



I. The Blessed Hope for all believers in JESUS

A. The rapture is part of our redemption, a mystery revealed to the Apostle Paul.

1. Jesus said, "I will receive you to Myself" —John 14:1-3
2. A great comfort to all believers—1 Thessalonians 4:15-18
3. The word rapture comes from the Latin word "rapiemur" in the Latin Vulgate Bible. Rapiemur is derived from the root verb rapio, which means to snatch, carry off or to seize someone or something quickly and suddenly ([www.latin-dictionary.net](http://www.latin-dictionary.net)).
4. The phrase "caught up" is the Greek word harpazo. It carries with it two meanings, one is "to carry off by force", and another means "to rescue from the danger of destruction". (Great Truths to Live By—Kenneth Weust)
5. How do we prepare ourselves His appearance—1 John 2:20, 27, 28-3:3

B. Christ's coming for His Church is described throughout the New Testament as a...

1. Time of redemption for our physical bodies—Romans 8:23
2. Time of assembly that occurs at the "last trump" —1 Corinthians 15:51-57
3. Time of reward for our service to Christ—2 Corinthians 5:1-10
4. Time of receiving what we have hoped for (ressurrection)—Galatians 5:5
5. Time of gathering for the whole family of God in heaven and earth—Ephesians 1:10-14
6. Time of perfection where the flesh is removed—Ephesians 5:27
7. Time of preparation for our return with Christ—Colossians 3:2-4
8. Time of physical transformation (bodies just like Jesus)—Philippians 3:20,21
9. Time of resurrection and translation—1 Thessalonians 4:17
10. Time of departure from the earth—2 Thessalonians 2:3

C. The day of the Lord is coming—1 Thessalonians 5:1-3

1. God has revealed His times and seasons in the 7 feasts of Leviticus 23.



- a) Two Greek words chronos speaks of a timeline; kairos speaks of appointments. The day of the Lord is hidden in the Lord's Feasts.
  - b) The Lord's feasts are a shadow of good things to come—Colossians 2:17
  - c) The feasts (moeds—appointments) of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations (miqra-rehearsals, assemblies) these are My feasts.—Leviticus 23:2
2. Three times a year the men of Israel were to appear at Jerusalem before God: Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, a foreshadow of Israel's dates with Messiah's visitations!
- a) Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits: Christ suffering, sacrifice, and resurrection—Isaiah 53:1-6
  - b) Pentecost: The ingathering of harvest, the Church—Isaiah 28:11,12
  - c) Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles: Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming in glory and judgment. Christ sets up the Kingdom Age on Tabernacles. There will be a great trumpet sounded to gather his elect upon the earth when Christ judges the Nations at His return—Matthew 24:31
3. The day of the Lord is a time of wrath and judgment for the world.
- a) And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.—1 Thessalonians 1:10
  - b) Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.—Romans 5:9
  - c) For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience—Colossians 3:6
  - d) But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ -1 Thessalonians 5:8-9

## II. Clearing up the confusion about the timing of the rapture.

### A. Two specific events that signal the day of the Lord is rapidly approaching

1. The departure of the Church from the earth
2. The revealing of the anti-Christ to the world.



B. Clarifying the concept of apostasy in modern Bible translations. The apostasy traditionally has been viewed as a departure from the faith. But the context is clearer when interpreted as a literal “departure” not ‘departure from’. Earlier English translations render apostasia as a departure or departing.

1. The World English Bible: Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to him, we ask you not to be quickly shaken in your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by letter as from us, saying that the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For it will not be, unless the departure comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of destruction. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 WEB)
2. 1534 Tyndale Bible: 2Th 2:3 Let no ma deceave you by eny meanes for the lorde commeth not excepte ther come a departynge fyrst and that that synfnll man be opened ye sonne of perdicion
3. 1535 Coverdale Bible: Let noman disceauē you by eny meanes. For the LORD commeth not, excepte the departynge come first, and that that Man of synne be opened, euen the sonne of perdicion,
4. 1540 Cranmar or Great Bible: 2Th 2:3 Let no man deceauē you by eny meanes, for the Lorde shall not come excepte ther come a departynge fyrst, and that that synfull man be opened, the sonne of perdicyon,
5. 1549 Matthews Bible: 2Th 2:3 Let no man deceyue you by any meanes, for the Lord commeth not, except there come a departyng first, and that, that sinful man be opened, the sonne of perdicyon
6. 1587 Geneva Bible: 2Th 2:3 Let no man deceiue you by any meanes: for that day shall not come, except there come a departing first, and that that man of sinne be disclosed, euen the sonne of perdition.

C. Clarifying who is referred to as the restrainer of the anti-christ. Is it the Holy Spirit or the Church?

1. The Church has authority over the spirit of anti-christ and is therefore the restrainer—1 John 1:1-4
2. The church is God’s dispensers of the Gospel of Grace—Acts 20:2-4; Galatians 1:6-8; 2:3-5
3. The Church is before the throne of God witnessing the Lord Jesus Christ releasing the seal judgments, the 1<sup>st</sup> seal is the revealing of the coming anti-christ—Rev. 4 & 5



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D. Don't be troubled or deceived concerning the timing of the rapture.

1. Paul makes a clear distinction between the destiny of the world and the destiny of the church in the last days.. The church receives her rest from persecution, the world receives punishment for not obeying the Gospel—2 Thessalonians 1:3-10
2. The world will be under the deception of a time-Christ because of unbelief. The church has been set apart for salvation and obtaining glory because of faith—2 Thessalonians 2:8-13
3. We are encouraged to stand fast and hold onto the traditions received from the Apostle Paul's ministry. Those traditions are the doctrine of the New Testament. They reveal who we are 'IN CHRIST'

III. All believers will give account for their lives at the time of their resurrection.

A. Live for eternity! Finish strong! Receive your eternal reward.

1. We all must appear at the BEMA (reward seat) to receive the our rewards for service—2 Corinthians 5:8-11
2. Faithful believers will receive rewards; unfaithful believers will suffer loss of rewards—1 Corinthians 3:10-15
3. This is not a time of judgment for sin but of the examination of our works.
  - a) He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life—John 5:24

B. Live to receive your crown! The believers' crown is a symbol of the glory and honor that will be bestowed upon us for how we lived for Christ.

1. Crown (Greek: stephanoo) was given as a reward of victory in the olympic games; man was crowned with glory and honor bestowed when God created him; The Lord Jesus was crowned with glory and honor in His exaltation; believers will be crowned with glory and honor.
2. The Incorruptible Crown given for spiritual discipline—1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NLT Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.



3. The Crown of Righteousness given for finishing the race—2 Timothy 4:7-8 NLT I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.
4. The Crown of Life given for overcoming the flesh—James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endures temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.
5. The Crown of Rejoicing given for winning souls (evangelism)—1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 NLT After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you! Yes, you are our pride and joy.
6. The Crown of Glory given for spiritual leadership (discipleship)—1 Peter 5:2-4 NLT Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor.