

# Rapture



## How Close Are We?

Fall Teaching Session  
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# Rapture: How Close Are We?

Tim Buck - 11/14/2017



## I. Is the Rapture Biblical?

1 Thess. 4:13-17	1 Cor. 15:51-52	Rev. 4:1-2
<p><sup>15</sup> According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep (died).</p> <p><sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the <u>voice</u> of the archangel and with the <u>trumpet</u> call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.</p> <p><sup>17</sup> After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up (harpazo) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.</p>	<p><sup>51</sup> Listen, I tell you a <b><u>mystery</u></b>: We will not all sleep (die), but we will all be <u>changed</u></p> <p><sup>52</sup> in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last <u>trumpet</u>. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.</p>	<p>After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the <u>voice</u> I had first heard speaking to me like a <u>trumpet</u> said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."</p> <p><sup>2</sup> At once I was <u>in the Spirit</u>, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.</p>

A. The three passages above, have very similar Rapture features:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. The Rapture is a future event for the church, that has not yet happened!

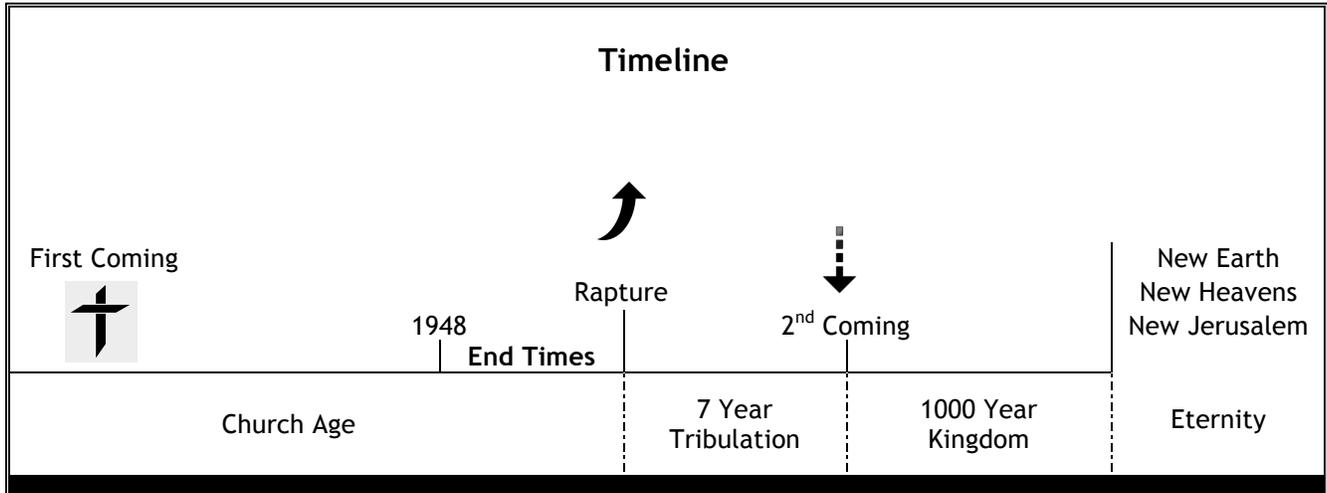
C. The Rapture is promised some \_\_\_\_\_ times in NT

Other Rapture Passages			
John 14:1-3	1 Thess. 1:10	1 Tim. 6:14	James 5:7-9
1 Cor. 1:7-8	1 Thess. 2:19	2 Tim 4:1, 8	1 Peter 1:7, 13
Phil. 3:20-21	1 Thess. 5:9, 23	Titus 2:13	1 Peter 5:4
Col. 3:4	2 Thess. 2:1	Heb. 9:28	1 John 2:28-3:2

### Answers

1. Shout 2. Trumpet 3. Change 4. 44 5. Death 6. Full Number 7. Church 8. Israel  
9. Father's 10. Bride 11. Resurrection 12. Church-Age 13. Antichrist 14. Revival 15. Wrath  
16. Jesus 17. Holy 18. Comfort 19. Season 20. Dead 21. Living

