

## The Rapture of the Church

*John 14:1-3 1Cor 15:20-25; 50-53 Phil 3:20-21 1Thes 4:13-18 2Thes 2:1*

WHO:	The dead and living “in Christ”
WHAT:	1) <b>transformation</b> (corruptible to incorruptible) 2) <b>translition</b> to the presence of Christ
WHERE:	In the clouds (the air)
HOW:	In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye
WHEN:	At the last trumpet...at the coming of the Lord
WHY:	To be with Christ forever

**Post-tribulationism:** “The Church of Christ will not be removed from the earth until the Advent of Christ at the very end of the present Age: the Rapture and the Appearing take place at the same crisis; hence Christians of that generation will be exposed to the final affliction under Antichrist.” *Alexander Reese*

“**Mid-tribulationism** holds that the church will pass through the first part of the time of affliction. Generally, this view maintains a careful distinction between tribulation and wrath. The church will experience the great tribulation (the first half of Daniel’s seventieth week). For midway through the Book of Revelation the church is raptured at the sounding of the seventh trumpet.” *Daniel J. Lewis*

A **pre-tribulation** rapture position divides the second coming of Christ into two phases, the coming of Christ for His saints (the rapture) and the coming of Christ with his saints seven years later (the return in glory). This position preserves the separate identities of the two peoples of God, Israel and the church.

### Reasons for the Pre-tribulation Rapture Position

1. The purpose of the tribulation does not include the church
  - The 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel (tribulation period) pertains to Israel *Dan 9:24*
  - The tribulation is referred to as “the time of Jacob’s trouble” *Jer 30:7*
  - Prepare Israel for the King who was shortly to come *Mal 4:5-6*
2. The scriptural demand for immanency
 

*John 14:2-3 1Cor 1:7 Phil 3:20-21 Col 3:4 1Thes 1:10; 5:6 Titus 2:13 Jas 5:8*

  - The church was told to be watching for the Lord Himself, not for signs that would precede His coming
  - If immanency is scriptural then the church must be raptured before the signs of the tribulation period unfold

3. The promise that the church will not experience wrath  
*1Thes 1:10; 5:9 Rev 3:10*
  - Wrath begins early in the tribulation period consisting of war, famine, death, martyrdom and terror *Rev 6*
  
4. The restrainer in *2 Thes 2:1-10* who holds back the revealing of the Anti-Christ  
 There is One preventing the purpose of Satan from coming to culmination and He will keep performing this ministry until He is removed. It would seem that the only One who could do such a restraining ministry would be the Holy Spirit operating through the church.
  - As long as the Holy Spirit is resident within the church this restraining ministry will continue
  - When the church is removed this restraining ministry ceases and the Anti-Christ will be revealed
  
5. The promise of Jesus to take the church to heaven to be with Him *John 14:1-3*
  - Jesus will be in heaven until the end of the tribulation
  - Jesus will be on earth after the tribulation to reign as King
  
6. The twenty-four elders are already in heaven *Rev 4:4, 10-11; 5:9-10*
  - They appear to be resurrected, in heaven, judged, rewarded & enthroned near the beginning of the tribulation
  - These are things promised to the church *Matt 19:28; Rev 3:21*
  - The O.T. saints will not be resurrected until after the tribulation
  
7. Argument from analogy
  - The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah *Gen 18:16-19:29 2Pet 2:6-9*
  - The flood of Noah *Gen 7:1, 4, 23 Matt 24:36-39 2Pet 2:5, 9*
  
8. The Rapture is different from the resurrection following the tribulation
  - The Rapture only includes the dead or living in Christ *1Thes 4:16-17*
  - The resurrection at the end of the Tribulation includes those that were martyred during the tribulation and most likely the O.T. saints. *Rev 20:4-6*
  
9. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet of *Rev 11:15* is not the same as the “last trumpet” of *1Cor 15:52* which is associated with the Rapture
  - The 7 trumpets in Revelation are sounded by angels *Rev 8:2, 6*
  - The Rapture is initiated by the “trumpet of God” *1Thes 4:16*
  - The 24 elders are already resurrected and in heaven *Rev 11:16*