

# The End Times According to Jesus

## **Small Group Guide:**

## **The End Times According to Jesus, Week 1**

### **Key Takeaways:**

1. The rapture is an event where believers in Jesus Christ, both living and dead, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.
2. The rapture is distinct from the Second Coming of Christ.
3. At death, a believer's soul goes to heaven while their body remains on earth. The rapture will reunite the soul and a resurrected body.
4. The rapture will happen instantaneously - in the "twinkling of an eye."
5. Believers' bodies will be transformed into glorious, immortal bodies like Jesus' resurrected body.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why do you think many pastors avoid teaching about end times and eschatology? How can we approach this topic responsibly?

2. Pastor Allen emphasized the importance of understanding what happens when a person dies. How does this knowledge impact your view of death and the afterlife?
3. Discuss the sequence of events described for the rapture (Jesus' shout, archangel's voice, trumpet sound). What stands out to you about this description?
4. How does the concept of the rapture being a "mystery" revealed by Paul affect your understanding of biblical revelation?
5. The sermon mentions that our resurrected bodies will be "extra-dimensional." What implications does this have for our understanding of eternity?
6. How does the promise of the rapture and resurrection provide comfort to believers? How can we share this hope with others?

### **Practical Application:**

1. Study the key Bible passages mentioned in the sermon (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, Philippians 3:20-21) for deeper understanding.
2. Reflect on how the promise of the rapture should impact your daily life and priorities.
3. Practice explaining the concept of the rapture to someone who is unfamiliar with it, using clear and simple terms.
4. Consider how you can live as a "citizen of heaven" (Philippians 3:20) while still engaging in your earthly responsibilities.
5. Pray for opportunities to share the hope of the gospel and the promise of resurrection with others.

## Closing Prayer:

Thank God for the hope we have in Christ, including the promise of resurrection and eternal life. Ask for wisdom to live in light of this future reality and for opportunities to share this hope with others.

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# 5-Day Devotional

## Day 1: The Hope of Resurrection

### Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

**Devotional:** As believers, we have a unique perspective on death. While it's natural to grieve the loss of loved ones, Paul reminds us that our grief is different - it's tempered with hope. Our hope is rooted in the resurrection of Jesus and the promise that we too will be raised. Today, reflect on how this hope impacts your daily life. Does it change how you face challenges or think about the future? Remember, for those in Christ, death is not the end but a transition. Let this truth bring comfort and courage to your heart, especially when facing difficult times.

## Day 2: The Mystery of Transformation

### Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:51-54

**Devotional:** Paul speaks of a "mystery" - the transformation that will occur at the rapture. This reminds us that God's plans often surpass our understanding. Just as our physical bodies will be transformed in an instant, God is constantly working to transform our hearts and minds. Today, consider areas in your life where you need God's transforming power.

Are there attitudes or habits that need changing? Invite the Holy Spirit to begin this work in you now, knowing that one day, this transformation will be complete.

### **Day 3: Citizens of Heaven**

#### **Reading: Philippians 3:20-21**

**Devotional:** While we live on earth, our true citizenship is in heaven. This dual identity can create tension in our daily lives. How do we balance our earthly responsibilities with our heavenly calling? Reflect on how your heavenly citizenship influences your decisions, priorities, and interactions with others. Are there areas where you need to align more closely with your heavenly identity? Remember, as citizens of heaven, we're called to represent God's kingdom here on earth, bringing His love, justice, and hope to those around us.

### **Day 4: The Comfort of Christ's Return**

#### **Reading: John 14:1-3**

**Devotional:** Jesus promised to return for His followers. This promise was meant to bring comfort to troubled hearts. In a world filled with uncertainty and fear, how does the promise of Christ's return bring you peace? Today, meditate on the reality that Jesus is preparing a place for you. Let this truth anchor your soul amidst life's storms. How might your life look different if you lived each day in anticipation of Christ's return? Allow this hope to motivate you to live with purpose and urgency in sharing God's love with others.

### **Day 5: Watchful Living**

## **Reading: Matthew 24:36-44**

**Devotional:** Jesus teaches us to be watchful and ready for His return. This watchfulness isn't about passive waiting, but active preparation. How can you cultivate a spirit of readiness in your daily life? Consider how this mindset might impact your spiritual disciplines, your relationships, and your choices. Being watchful also means being aware of God's presence and work in the present moment. Today, practice being attentive to how God is moving in your life and in the world around you. Let this awareness fuel your faith and motivate you to participate in God's redemptive work while we await His return.