II. When is the Rapture?



III. The Rapture Compared to the Second Coming

Comparison	
Rapture	Second Coming
1 Christ comes for his own (1 Thess. 4:17)	1 Christ comes with his own (Rev 19:14)
2 He comes in the air (1 Thess. 4:17)	2 He comes to the earth (Zech. 14:4-5)
3 He comes for His bride (2 Cor. 11:2)	3 He comes with His bride (Rev. 19:14)
4 Unseen removal of believers (1 Thess. 4:17)	4 Display of Christ's Glory (2Thess. 2:8)
5 Only his own see Him (1 Cor. 15:52)	5 Every eye sees Him (Rev. 1:7; Mt. 24:30)
6 Tribulation begins (2 Thess. 1:6-9)	6 Millennial Kingdom begins (Rev. 20:1-7)
7 Delivered from God's wrath (1 Thess. 1:10)	7 Experience God's wrath (Rev. 6:12-17)
8 Before the Tribulation (Rev. 3:10)	8 After the Tribulation (Rev. 19:11-16)
9 Focus: Lord and Church	9 Focus: Israel and the Kingdom
10 World is deceived (2 Thess. 2:3-12)	10 Satan is bound (Rev. 20:1-2)

#### IV. What is the Rapture?

A. The Rapture involves the sudden removal of every Christian from the world

1. The final generation of believers will not see \_\_\_\_\_ 1 Cor. 15:51-52

*I tell you a mystery, we shall not all die, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*

2. It occurs when the \_\_\_\_\_ of Gentiles is complete - Rom. 11:25

<sup>25</sup> *I do not want you to be ignorant of **this mystery** - Israel has a hardening of heart until the full number of the Gentiles has come in*

**“Mystery” Definition (*mysterion*) = “Not previously known” (Eph. 3:5)  
“not made know in other generations, now revealed”**

**A truth hidden in the Old Testament Age and revealed in the Church Age**

The Church is a separate body from Israel, not revealed in the OT. When the church is complete, it will be removed from earth. This clears the way for God to lift Israel’s blindness and draw them to salvation in the Tribulation.

3. Three “Mysteries” of the NT

a. Church - Eph. 3:8-9

b. Rapture - 1 Cor. 15:51                      } Not revealed in the OT

c. Blindness of Israel - Rom. 11:25

4. Application

a. If the “Rapture” was not revealed in the OT, it must be a different from the Second Coming which is taught all through the OT - Dan. 2:44-45; 7:9-14

d. This eliminates the possibility of a Post-Tribulation Rapture which teaches the church will be raptured at the same time of the Second Coming

c. Rapture: Christ rescues the \_\_\_\_\_ before the Tribulation - I Thess. 1:10

d. Second Coming: Christ rescues \_\_\_\_\_ at Armageddon - Rev. 19:11-14

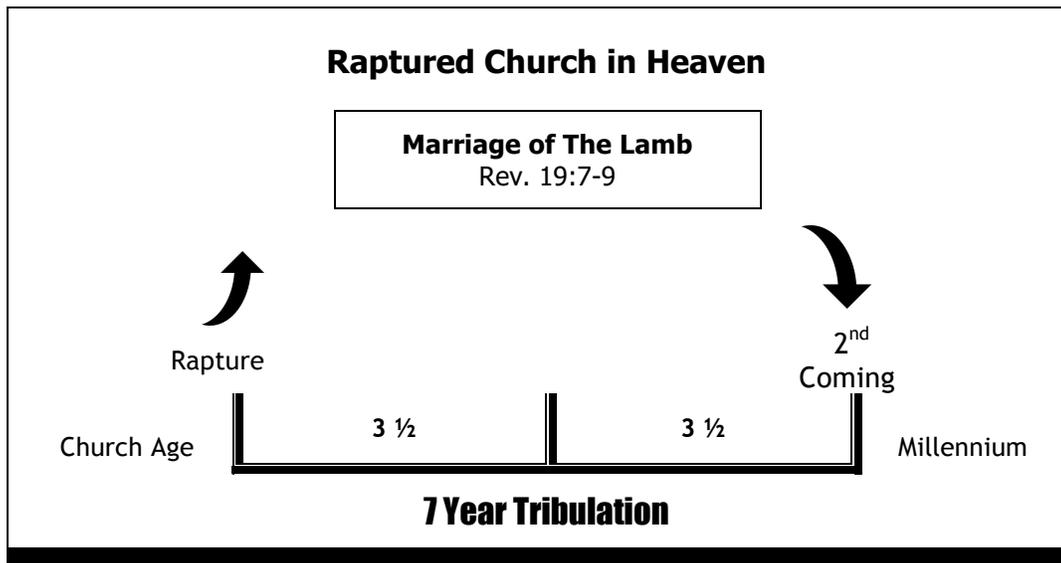
**The Groom comes when the Bride is ready (Complete)**

