

# Life & Times of Jesus #13

by Jack Hibbs

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*Jack Hibbs discusses the significance of the rapture of the church, emphasizing its hope and distinction from the second coming of Christ.*

**Duration:** 55:07

**Topics:** "Eschatology", "Rapture"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the topic of the rapture of the church, specifically in relation to Jesus Christ. The speaker expresses their hope that the rapture will happen soon, despite their current jet lag. They congratulate the congregation for their involvement in preaching the gospel and emphasize the importance of trusting in Jesus and seeking forgiveness for sins. The speaker then discusses the concept of the resurrection and the future reunion of believers in the air, highlighting the significance of this event and its portrayal in movies. The sermon concludes with a prayer for a deeper understanding of the hope that awaits believers until the second coming of Jesus.

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## Transcript

Would you grab your Bibles this morning and turn to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 in our teachings today, this morning as we look to our series continuing on in our series in the life and times of Jesus Christ and this morning we come to part 13 and part 13 is very important in that we are looking to Jesus Christ and the rapture of the church and it is my hope with this level of jet lag I'm under that it happens now. That would be great. Dana did pretty good on the guitar, huh? He's about, it's about a little after midnight for him right now in his mind so he did very fine.

I hope I can do half as good. While you're turning there I'd like to announce because I know so many of you were investing yourselves both financially and spiritually in prayer but congratulations is due to all of you who have been involved on December 6th. A baby was born in Stuttgart, Germany known as City Chapel, Calvary Chapel, Stuttgart, Germany.

God blessed it wonderfully. We hit the streets, cold turkey. We were not allowed to take music out there during the Christmas Mart which are thousands of, I don't want to describe it, it's just too nice.

But just marketeers and selling all their wares and very festive and very amazing and you know that's the home of Mercedes Benz and all that kind of stuff. It's a very, very important city. Very well trafficked at this time of the year and well God blessed tremendously because we just walked up to people.

Now get this, we walked up to them and said, excuse me, can we talk to you about Jesus Christ? Well, down the avenue there was a cluster of Mormons to the left and a cluster of Jehovah Witnesses to the right and a cluster of Scientologists and then there's a cluster of lunatics which were us. And you know what, we stood out like day and night because of the joy of the Lord. Really? And people made decisions for Jesus Christ and forgive me for my time but last night for us, we had enjoyed communion together with the church in a little room and it was a wonderful time and we had Sunday services and Wednesday night services and services during the week and the Lord brought, of course, you would have had to have known this, the Lord brought a man who was already born again walking the city streets for eight weeks, two months with no friends, no buddy.

He's a medical student and he saw some of our team praying with someone to accept the Lord and when they got done praying, he said, are you born again? And we said, yes. And he said, you know, praise the Lord, I am too. And he was so excited and he became, he was just with us from that moment on.

In fact, not only is he with us, but he has, he doesn't start med school in Stuttgart for nine months and he's our first usher at the church and he's doing a tremendous job already. His name is Eric. We'll just call him Eric.

Okay. He is the cutest guy you've ever seen. He's as black as the night, which means guess where he's from? Africa.

And he wants us to go to Africa to start a Calvary Chapel in Africa, please, is what he wants. And if you're new here, we have been trying to avoid Africa for two years and God won't let Africa out of our attention. But, uh, he's so excited and, and people began to come and we didn't know what to do because we hadn't planned on this, but someone showed up with a, with a little child and it dawned on us, Oh, children's ministry.

And before we could respond to children's ministry, the Lord provided for us, uh, as a children's minister, maybe I shouldn't say his name, but he is, uh, the United States European commander for reconnaissance for NATO. And, um, he is our children's minister. And, uh, he said, well, I think that I need to talk to you soon because, um, I know of at least 150 families that are going to want to attend this church in the next couple of weeks.

They had been praying for a Calvary Chapel. His wife has worked with Kay Arthur and her ministry. And so from knowing nobody on the streets, us getting off of a plane, going down the Avenue, God has opened up a tremendous door.

One of the days I was cold and miserable and, um, I wanted to get warm. So I walked into the, uh, the civic center building and I asked if I could see the mayor. I thought, why not? His office probably has better heat than anybody's.

I asked to see the mayor and I'll make a long story short. It was about an hour and a half visit. And the mayor, they want us to come back on June 26th and they want us for three days to, uh, take their stadium, their soccer stadium holds about 25,000 people.

