

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Mr. Hadley, Ashley Law, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Ms. Sowder, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

Out of Town: Angela, Connie, and Violet Law; Sarah Law.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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Does the Bible Teach the "Rapture"?

By Derek Long

Have you ever heard people talk about the "Rapture"? Have you wondered what the "Rapture" is all about? Most people when speaking about the "Rapture" are talking about a silent coming of Christ to remove the righteous from the earth. Some people think the "Rapture" will proceed a period of great tribulation followed by Jesus reigning on earth for 1,000 years. The "Rapture" is thus part of a larger idea sometimes referred to as Premillennialism which we will not examine in all its details in this article. What does the Bible teach about the "Rapture" though?

The simple answer to what the Bible teaches about the "Rapture" is the Bible is silent regarding the "Rapture." The word "Rapture" does not appear in most English translations of the Bible. The word "rapture" means to be seized or caught up. A passage sometimes appealed to as giving evidence for the concept of the "Rapture" is 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. There we are told, "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be

with the Lord” (NKJV). The language of “shall be caught up together” is sometimes cited as proof for the “Rapture.”

Does 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 teach what those who teach the “Rapture” normally teach? It does not! First, the coming described is not silent but is a noisy coming (vs. 16). It is something everyone will know is taking place. Second, those who are caught up to meet the Lord in the air shall always be there with the Lord (vs. 17). The “Rapture” theory often has these people coming back with Christ later on. Third, remember chapter 5 continues the thoughts of chapter 4. 1 Thessalonians 5:3 speaks about a time when, “sudden destruction comes upon them” (NKJV). The coming of Jesus in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 is when the righteous are rewarded but also when the wicked will be punished. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 is not a passage supporting the concept of the “Rapture” as we commonly hear it taught by many today!

What are some other passages which help us see whether the “Rapture” will really take place or not?

- The “Rapture” would have the righteous dead being resurrected several years before the wicked dead and before the end of time. The Bible teaches both the righteous and the wicked will be raised at the same time. Jesus said, “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:28-29, NKJV). Jesus places the resurrection of the righteous and wicked at the same time not many years apart. See also Paul’s statement in Acts 24:15. In addition, Jesus teaches the righteous will be raised in the last day (John 6:39-40,

44, 54). Proponents of the “Rapture” though have the righteous being resurrected years before the last day!

- The “Rapture” would separate the righteous being rewarded and the wicked being punished. Yet the Bible teaches when Jesus returns both of these things will take place at the same time. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8 says, “since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (NKJV). The righteous will receive rest at the same time the wicked are being punished. It is not that the righteous will be raptured several years before the wicked experience eternal punishment.
- Those who are familiar with the doctrine connected with the “Rapture” would be able to determine when the Lord will return based upon when the “Rapture” took place if their teaching were true. The Bible though plainly teaches, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matthew 24:36, NKJV). Many other passages teach the unexpected nature of the Lord’s return (Matthew 24:42, 44; 25:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3; 2 Peter 3:10).

Other points could be brought out showing the fallacy of the teaching of the “Rapture” but these points should help us see such is not what the Bible teaches about the Lord’s return.