

***Meeting the Lord in the Air***  
A Case for a Pre-tribulation Rapture

I Thessalonians 4:13-18  
November 1, 2020

**What is the Rapture?**

- 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

1. The rapture is for those who believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus. v. 14
2. The rapture begins with a pronouncement. v. 16
3. The Rapture brings us to the Lord forever. v. 17
4. The rapture will bring about our transformation.  
- Philippians 3:20-21a

**The Rapture compared to the Second Coming of Christ**

1. The rapture: Jesus comes in the air and returns to heaven (1 Thess. 4:17).  
The second coming: Jesus comes to the earth to dwell and reign (Matt. 25:31-32).
2. The rapture: Jesus comes to reward (1 Thess. 4:17).  
The second coming: Jesus comes to judge (Matt. 25:31-46).
3. The rapture: believers depart the earth (1 Thess. 4:15-17).  
The second coming: unbelievers are taken away from the earth (Matt. 24:37-41).
4. The rapture: unbelievers remain on earth.  
The second coming: believers remain on earth (Matt. 25:34).
5. The rapture: believer's are taken without warning.  
The second coming: other events prelude it.

**When will the rapture occur?**

1. The rapture happens immediately before the seven-year tribulation.
2. There is no mention of the church in The Revelation's description of the tribulation.
3. A post-tribulation rapture does not explain how the millennial kingdom is populated.  
- Revelation 20:7-8a; Matthew 13:41-42
4. The epistles make no mention of Christians having to endure a coming tribulation.
5. The Thessalonian believers are grieved because they thought their friends and love ones missed the rapture.

**Why the rapture?**

1. The rapture serves to preserve Christians.  
- Revelation 3:10

2. The rapture serves to bring about Israel's repentance.  
- Revelation 12:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

### **Conclusion**

1. Christians are to face death differently than those who do not believe. v. 13

a. Death for the Christian is equated to sleep.

b. The Christian's state of sleep should help us to not grieve.

2. Christians are to comfort one another with this truth. v. 18