Uh, they want us to show, um, we told them that we would bring a world class skaters, uh, because skateboard is a real big deal there. In fact, there are some professional skate guys there surfing. They're crazy about surfing.

Why? I don't have a clue, but anyway, they're crazy about surfing. They're crazy about all that kind of stuff. And the mayor's office was incredible to us.

And, uh, they said there would be no fee because it would be a community outreach. They said they'll help us in any way we can. But, uh, they asked us to please come back in June.

Uh, we don't know what's happening, but whatever's happening in Stuttgart is big. And, uh, we may need to go back there very soon to sign a contract for a larger facility to house the people that have been praying since May. Many of the, uh, army and, uh, Marines that are there have been praying for a Calvary chapel.

Is that amazing? We had no idea that they were there praying. So God is so, so good. And we have tight tapped into a gold mine, uh, for the Lord there in Stuttgart, Germany.

So I am assuming that if you don't have a passport, you need to get one soon because you will probably be visiting Stuttgart. And if you're saying not me, you're probably the one that's going to be going with this first because he's working in that city. So we're excited.

Let's bow our hearts and pray before the message. Father, we ask you in Jesus name that you might go before us and father that you might right now touch our hearts and open up this truth of the gospel that appropriately in these last days churches aren't talking about because I don't know if they have the brains or the guts or I don't know what it is to talk about it. But there's a dearth in the land about the greatest hope outside of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And that is Jesus is coming and he could come today. Your Bible makes it undeniably clear. And in the brief moments that we have together, there's no way that we can do it justice.

But father, by your mercy and by your grace, we ask you to help us to present a doctrine that your ancient prophet Isaiah spoke of in mystery that was revealed to us by your son Jesus and confirmed by the apostles. So father, we pray that this morning you might touch our hearts that we might see more clearly the hope that awaits us moment by moment until you come again. And it's in Jesus name we pray and all God's people said, amen.

First Thessalonians chapter four, beginning at verse 13. You know it well, but we'll read it together as we come to the life and times of Jesus Christ, a series that we're doing. And this is part 13, part 13 of a 16 part series.

So obviously we near the end. First Thessalonians chapter four, verse 13, Paul says, I do not want you to be ignorant brethren concerning those who have fallen asleep, or let me change it and make it more accurate for you. Those who have died, believing in Jesus Christ, as you sorrow like those who have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus Christ died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who sleep or who have died in Jesus. For this, we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep for the Lord himself. Now listen, everybody, the Lord himself, verse 14 says God will come.

This verse says verse 16, for the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a voice or with the shout of the archangel, the what, what the, oh boy, for the Lord will himself descend from heaven with the shout,

with the voice of the archangel, with the voice of the trumpet of God, the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be with the Lord.

Therefore, comfort one another with these words. Ever since the time of Christ and the giving of the gospels, the hope of the rapture of the church has been preeminent in the doctrine, in the teaching of God's apostles and God's disciples, beginning first in the new Testament with Jesus himself. Unfortunately, as we look to this book of Thessalonians, Paul was confronted with a problem to respond actually to a problem.

First of all, in four weeks time, Paul was only there for four weeks in Thessalonica. By the way, you can visit that city today. It's one of the oldest cities on the face of the earth.

Paul visited there and he planted a church and in four weeks he taught them two major doctrines. The first one is predestination. Most Christians don't even know what the word means.

In four weeks, he taught them the doctrine of predestination. And the second doctrine was the imminency of Christ's return. Now, jot this down in your notes.

You're all taking notes, aren't you? In your note taking, remember this. First Thessalonians equals the rapture of the church. Second Thessalonians equals the second coming.

Why? Because when Paul wrote to them the letter of First Thessalonians, he was speaking to them, reminding them of what he had taught them. He taught them that the Lord knew in advance, he knows in his foreknowledge those that are his. And also that he would be coming back in a time that would be unannounced.

It could be at any moment. There would be no warning. There would be no event that would have to precede the rapture of the church.

We use the word rapture. You notice here it's not found in your Bible, is it? Unless you have a Latin Bible, maybe you have a Latin Bible and you see the word rapture there. If you have a Greek Bible, you have the word harpazo.

Harpazo. If you have an English Bible, like most of us, you have two words put together. You have the word caught up.