B. Rapture fulfills Christ’s Bridegroom Promise to take us to the \_\_\_\_\_ House - Jn. 14:3

*My Father’s house has many rooms... If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you will always be where I am.*

C. Rapture completes “The Church” as the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ - Eph. 5:31-32; 2 Cor. 11:2

*Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)*



D. The Rapture is the two-phase \_\_\_\_\_ of the Church - Jn. 11:25-26

1. The dead “In-Christ” will be Resurrected first
  2. The Living “In-Christ” will be transformed
- } Receive Glorified bodies

E. The Rapture ends the \_\_\_\_\_, and clears the path to bring God's judgment of the 7-Year Tribulation (Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week - Dan. 9:27) - 2 Thess. 2:12

*They all will be condemned who believed not the truth but delighted in wickedness.*

F. The Rapture removes the "**Restraining Ministry**" of the Holy Spirit allowing

\_\_\_\_\_ to be revealed - 2 Thess. 2:6-8

*<sup>6</sup> You know what is holding him back (Antichrist), so that he may be revealed at the proper time. <sup>7</sup> For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back (Holy Spirit) will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way (Removed at the Rapture). <sup>8</sup> Then the lawless one will be revealed...*

## 1. The Bad News

### ***One Minute After the Rapture...***



One minute, everything is normal.  
Then, without warning, all believers are GONE!  
What happens on earth the minute they are gone?

- The Church-Age and Age of Grace ends
- No believers remain on planet earth - No testimony, no salt, no light
- The world plunges into spiritual darkness - Zeph. 1:15
- The restraints of the Holy Spirit are removed - 2 Thess. 2:5-7
- A strong dose of delusion and deception is poured out - 2 Thess. 2:11  
Humanity will "**believe a lie**" - That which is false becomes true!  
The fanatical system of Antichrist (Islam) will pull men like a magnet
- Universal grace and sovereign protection for believers is taken away
- The Caliphate rises and Antichrist is revealed - 2 Thess. 2:3, 6, 8
- God's wrath begins to fall - 1 Thess. 1:10, 5:9; Rev. 6:17

## 2. The Good News

a. Today, the Holy Spirit is still holding back evil and Antichrist

b. Salvation will be costly but abundant throughout the Tribulation

1) People who heard the Gospel before will still be able to trust Jesus

2) The Tribulation sparks the greatest \_\_\_\_\_ Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9

V. Terms for the Rapture

Descriptive Terms & Definition		
Greek Word	Meaning	Verse
1 <i>harpazo</i>	Most common word used - caught up - snatched	1 Thess. 4:14
2 <i>parousia</i>	Describes the presence of Jesus at His coming	1 Thess. 2:19
3 <i>allasso</i>	Change - Transformation - Of our bodies	1 Cor. 15:51
4 <i>atamos</i>	Blink - “too quick to measure” - nano-second	1 Cor. 15:52
5 <i>rhuomai</i>	To rescue from danger in a rush - To deliver	1 Thess. 1:10

VI. 5 Facts about the Rapture in Thessalonians - (Rapture is mentioned in Every Chapter)

A. The Rapture promises that we will be delivered from \_\_\_\_\_ **1:10; 5:9**

<sup>10</sup>wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath (Tribulation).

B. The Rapture promises \_\_\_\_\_ Himself is coming back - **2:19**

*Parousia* = In His presence - Just as He promised - Jn. 14:2-3

*I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

C. The Rapture should lead us to \_\_\_\_\_ living - **3:13**

D. The Rapture is a \_\_\_\_\_ for believers - **4:17-18**

1. Comfort to those whose loved ones have died - **4:18**

Living saints will be reunited forever with their loved ones

2. Comfort knowing we will “*always be with the Lord*” - **4:17**

E. Wake up! God warns us to recognize the \_\_\_\_\_ of His coming - **5:1-2**

*Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, <sup>2</sup>for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.*

## VII. 8 Raptures in the Bible

### The Rapture of Enoch (Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5)

We read that in the days before the flood, “Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.” Enoch didn’t die. God took him (rapture) to heaven.

### The Rapture of Elijah (2 Kings 2:1-11)

The prophet Elijah went out with a bang in his nascar chariot of fire without dying in front of a host of witnesses.

