THE CATCHING AWAY OF THE CHURCH (RAPTURE)

1. DEFINITION. The word “rapture” means “catching away” and is used to denote the translation of believers into heaven at the coming of Christ. DISTINCTION must be made between the Rapture and the Revelation. The first refers to the secret coming of Christ into the air FOR His own (I Thess. 5:17); the second refers to the later visible return of Christ to the earth WITH His own to judge and reign. Zech. 14:4-5.
2. THE PROMISE OF THE RAPTURE.
3. By Christ himself. John 14:2-3, 28 with Heb. 10:23, 37.
4. In the epistles. Titus 2:13; Phil. 3:20-21. I THESS. 4 :13-17
5. The last promise in the Bible. Rev. 22:20.
6. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE RAPTURE.
7. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven. “With a shout … archangel … trump of God … the dead in Christ shall rise first. I Thess. 4:16.
8. Then we (believers) which are alive and remain … caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord. II Thess.4:17.
9. THE SUBJECTS OF THE RAPTURE.
10. The dead in Christ. I Cor. 15:22-23, 52.
11. The living believers. I Cor. 15:51-52. “we” i.e. believers.
12. The rapture, then, includes only the saved. The unsaved will remain on earth for judgment. Luke 13:25-27; II Thess. 2:11-12.
13. THE TIME OF THE RAPTURE.
14. AT ANY MOMENT. Mark 13:34-37; I Cor.15:52. Christ taught his disciples to expect His coming not death. John 21:18-22.
15. BEFORE THE TRIBULATION. Rev.3:10. Type: Enoch translated before the flood (judgment). Heb. 11:5. (see prophetic order of old testament books Ezra through Psalms.)
16. THE RESULTS OF THE RAPTURE.

FOR CHRIST: (a) It is the answer to His prayer. John 17:24. (b) It procures His sanctification. Isa. 53:11; II Thess. 2:1; Heb. 2:13.

FOR BELIEVERS: (a) Raised and “changed” I Cor. 15:21-22, 51-52.

(b) Glorified: Phil. 3:20-21. (c) Heaven: Jude 24; John 14:3.

1. THE EVENTS FOLLOWING THE RAPTURE.

IN HEAVEN: (a) The judgment of believers’ service and giving of rewards. I Cor. 3:14-15 and 4:5, II Cor. 5:9-10, Rev. 22:12. (b)The marriage of the Lamb. Eph.5:25, 27, 32; Rev. 19:7-9

ON EARTH: The tribulation, followed by the return of Christ to earth WITH His saints to reign. Jude 14, Col. 3:4

1. THE PRESENT PRACTICAL EFFECT OF THE RAPTURE.

To KNOW and LOVE His appearing will produce:

Watchfulness: Mark 13:34, 37. Comfort: I Thess. 4:17-18.

Abiding in Him: I John 2:28. Patience: James 5:7-8.

Righteousness: Phil. 4:5. Service: II Tim. 4:1-2.

Purity: I John 3:2-3.