It means to be violently removed from a dangerous situation. You're violently snagged or pulled away from danger. The rapture of the church, whatever it is, it means that the church is to be pulled away from a violent affair.

The church is to be removed from a destructive thing. This is the pure meaning of the words. Then you might say, well, why is there so many debates about it? Quite frankly, I don't want to hurt anybody's feelings, but you belong in one of three camps and you may not even know this.

By virtue of what denomination you were brought up in, you are either amillennial in your Bible understanding. Again, many people don't know what that even means. Or you're either postmillennial or you are premillennial.

By the way, out of the three views, and it is only three views of the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation that you can possess, out of the three, there is only one view that holds to the literal interpretation of scripture. Most people that attend a church called Calvary Chapel or Calvary Chapels Vineyard Christian Fellowships believe the same. Many independent churches believe the same, that they are premillennial in their theology, meaning they believe in the literal interpretation of God's word unless it states otherwise.

The Bible will always announce when something is symbolic or representative or pictorial or somehow an illustration. It's very, very important. The view that you hold forms the rest of your theology.

Example, some of you may be prone to thinking you can lose your salvation. I want you to know that you are not a premillennialist. You are either an awe or a postmillennialist.

Interesting view. Catholicism holds to an amillennial view. Various denominations do.

And it's incumbent upon you to know the difference. Know your Bible. And why? I said your Bible.

It's not so important that you know a denomination, the traditions of men. What does your Bible say? Get a concordance out. Get a lexicon.

Start understanding the word of God for yourself and see why the rapture of the church is taught and the Old Testament held it as a mystery and the New Testament reveals it as a great hope to the Christian. And forgive me if I get too excited because, first of all, I've been up since about 2.30. I've had nine cups of coffee. And on top of it, this is my favorite topic.

Why? Because I need it to happen today. I want Jesus to come today. Am I perfect? If you knew me, you know the answer to that.

Perfect has nothing to do with it. Being in Christ has everything to do with it. Is your name written down in heaven, friend? Can you stand up and can you say, Jesus has written my name in his Lamb's book of life.

I have erred. I have sinned. I have blown it.

I have blundered it. I don't deserve heaven. But you know what? I am under the blood of Christ.

I'm trusting in what Jesus did for me on the cross 2,000 years ago. And if anybody points a finger at me, I look to the cross. They can point all they want, but I'm trusting in the blood.

Has somebody criticized you? Has somebody come against you? If they haven't, cheer up. They will. Point to the cross.

There's a million things wrong with us. Point to the cross. Paul the Apostle said it's the power of the preaching of the cross that is the power of the gospel.

It's that power that saves us. The cross is what liberates us and sets us free. And the one who hung on that cross gave us the promise regarding the rapture of the church.

And if you're a note taker, and if you're a student, or if you're going to go back to your Bible class tomorrow at school, drive your professor crazy with this one. There is no verse found in Matthew's gospel concerning the rapture of the church. Not one.

There is no verse found in Mark's gospel concerning the rapture of the church. Not one. There is not one verse found in Luke's gospel concerning the rapture of the church.

Not a one. There's only one book that introduces us to the rapture of the church, and it's by Jesus Christ himself. When I say one book, it is the first book that mentions it in the gospels, and it's the gospel of John.

And it's from Jesus himself. In John chapter 14, Jesus said in verses one through four, he says, let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me, for in my father's house are many mansions, and if it were not so, I would have told you.

I go now to prepare a place for you that where I am there, you may be also. He says, listen, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there, you may be also. He says, for the way you know.

And do you know the way? In our note taking this morning, consider this, three points. Number one, the rapture is our hope as a Christian. There is no hope for the second coming.

Read your Bible carefully. The second coming of Christ is dreadful. The Bible says that the tribes and the occupants of the world will mourn at the great and terrible day of the second coming of Christ.

The second coming of Christ is altogether different than the rapture. They're at least seven years apart. But note this, in John 14 verses one through four, it is prophesied and promised by Jesus himself.

Can you jot that down? The rapture is our hope. And it's promised by Jesus first. John chapter 14.

Listen, it is so sure in the original language, I'm going to say something radical, that if you don't believe that Jesus could come back in the which is called the doctrine of imminency, meaning without warning any moment, then you can take a razor blade or scissors and cut out John chapter 14 verses one through four right now. Because if you have a mid or post tribulation rapture view, you've got a serious problem. Jesus Christ here says, I am going away.

