

## Rapture of the Church

1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:51-58

Intro: The second coming of Jesus Christ for His church (the dead and the living in Christ) is the subject of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. This will be the day that the Lord Jesus fulfills the promise that He made in John 14:1-3. He told His disciples, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there you may be also." Paul assures the Thessalonians that the dead in Christ will return with Jesus and be the first to receive a glorified body (*resurrection*), and then all living believers will likewise be caught up, glorified, and meet the Lord in the air (*raptured*; cf. 1 Cor 15:51-58).

### Three-fold outline of the passage:

- I. The Assurance of the Resurrection 4:13-15
- II. The Activity at the Resurrection 4:16-17
- III. The Application of the Resurrection 4:18

#### I. The Assurance of the Resurrection 4:13-15; cf. John 14:1-3; 1 Cor 15:51-58

- A. The teaching of resurrection provides a *secure hope* (v. 13; see 1 Cor 15:51-58)
- B. The hopelessness of the unsaved pagan world
- C. The requirement for resurrection (v. 14)

#### II. The Activity at the Resurrection 4:16-17

1. The return of Christ (v. 16)
  - 1) The shout of Christ (**Lazurus, John 11:43**)
  - 2) The voice of an archangel, "Michael"
  - 3) The trump of God
2. The resurrection of the dead "in Christ" (v. 16)
3. The rapture of living believers (v. 17)
4. The reunion in the clouds (v. 17)



*"Come up here My beloved Church!"*

#### III. The Application of the Resurrection to Our Own Lives 4:18

1. Paul tells the Thessalonian believers in verse 18, "Therefore *comfort one another with these words*." The promise of Christ's return for us is a ***sure comfort for our souls!***
2. Paul assures the Thessalonians that the dead in Christ will not only return with Jesus, but they will be the first to receive a glorified body, and then *all the living believers will likewise be caught up, glorified, and meet the Lord in the air*. The promise of the *resurrection and rapture offers believers hope*, and *should foster watchfulness among us*. **It should also produce a purifying effect on our daily lives = less sin!**
3. Let us remind one another daily: **"It might be today, that Jesus comes for us!"**
4. **Let us reach out to the lost:** *"Tell them about the salvation available in Jesus!"*