

The Rapture & the Book of REVELATION

(Why It Is Important to Our Lives)



"2 ...I am going to prepare a place for you... 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am." John 14:2-3 NLT

- What is the rapture? Is the rapture missing from the book of Revelation? Why is the rapture important to our lives?

There seems to be skepticism today concerning the rapture. Some people scoff at the idea of Christ unexpectedly returning to rapture people who are his followers. They say that the Bible does not teach this, it is all man-made. They explain that the word "rapture" cannot be found in the Bible.

For example, one person writes on Facebook: "The word RAPTURE is NOT in the Bible! It is a Man-Made Word!!" Another individual writes: "There is NO place in the Bible that uses the word Rapture! This is a false teaching."

The Apostle Peter warned of skepticism concerning the Lord's return. He writes in 2 Peter 3:3-4 (NLT), *"3 Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. 4 They will say, 'What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again?' [the Return not the Rapture] From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."*

The Central Lesson:
The rapture - it's real, be encouraged, don't miss it!

4 Observations...

1. The rapture is a **REAL** event.

The promise of the rapture is found primarily in two Bible passages: **John 14:1-3** and **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**. The rapture of the Church is the believer's blessed hope (Titus 2:13). The rapture is a mystery that was revealed to the New Testament Church (1 Corinthians 15:51-52). In 1 Thess. 4:17 the word for "rapture" is the Greek **ἄρπάξω** (har-pad'zo)—snatch away. In John 14:3 it is the Greek **παραλαμβάνω** (par-al-am-ban'o)—to take or receive alongside; to take (receive) by showing strong personal initiative. The rapture is distinct from the return.

The RAPTURE	The RETURN of Christ
Jesus comes in the air. 1 Thess. 4:17	Jesus comes to the earth. Zech. 14:4
Jesus comes <i>for</i> His Church to take her to heaven. 1 Thess. 4:17; 2 Thess. 2:1	Jesus comes <i>with</i> His Church to bring her to the earth. Rev 19:14; Zech. 14:5
The rapture is sudden and unseen by the world. 1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 5:2	The return will be expected and visible to the world. Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:30.

2. The rapture is **NOWHERE** clearly mentioned in the book of Revelation.

Regardless of the position one takes of the timing of the rapture—pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation, post-tribulation, etc.—the rapture is **not** directly mentioned in Revelation. It is absent. For example, read Revelation 19 where the rapture should be mentioned for the **post-tribulation** view, or Revelation 4 or 6 where the rapture should be mentioned for the **pre-tribulation** view. It is absent.

Some Bible teachers believe that in Revelation 4:1, where John is called up to heaven, sees an open door, and hears a voice saying, *"Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this"*—represents (symbolizes) the rapture. They point to the phrase *"Come up here"* with a voice that sounds *"like a trumpet"* (4:1) as being similar to the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 where believers will be *"caught up"* (1 Thess. 4:17) as a result of *"a loud command...with the trumpet call of God"* (1 Thess. 4:16). Also, the same phrase is used for the "Two Witnesses" in Revelation 11 when *"a loud voice from heaven"* says to them, *"Come up here"* and they are caught up to heaven (Rev. 11:12).

Other Bible teachers do not believe that this represents the rapture but simply John being caught up to heaven temporarily *"in the Spirit"* (Rev. 4:2) to receive a revelation about future events. But, those who believe in a pre-tribulation rapture, would say this is when it **would** take place before the Tribulation period described in Revelation chapters 6-19.

3. The **OBJECTIVE** of the book of Revelation and the rapture are totally different and explains the absence of the rapture in the book of Revelation.

The focus of the book of Revelation is the **return of Christ** (Rev. 1:7; 3:11; 19:11-16; 22:7, 12, 20) to fix this broken world, to judge evil, and set up his righteous reign over the earth in the millennium (Rev. 20). The objective of the book of Revelation is **much broader** (*judging a corrupt world, the Antichrist and Satan, establishing Christ's millennial reign over the earth*) than that of the **narrow objective** of the rapture (*snatching away of Christ-followers*). Therefore, this is most likely why the rapture is absent from Revelation.

4. The **ANTICIPATION** of the rapture is important to everyone's daily life.

- The rapture offers encouragement to struggling Christians. *"So encourage each other with these words."* 1 Thessalonians 4:18 NLT

Paul's main application of his teaching on the rapture is **encouragement**. Be **encouraged** when facing difficult times and when dealing with the loss of a believing loved one. **Serve** and **live** for God wholeheartedly. Be a **witness** to reach as many lost people as possible. Last, **resist temptation** and seek to live in purity (1 John 3:2-3; Titus 2:11-13; 2 Pet. 3:10-11; Rom. 13:11-14).

- The rapture motivates people to accept Christ as their Savior.

Are you living with anticipation of Christ's return? Are you ready to meet Christ at His return? Have you received Christ as your Savior?

Conclusion - The rapture - it's real, be encouraged, don't miss it!

Action Steps: ► Receive Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday's Bible study. ► Attend a small group. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus. ► Read Revelation 4. *What do you learn about heaven?*