. It will be a terrifying period of time.]

[Jeremiah 30:7 Alas! for that day is great, **so that none is like it:** it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; . . .]

[Our Lord said,]

[Mark 13:19 For in those days shall be affliction, **such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.**]

Matt 24.21

[Matthew 24:21-22 ²¹ For then shall be **great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.** ²² And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: **but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened [Rapture].**]

2 Pet 3.9

[Folks there is a time, yet to come upon this earth, that will be so terrible that nothing this world has ever seen in all of its history will be able to compare with that time.]

[It is the,]

- [Time of Jacob's trouble]
- [Time of the outpouring of God's Wrath upon this world.]
- [Great Tribulation Period – According to our Lord Jesus Christ.]

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A. The Texts of the Rapture
B. The Terror of the Rapture

[According to the Word of God this terrifying time **begins with the Rapture** and ends seven years later with the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth.]

[Now, someone might say, preacher this idea of the Rapture has been preached for nearly two thousand years and it has not happened yet. Why would God wait so long to fulfill this Bible prophecy?]

[2 Peter 3:9-10 ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.]

[Almighty God delays this coming judgment of the world with the outpouring of His Almighty and terrible wrath because He wants, He desires, that all people should come to repentance. **What does that mean? It means that God loves you enough to give you another chance to get saved.**]

[God does not desire to condemn or torment anyone. He sent His Only Begotten Son to seek and to save that which was lost. God loves you so much He longsuffers with evil and sin hoping that you will choose to get saved. That's why the Rapture has not occurred yet.]

C The Triumph of the Rapture (1 Thess 4.13-18) [- The Rapture for the born again Christian is a doctrine of Eternal Hope, Everlasting Joy, and Encouraging Endurance.]

[The Rapture assures all who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ that there is a better time in our future. There is nothing that this world can throw at our mortal lives that can begin to compare to that time of eternal bliss and absolute perfection that will soon come upon us. We currently have **spiritual victory in Jesus**; we will one day soon have **complete victory in Jesus**.]

[The Rapture Assures Us That,]

The Rapture 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18 A. The Texts of the Rapture B. The Terror of the Rapture C. The Triumph of the Rapture

- **[There is no condemnation in our future]**

[Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. – Our eternal home is coming soon.]

- **[There is no separation from our Christian Friends and Family (vs 14-17)]**

*[1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, **even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.** ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: **and the dead in Christ shall rise first:** ¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain **shall be caught up together with them in the clouds,** to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.]*

[For the Christian mortal death is but a temporary departure and there is soon coming a day when we will all be together for all eternity to come. **That day will be the day of the Rapture!**]

- **[There is an eternal prepared place of promise for every born again Christian. (vs 17).**

*[1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: **and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**]*

[That prepared place our Lord Jesus Christ promised,]

*[John 14:1-3 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.]***

[We have a promised eternal home, we call it heaven, and it will begin to be ours at the Rapture.]

[Heaven is,]

- **[A Prepared Place]**
- **[A Precious Place]**
- **[A Perfect Place]**
- **[A Promised Place]**

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- A. The Texts of the Rapture
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[It will all be ours at the Rapture!]

D. [The Timing Of The Rapture – Pretribulation]

[2 Thessalonians 2:3–12 - Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God **[Anti-Christ]**. ⁵Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? ⁶**And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.** ⁷For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: **only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.** ⁸**And then shall that Wicked be revealed,** whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: ⁹Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁰And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹**And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:** ¹²**That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.**

Notice the timing of the appearance of the Anti-Christ and the beginning of the Tribulation Period. **He who letteth [Holy Spirit] must be taken out of the way (vs 7).** That happens at the rapture for we, born again Christians, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and will never be without His presence by the promise of God. So the church must be taken out, Raptured, when the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way to the Anti-Christ can do his diabolical deeds during the Tribulation Period.

This reveals that the Rapture must occur before the Tribulation Period can begin.

Also Notice verses 11-12, this Strong (supernatural) Delusion will fall upon every one who heard the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and denied Christ. There will be many saved during the Tribulation Period but none who refused the Gospel before the Tribulation Period.

So two possibilities are before you this morning. Which will you choose?

- **You can deny the Word of God,** that reveals the will and way of God to you, and you will, one day soon, experience all of the **TERROR of the Rapture.** The devouring destructiveness of that hateful adversary the Devil released upon mankind combined with the outpouring of the Wrath of God upon sinful humanity and this corrupt world. The terror of that time will be beyond compare in human history according to the Word of God.
- **You can Hear and Heed the Word God,** and be Saved today and participate in the rapture and all of the bliss, provision, and protections promised in the word of God. You will be taken up in the rapture and know all of the wonder of those fulfilled promises given by our Lord Jesus Christ.

The choice is all yours and you must make that decision before the Rapture occurs.

What do you choose today?

Grace Baptist Church, Aug 6, 24, evening
Grace Baptist Church, Feb 26, 2023
CrossRoads Baptist Church, July 24, 2016

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- B. The Terror of the Rapture**
- C. The Triumph of the Rapture**
- D. The Timing of the Rapture**