

‘The Mystery of the Rapture’

(I Corinthians 15:51 - 53)

Intro: By now, we have learned that the word “rapture” does not appear in the Bible, but that does not mean that the doctrine and the principle isn’t taught in the Bible. Which we will get into in a bit. Perhaps some folks have a difficult time understanding the difference between those who accept Christ by faith in this dispensation of the church age and those saved during the Tribulation. The Redeemed of the Lord during the church age make up the Bride of Christ. Those saved during the Tribulation will enter the Millennium and live as we have lived during our life time, able to marry, able to have children. It will be the offspring born during the Millennium who will be Satan’s target. He will endeavor to delude them once he is loosed before the final battle. Any rebellion that will take place in the Millennium will be by those who choose to live by the flesh as do so many in this current dispensation. For anyone who has been saved for any length of time in a fundamental church, there should be no mystery concerning the rapture event. However, we will take a look at it anyway perchance someone is unaware of this future event.

I’ll not deal with the mid-tribulation view because I am convinced the Bible doesn’t teach such a view let alone a post-tribulation view.

I. The Mystery of the _____ – I Corinthians 15:51 – 53.

- A. While it may be a somewhat common notion to some that one has to _____ before they can go to heaven, well, not so quick!
 1. While it is true of the vast majority of people who have come to a saving faith in Christ, we know of at least _____ who did not have to die.
 - a. _____ was the first we know of – **Genesis 5:21 – 24 & Hebrews 11:5 & 6.**
 - b. _____ was caught to heaven in a whirlwind – **II Kings 2:1 – 12.**
 2. However, we also know that there will be a whole _____ in the last days who will be raptured out alive – **I Thessalonians 4:15.**
 - a. **I Thessalonians 4:13** – The question that had been posed was what will happen to those who were _____ by faith in Christ who die before He comes for us?
 - b. The same thing as happens to day – the body goes to the grave, the soul & spirit of man goes to be with the Lord Jesus Christ – **II Corinthians 5:6 – 10.**
 3. The rapture is not the _____ of Christ, though we can say, the rapture

involves the first wave of the second coming, but the truth is that both contain differing events.

a. Jesus does not set His _____ on planet earth in the rapture, He comes in the clouds and we are called unto Him there! – **I Thessalonians 4:16 & 17.**

b. We find the _____ characteristics of the Second Coming in the Old Testament book of **Zechariah 14:1 – 4.**

4. We know that the rapture could occur at any given _____ – **Matthew 24:32 – 39.**

a. It would seem reasonable that if we knew when the rapture was to take place, then like most people, we would put off _____ Christ till the last possible moment.

b. One never knows when death will over take us or that we will be conscious of our need to be saved when death confronts us and there is no _____ to think. (**Matthew 24:42 – 44**) – (Ready or not)

5. Perhaps someone is thinking to themselves, “I’ll wait for the rapture to take place, then I’ll know it is all real and _____ accept Christ!”

a. Not so fast there, buckaroo! You’ve got a few _____ with your plan.

b. First, if you have been presented with the Gospel and you’ve rejected it whether you intended to take it up later or at a more convenient time, today is the day - **II Corinthians 5:20 – 1:1 & 2.**

c. Secondly, there is **II Thessalonians 2:8 – 12.**

d. Meaning that all who _____ the present presentation of the Gospel and reject it or postpone it to some later time that never comes. When the rapture takes place, _____ chances, _____ hope for getting saved is gone!

B. For the mere professing Christian, they will find that the rapture holds the greatest _____ of their life for two reasons.

1. Knowing how to be saved is not the same as _____ to a saving faith in Christ **Ephesians 2:8 & 9** are very clear, we are saved by faith, not _____ alone.

2. If one is genuinely saved but chooses not live their lives as God expects, there is going to be an accountability or reckoning if you prefer – **Romans 4:12 & II Corinthians 5:8 – 11.**

C. Are you ready? If not why not? If your excuse is the way some so called professing Christians act, what about those who live their lives all out for the Lord! Those who chose not to live for the Lord do not negate the Scriptures and its truth. Your salvation doesn’t depend on how others choose to live their lives, but what you or I choose to do with what God’s Word says. It’s not their sin that keeps a soul out of heaven, but our own sin. “**Ezekiel 18:4 & Ezekiel 18:20** both declare that - The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”