### The Rapture of Jesus (Acts 1:11; Rev. 12:5)

Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mt. of Olives in slow motion to give the disciples a lasting memory. Just like our rapture, the word *harpazo* (caught-up - rapture) is used to describe the ascension of Jesus from earth to heaven.

### The Rapture of Phillip (Acts 8:39-40)

Phillip was raptured bodily from Gaza to Azotus, 50 miles away. The word *harpazo* is used to describe his event. Philip vanished into thin air after baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch. He was raptured not to heaven, but from one geographical location to another.

### The Rapture of Paul (2 Cor. 12:2-6)

Paul was “caught up” (*harpazo*) to “Paradise” (heaven) and then returned to earth. This was Paul’s personal rapture allowing him to experience the sights and sound of heaven which he was reluctant to discuss (v. 4-6).

The Lord wanted Paul to have first hand experience so when he taught the churches about the rapture, he knew what he was talking about. Since he had experienced his own personal rapture, Paul couldn’t wait for all believers to experience the same life-changing event.

### The Rapture of John (Rev. 4:1-2)

The Apostle John was temporarily raptured into heaven to receive special insight about future events for the book of Revelation. His rapture description closely mirrors Paul’s descriptions (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-53).

The timing of John’s rapture patterns the rapture of the church. It occurs after the church age (Rev. 2-3) but before the start of the Tribulation (Rev. 6-19).

### The Rapture of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:11-12)

After being killed by Antichrist, and both men lying dead on a street in Jerusalem for 3 ½ days, the Lord gives witness to the world of His supernatural power. The Two Witnesses resurrect and are raptured in plain view by the whole world... in slow motion for all their enemies to see... and film! **#Rapture**

**VIII. The Bible’s most unusual Event - 1 Thess. 4:13-18**

A. Who will be Raptured? Two Groups!

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ - **“the dead in Christ”** will rise first - 1 Thess. 4:16

a. Believers who have died since the Day of Pentecost

b. The Holy Spirit began building the church at Pentecost - **1 Cor. 12:13**

*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body*

Not OT Saints or Tribulation saints will be involved in the Rapture

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ - **“We who are alive”** are “caught up” - 1 Thess. 4:16

B. The Rapture is the Resurrection for the Church

**Bringing together the completed church**

<b>The Two Phases of the Rapture</b>	
<b>Phase 1 (Church-Age Saints in Heaven)</b>	<b>Phase 2 (Church-Age Saints on Earth)</b>
The spirits of deceased saints return with Jesus in the air	Living saints hear the sound of the trumpet and are instantly transformed
Upon returning, the graves are opened and their bodies are resurrected	Living saints instantly receive their glorified bodies fashioned like Jesus
The old bodies are instantly transformed into new glorified bodies	All living saints are supernaturally lifted up (raptured) into the air
Saints resurrect and wait in the air with Jesus for the arrival of the living saints	Jesus waits with open arms to meet the saints in the air
✓ The completed church returns to heaven with Jesus	
✓ Jesus presents his Bride (Church) to the Father	
✓ The Bride (Church) will be joyfully wed to Jesus at the Marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9), and remains in heaven with Jesus for 7 years	

## Questions About the Rapture

### C. Will the Graves Burst Open?

1. A preview of the Great Resurrection at the Rapture - Mt. 27:51-53

*The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.<sup>53</sup> They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into Jerusalem and appeared to many people.*

2. The world may be left with a large number of open graves and empty tombs

### D. Will the world hear the Sounds of the Rapture?

1. 3 Sounds in rapid succession - I Thess. 4:16

- a. A Loud **Command**
- b. The **Voice** of the Archangel
- c. The **Trumpet** of God

2. They may hear the sounds but won't see anything leading to confusion - Acts 9:7

*<sup>7</sup> The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.*

3. God spoke from heaven, people heard but didn't understand - Jn. 12:28-30

### E. Will we recognize former friends and relatives?

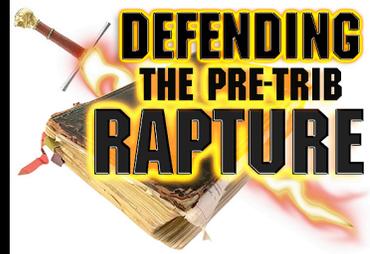
1. Jesus said we will sit down & recognize Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - Mt. 8:11
2. The disciples recognized Moses and Elijah - Mt. 17:3
3. The Rapture will unite us with former friends and love ones - 1 Thess. 2:14
4. Paul looked forward to meeting his friends at the Rapture - 1 Thess. 2:19

### F. What will our glorified bodies be like? (Four features) - Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15:42-44

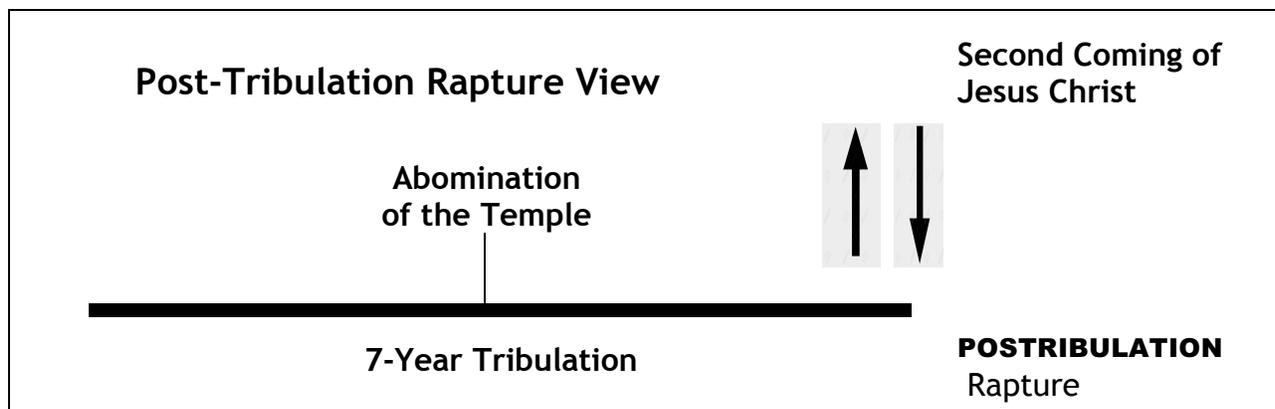
*<sup>42</sup> The body sown is perishable, it's raised imperishable; <sup>43</sup> it's sown in dishonor, it's raised in glory; it's sown in weakness, it's raised in power; it's sown a natural body, it's raised spiritual*

- |   |                     |   |
|---|---------------------|---|
| 1 | <b>"perishable"</b> | No more sickness and death              |
| 2 | <b>"dishonor"</b>   | No more shame because of sin            |
| 3 | <b>"weakness"</b>   | No more weakness in temptation          |
| 4 | <b>"natural"</b>    | No more limits to the time-space sphere |

## 10 Proofs for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture



### 1. Jesus promised to take us to the Father's House, not return the saints to earth



### 2. God never judges the righteous with the wicked - Gen. 18:23-33 (Abraham's Argument)

### 3. God promised to deliver the church from wrath and the universal trial of destruction (7-Year Tribulation) 1 Thess. 1:10, 5:9-10; Rom. 5:9; Eph. 5:6; Rev. 3:10

<sup>10</sup> ...I will also keep you from the *hour of trial* that is going to come on *the whole world* to test the inhabitants of the earth (Tribulation)

### 4. The 13 Church Epistles contain No Warnings of the Tribulation for the Church

a. Jesus gave instructions to Israel for the Tribulation - Mt. 24:15-22

b. There are no instructions in scripture on how the church is to deal with Antichrist and the horrific judgments of the Tribulation

**5. The Rapture is before the Tribulation in the structure of the book of Revelation - Rev 4:1-4**

**6. The 24 Elders portray the Raptured Church in heaven - Rev. 4:4**

*<sup>4</sup> Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.*

Only the church is given the same 3 promises: Thrones - Crowns - White Robes

**7. Only a Pre-Trib Rapture explains how the Marriage of the Lamb (Church & Jesus) takes place in heaven - Rev. 19:7-9**

**8. Only a Pre-Trib Rapture explains how the Church returns with Jesus at His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming**

A. Heaven's door opens and Christ and the Church return - Rev. 19:11, 14

B. Christ and the Church leave heaven riding white horses

**9. The Judgment of the Sheep and Goats contradicts the Post-Trib Rapture - Mt. 25:31-46**

**10. If the church is still on earth, there would be no need for God to send the Two Witnesses, the 144,000 evangelizing Jews and His special preaching angels to spread the Gospel - Mt. 24:14; Rev. 14:6-7**