

End Times

(The rapture)

Do not be a preterist!

I. A timeline of events

Church age to

Rapture to

Tribulation to

Second Coming to

Millennial Reign to (Latin “mille” meaning 1000)

New Heaven and Earth

II. What is the rapture?

thecripplegate.com/rapture-vs-second-coming-back-to-the-future-part-4/

A. [1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:6](#)

And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died^[a] so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.

¹⁵ We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died.^[b] ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died^[c] will rise from their graves. ¹⁷ Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ So encourage each other with these words.

⁵ Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters,^[d] we don't really need to write you. ² For you know quite well that the day of the Lord's return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. ³ When people are saying, “Everything is peaceful and secure,” then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman's labor pains begin. And there will be no escape.

⁴ But you aren't in the dark about these things, dear brothers and sisters, and you won't be surprised when the day of the Lord comes like a thief.^[e] ⁵ For you are all children of

the light and of the day; we don't belong to darkness and night. ⁶ So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Stay alert and be clearheaded.

B The word "rapture" comes from the phrase "caught up".

C At the Rapture, Christians are physically removed from the earth, together with all those who are dead in Christ, and we all get our immortal, glorified bodies.

[1 Corinthians 15:50–54](#) What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever.

⁵¹ But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! ⁵² It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. ⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

⁵⁴ Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die,^[a] this Scripture will be fulfilled:

"Death is swallowed up in victory."^[b]

III. Where are dead believers now?

A. They are in Heaven! (Not the forever heaven)

B. Stephen

Acts 7:55 ⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed steadily into heaven and saw the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honor at God's right hand. ⁵⁶ And he told them, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at God's right hand!"

⁵⁷ Then they put their hands over their ears and began shouting. They rushed at him ⁵⁸ and dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. His accusers took off their coats and laid them at the feet of a young man named Saul.^[c]

⁵⁹ As they stoned him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Paul

Phil 1:23 I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me.

C. What characteristics do believers have who are currently in heaven?

Rev 6:9-11 When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of all who had been martyred for the word of God and for being faithful in their testimony. ¹⁰ They shouted to the Lord and said, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you judge the people who belong to this world and avenge our blood for what they have done to us?" ¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them. And they were told to rest a little longer until the full number of their brothers and sisters^[a]—their fellow servants of Jesus who were to be martyred—had joined them.

1. They have self awareness
2. They know they are in heaven
3. They have a body like form

IV. What is the time context for the rapture as it relates to the tribulation?

A. The three views

1. pre-Trib – that the Rapture takes place before the 7-year Tribulation
2. mid-Trib – that the Rapture takes place before the mid-way through the 7-year Tribulation
3. post-Trib – that the Rapture takes place after the 7-year Tribulation (i.e. with the Return of Christ).

B. John MacArthur defense of Pre-trib

1. Jesus words

Rev3:10 "Because you have obeyed my command to persevere, I will protect you from the great time of testing that will come upon the whole world to test those who belong to this world.

2. Church is not mentioned in Rev 6-18

The term ekklesia is mentioned in Rev 1-3 but not again until Rev 22:16

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this message for the churches. I am both the source of David and the heir to his throne.^[a] I am the bright morning star."

3. I Thess 4:13-18

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4. Close “cousin” scriptures

John 14:1-3_“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. ² There is more than enough room in my Father’s home.^[a] If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?^[b] ³ When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.

I Thess 4:17-18 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ So encourage each other with these words.

V. What is the difference between the rapture and second coming?

A. With Rapture Christ comes for us in the air and takes us with him, in his Glorious Coming (the Matthew passage) – Jesus comes to dwell with us;

B. With Rapture – Jesus gathers his people himself; at his Glorious Coming, his angels do the gathering;

C. With Rapture, Jesus comes to reward ([1 Thess 4:17](#)^[L]); in his Glorious Coming – he comes to judge ([Mat 25:31-46](#)^[L]);

D. With Rapture the believers depart the earth and only unbelievers remain to usher in the Tribulation, but with Jesus’ Glorious Coming – the unbelievers are taken away and the believers (saved in the Rapture) remain to populate the Millennial Kingdom;

E. With Rapture there is no mention of the Kingdom, but the Kingdom begins with Jesus’ Glorious Coming.

Close:

“He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon!”

Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! Rev 22:20