

What about the Rapture?

Matthew 24:27-28 (C/R Mark 13:24–27; Luke 21:25–28) (NKJV)

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NKJV)

Rapture is not a word that is found in Scripture. But it is used to describe a biblical doctrine.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Paul is seeking to encourage the believers in Thessalonica concerning some of their members who had died. He assures them that the Lord will return from heaven, along with a trumpet call. And when that happens, the dead in Christ will be raised, and those still alive will be caught up together with them.

Let's look at what the Word says about the Rapture:

The word “rapture” is taken from the Latin “rapio” for the two words “caught up” used in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. It has come into popular use today to refer to the Lord Jesus coming for the church, to lift her up into the heavens.

When is the Rapture?

When you are studying the rapture of the church, there are several things you need to keep in mind. First of all, the second coming of Christ is in two parts, separated by a period of seven years.

- The first part is sometimes referred to as the “Rapture” (1 Corinthians 15:52-58).
- The second part occurs when Christ physically and bodily returns to this earth on the Mount of Olives from which He ascended.
- The interval between these two events, known as the Great Tribulation, is divided into two, three-and-a-half year periods each. The seventy weeks described in Daniel 9:26-27 speaks of this.

Take note the rapture is not synonymous with the second coming. The rapture is when Christ will come in the air to receive believers into heaven. He will not come all the way down to earth in the rapture. He will only do that at the second coming, when he will be accompanied by the saints. (Rev.11:15)

The Great Tribulation is the “wrath to come” from which the believer is delivered by the Rapture. The children of God, “because they have kept the word of His patience, will be kept from that hour of trial.” (Revelation 3:10)

We believe that the Scripture teaches that Christians will not be judged with the world when God pours out His wrath in the day of the Lord. (1 These. 5:9) Scripture teaches us to look for the Lord's return, not for the tribulation (1 These. 1:10 and Titus 2:13).

Jesus said regarding His second coming, “*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only.*” We should live like Jesus is coming today. It may be closer than we dare dream.

The different views of When the Rapture will occur:

There are some Christians in the history of the church, dispensationalists they're called, who believe in something called a **pre-tribulational** rapture. So these people believe that because God is going to restore Israel and keep His promises in a literal, earthly fashioned, that he's going to do this during the seven year tribulation period. So God ends His working with the largely Gentile church by removing the church out of the world. So believers are raptured away in the secret coming of Jesus, taken to heaven for seven years, and then there is a public, visible coming of Christ.

But there are others who believe in a mid-tribulation rapture and a post-tribulation rapture.

Mid-tribulation view believes that the rapture will take in the middle of the seven year tribulation period. That after the first 3 1/2 years of peace, that when that Abomination of Desolation appears in the temple, which is the beginning of the last 3 1/2 years of wrath and devastation. The rapture of the church will take place. Many believe that Matthew 24:15-20 implies that the rapture will take place in the middle of the seven year tribulation.

Post-tribulation view believes, as you would assume. That the rapture is going to take place after the seven year tribulation period. Which implies that Church will go through all the devastation that Bible describes that will happen during the time when God will pour out His wrath on all the earth toward the unbelievers. Matthew 24:21-26 is the reference that those who support this view, interpret it to mean after the tribulation.

Your belief about when is not as an important issue as you being ready for the Rapture!