And I'm going to my father's place. And there's many mansions there. I go to prepare.

I will come again. And I'm going to pick you up. And I'm going to take you to the place that where I am, you may be also.

I don't know how plain how much more plain it can be. If you've got Christ coming out of heaven, with a partial rapture, or a resurrection of the dead as he descends, and you catch up or you meet him in his descent, and then the kingdom is established. You don't have John chapter 14, verses one through four ever happening.

Do you read me? It's a problem. You can spiritualize it all you want and be a post millennialist or an all millennialist. But you cannot biblically be a mid or post tribulationist.

Can't do it. Can't do it. The Bible says in Titus chapter two, verse 13.

Paul says, while we wait for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Did you know that's good news? Did you know that's a hope? Did you know concerning the second coming that there are hundreds of prophecies that have to be fulfilled before Christ can ever come back to the earth? But did you know that regarding the rapture, there's not one prophecy that's needed

before he could come? Did you know that? Somebody help me. Did you know that? I need some amen so I can stay awake.

It's amazing. And yet you can turn on a Bible program and, and the announcer will say in a moment, our pastor teacher whatsoever, what's his face is going to be teaching on the rapture of the church. And you go, Oh boy, I need some encouragement.

And then the guy comes on and says, let's turn on our Bibles. We're going to learn about the second coming. Those are two completely different events.

And if you haven't studied it and found out the difference you ought to, because you don't have a blessed hope yet. There's no blessed hope about the second coming. It's a dreadful day.

As I said, the Bible says, all those who dwell on the earth will weep and mourn when they see the wrath of the lamb and his robe will be splattered with blood. Not concerning the rapture. That's altogether different.

Altogether different indeed. Very quickly. The Bible warns us, do not be ignorant concerning Satan's devices, Satan's plans.

So guess what? Guess what we're ignorant of as a church. Flip Wilson even tried to tell us the devil made us do it. Boy, you're a young audience.

You don't remember that one. The Bible says, don't be ignorant about spiritual gifts. What's the church ignorant about? Spiritual gifts.

I don't believe in them. Oh, I believe in all of them and more. We got one side and we got the other side.

People rolling around swinging from the chandeliers. People over here, they're afraid to move or walk because they don't know what's going to happen. The truth is in the middle where it's usually found.

Don't be ignorant about spiritual gifts. Don't be ignorant about Satan's devices. And Paul said in first Thessalonians chapter four, verse 13, don't be ignorant about the rapture of the church and the hope that it brings.

I don't know what church you attend. Maybe it's this one. Does it preach and teach the rapture of the church? Could it be that today you're driving down the street and the rapture happens? According to the Bible, it can.

Could it be that before your mortgage payment comes near the end of the month that the rapture happens? Oh, yeah. Lord, come on, Jesus. That'll get you.

It's a promise. It's real. I find it amazing that there are so few Christians believing it, yet the New Age movement is explaining our departure in their own writings.

Now, I don't encourage you to read any New Age magazines or New Age books. Don't do it unless you're really grounded, because you'll get messed up. It's demonic material.

But do you know those people? They are already writing and explaining that the bigoted, narrow-minded people called fundamental Christians will be removed by the force to be taken out of the dimension that will allow evolution to take its final step. You're laughing. This is exactly what they're saying.

Read the book. For evolution to take its final step, which is man's awakening to the fact that he is a God, Satan's doctrine will visit the earth again as it was in the Garden of Eden. What did he tell Eve? Hey, sweetie, you can become a God.

Isn't it wild? The New Age movement, they believe that we're going to get snagged out of here by some flying saucer of space thing. But most Christians go, huh? It's not a saucer. It's the voice of the archangels.

The trumpet of God is going to call us out. But let's continue on. It's promised by Jesus.

The rapture is our hope, promised by Jesus. Secondly, it was a historical fact concerning Christianity. It was historical, a true historical fact.

How do we know? Verse 14 of Thessalonians, for if we believe, you ought to mark that. Do you? Do you believe that Jesus died and rose again from the dead? Then you're welcome to stay here. If you don't, you're welcome.

If you don't, you better not move. If you already believe it, stay put. But if you don't believe it, don't you dare move.

Ushers, anybody move now. Seize them. We have good news for you.

If you believe that Jesus Christ rose again, even so God will bring with him. Where are they? They're with him. Who are they? Those who died in Jesus.

You know anybody who died in Jesus? I tell you, I saw the saddest thing a while back. I was doing a funeral in Hollywood. Yeah, it's true.

People die in Hollywood. I think they live on forever, huh? It's a funeral. And as I was leaving, there was a lady sitting next to a tombstone.

She had her lawn chair. She had an ice chest. And she had Pepsi and stuff out there.

She had flowers. That's the saddest thing I've ever seen. She was elderly.

Maybe it was her husband who had died. What in the world is she doing there? She's trying to be as close to him as possible. But honey, he's not there.

His body may be there. But that part that sang to her or whispered in her ear or kissed her or sang her a song or had ideas or whatever it was, the part that made the body move is long gone. According to the Bible, that man is either in heaven or hell.

And there's nothing to do with that human body, that corpse there in the grave. He's gone. The Bible says to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord if you're a Christian, but to be absent from the body without being a Christian, the Bible says is to be in hell.

It's a historical fact that Christianity believed in the rapture of the church. In fact, so much so, Paul hung onto it as a hope. In 2 Timothy chapter 4, verse 8, you can jot it down.

Paul says, and remember, he's in a prison. His head's about ready to get cut off from his shoulders. Rome's going to kill him.

And I love his little spunkiness. He didn't say, finally, there's laid up for me a wristwatch and jewelry for my arms and ankles. No, he says there's a crown for my head.

Excuse me, Paul, you didn't get what we told you a moment ago. We're going to cut your head off. Paul says, yeah, I'm going to tell you something.

There's a crown of righteousness that's going to be put on my head. Jesus says, don't fear those who can take your body. Fear God who can take your body and your soul.

Paul says, you can cut my head off. God's going to put it back on. No, he's going to crown it.

I like that. And he says, you know what? He's that righteous judge, and he is going to give me that crown on that day. And not only to me also, but to all those who have loved, past tense in the Greek, his appearing.

You know what, Paul, finally at this moment, 2 Timothy 4, 8, Paul finally gave up his anticipation of the rapture, and he said, okay, my head's going to roll. I got it. I'm not going to get raptured from this prison.

But I have loved the expectation of his appearing. People, do you hear me? Are you having sex with your boyfriend? You cannot be having sex with your boyfriend and be longing for the presence of Jesus to come. You can't be having sex with your girlfriend and saying, oh, even so come quickly, Lord Jesus.

I don't think so. God is convicting you. You can't be drawn that line of coke and say, oh yeah, I'm living for the imminent return of Christ.

The Bible says all of us who have this hope that he's coming purifies ourselves. Not that we're perfect. We want to walk with him and make the best of this life that we can until he comes, because by golly, he's coming.

And when he comes, I don't want to be ashamed. In the last couple of weeks, if he would have come, there were hundreds of you praying for the team in Mexico and for the team in Germany. And many of you sharing the Lord out on those streets of those various countries.

What if he would have come at that moment? Where would you have been? Where would you, where were you? Were you sneaking by and doing one at Joe's Bar and Grill, you know, or whatever the thing might be? Were you saying, I'm going to be left behind? I'm saying you're going to be ashamed of yourself at his coming. You're not going to be left behind. You're going to be embarrassed.

Paul lived because Christ was coming soon. And it came across in his messages. The third thing that we see right here is that it's intended to give us encouragement.

This shouldn't bum you out. Can you, you know, I don't know, maybe there was an emergency or something going on, but just this morning when I mentioned rapture, I saw two people just get up and leave. Now, maybe, you know, maybe their car alarm went off or whatever, but some people, this scares people.

Rapture. Why in the world when Jesus says, I'm coming back for you. Unless we love this world so much that we don't want him to come back.

You know, we're nearing Christmas, you know? Yes, Lord. Even so come quickly after December 26th. No, it's intended to encourage us.

In Acts chapter one, there are two men in glorious apparel and they're standing there as Jesus ascends up to heaven and they speak to the disciples. And I love what they say. They say, what are you looking at? Now, it seems pretty normal to me.

Jesus, they're all talking. I mean, Jesus is talking to them. Can you imagine? He's standing on the hilltop there.

Some of us have been over there, standing there. Jesus is talking to them. Jesus starts going up and he's going up and a cloud descends out of heaven and engulfs him.

And they're like, and it says two men in white apparel say to the disciples, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who went up this way will come again in like manner. And it says they turned around and went back to Jerusalem. What an encouragement.

He's going to come again. Shut it down quickly because of time. First Thessalonians, in all of its five chapters, Paul ends each chapter.

It's beautifully and it's intended. It's very, very, very well intended by Paul. In each of its five chapters of First Thessalonians, he gives them a shot of encouragement in the arm.

First Thessalonians 1.10. He says, wait for a son from heaven. Notice he didn't say wait for the Antichrist, the European Union to form, wait for, you know, hailstones to fall from heaven. He doesn't say wait for asteroids to blow up the earth and the sea to turn to blood.

No, he says, wait for a son from heaven. Whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. Guess what? Somebody will say, oh yeah, that word means hell.

That word does not mean hell. It means from God's judgments. Second Thessalonians.

No, First Thessalonians 2.19. For what is our hope? Paul says, our joy, our crown of rejoicing. Is it not even you at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For you are our glory and our crown. That was a collective moment he was waiting for.

Do you get that? First Thessalonians 3.13. So that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness. That's another thing that it does to your life. It causes you to walk more holy with him.

Holiness before our God and father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all of his saints. Yeah, he's going to bring with him the ones who have died, believing in Jesus. Maybe your son or your daughter or your child or your mom or your dad.

Their spirit, it will come with him. And the Bible says that their bodies will be resurrected in a glorified state. I got to tell you something.

We were going on the tram up some street. I don't know what street it was. I couldn't read the names anyway.

And I punched a button because it stops the door and grabbed my camera. And I ran into a graveyard. I had about six people with me.

They're always nuts. He's flipped. It's an ancient graveyard.

And I'm out there shooting pictures. I'll show it. I'll show you them later.

If I would have got home sooner, I could have put them up on the screen, showed you ancient graveyards, tombs. See, we're going to take a picture of that for because I want to drop a statement underneath future resurrection site. Next time you drive by a graveyard, future resurrection site.

That's what it is. Their bodies are going to come out of the grave. Don't ask me how their spirits going to come with the Lord.

The saints are going to come with him. And we're going to meet them, it says, in the air. That's going to blow Spielberg's mind.

It's going to be, I don't know how he's going to do a movie after that one. He can't beat it. It's going to be incredible.

First Thessalonians chapter four, verse 17. We who are alive and remain shall be harpazo, rapture, caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be with the Lord.

Verse 18, therefore, comfort one another with these words. It's to be a comfort. Oh boy, you're going to go through the tribulation.

You're going to get your head cut off and you're going to resist the mark of the beast. You'll starve to death or you get your head cut off and you know, have a great time. That's your blessed hope.

That's not what the Bible teaches. That is what's ordained for the tribulation saints, which you're not. There's the old Testament saints.

There's three groups of saints, old Testament saints, church age saints, which began at Pentecost will end on the day of the rapture. And there's the tribulation saints. You guys already know all this stuff.

You should be up here telling that instead of me. First Thessalonians chapter five, verses nine through 10 is the fifth one. And that is God did not appoint us unto God's judgment.

That has nothing to do with hell, but the judgment upon earth, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us. And whether we are alive or we die, we should live together with him. Awesome.

The second thing that we see this morning, its roots, that is the rapture are in God's words, the very, very word of God. I already mentioned to you, John chapter 14, which is Jesus's first mention of the rapture, but noted it's on the authority of God himself. Paul says, for this, we say to you by the word of the Lord, that's a new Testament way of saying, thus sayeth the Lord.

That's a strong statement. John 11, 25, Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. By the way, in the, in the Greek, that's a continuum.

He continues to be the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, that's presently. Do you presently believe in him, though he may die? That is a yet future statement during the time of Christ.

Yet shall he live in the Greek. That is a future event. Live on and on and on.

The second thing that we see, or that I should say, that was the first thing. Sorry. See that that was ordained for the church.

Wow. It's our promise. It's dedicated to us.

Secondly, it's Paul's doctrine, the doctrine of imminency. He says in verse 15, that we who are alive and remain notice that he, he didn't say you guys, or he didn't say somebody, those believers of the future 2000 years ago, he said, we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those. Those are the ones who died, who have died in Christ.

In other words, their bodies are going to come up before we're raptured. But the scripture goes on to say, and we'll meet them in the air. Someday, maybe we need to draw a picture of this, you know, just to show it.

The word coming in Greek is parousia. The word means a being near physically or a physical advent, not necessarily a coming, or it could be, it could mean that something's in the vicinity. So it could appear both for the second coming, but also the appearance or the rapture of the church.

In first Corinthians chapter 15, verse 52, the Bible says in a moment, when this thing happens, when the rapture happens in a moment, we're going to be changed in a twinkling of an eye. That's pretty quick. Now, somebody says, I read this, I don't know how you prove it.

But that's 18 thousandths of a second. It says that the dead will be changed incorruptible, made in their changing incorruptible. People loathe the dead.

And you know, that's natural. I mean, it seems normal to me. The guy's dead.

Isn't it wild that God is so powerful powerful? He's going to take the dead and. Bring them to life. In the resurrection of their bodies.

And you might say, man, I don't believe this. You are so cool to be thinking that. Because the Bible says in second Peter chapter three, no, this first that in the last days, scoffers will come walking after their own loss, saying, where's the promise of the father? This news, where's this promise? For since the fathers have fallen asleep, everything's continued as it has been from the creation.

Where's his return? Now it's coming. Paul's doctrine of imminency. Yes, it's ordained for the church.

Yes. And the rapture is a, listen, it's a Christ event, not a father event. You got to write that down.

The father, he has his role in end time affairs, but concerning the rapture, this is very exciting concerning the rapture. It's a Christ event. What does that mean? It means that when Christ comes, he's coming for the church.

And Philippians three 20, the Bible says, so we eagerly wait for the savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly bodies that we may be conformed to the glorious or to his glorious body. Again, you

can read first Corinthians chapter 15, but notice the sequence number one. And don't you, I mean, wouldn't you love to hear this? Number one, it says it will be with the shout of the Lord.

How do you think the Lord shouts? I mean, just, just imagine for a second. How do you think he shouts? Remember when Elijah, the prophet, the Lord whispered and it freaked them out. Well, it's going to come with a shout.

The second thing it says, and it will be with the voice of the archangel. What is that going to sound like? And the third thing it says it will be with the trumpet of God. If you're Jewish, you just got goosebumps right now.

Cause that was a traditional blast right there. Thirdly, this, the rapture is our expectancy. How many of you would have went up at that moment? If that would have been it.

Yeah, I would have. Well, that's because you're the pastor. No, believe me, I have more strikes against me than positive things.

Again, it's because of the blood. Did that blast scare you or was it like, Oh, well, right. Would you been pulling up into this parking lot next week? If that blast would have been real.

Gee, look, Harriet, we can find a parking spot right up front. We long for his appearance. If you're a Christian, you can't wait for him to come.

If you're a Christian and you're goofing off, then you're kind of scared of his coming. The rapture is final. The rapture in theological terms brings a conclusion to the longevity of the church on earth.

Did you know that this, this fact alone ought to startle you. The rapture of the church ends the church age. When was the church born on the day of Pentecost? When will the church end on earth? The day of the rapture, whoever those people are, they're clothed in fine white linen for all eternity, different clothing from the Old Testament saints and the tribulation saints.

And his soon return compels us. Okay, I'm going to share something with you. It's personal.

I'm not going to worry too much about it because I don't worry about stuff. My mom taught me how to worry. And then I got tired of it after I met Jesus and I stopped doing it.

So I'm not going to worry about it. No, I want you to go back to that. Sorry.

Look at that. His soon return compels us. I need to get money to send over to Eric because he's living in a little flat that he's renting from somebody that's got no heat in Stuttgart.

I asked him how much money he needed. He needs a thousand Deutschmarks a month. That's about \$600.

Okay, now we're on the brink of having to rent a bigger building. We didn't plan on that. Seems to me God's got a problem.

I'm not going to worry about it. If or until the Lord opens up the door for a Christian to come back for our youth, he's going to be working in Stuttgart with the youth. He's got to eat.

Looks like God's got a problem. Roland and Sarah, you and I have been paying partially their salary there in Germany to get the church started. But it's just not Germany.

You're keeping families fed and clothed and you pay the rent on a church in St. Petersburg, Russia. You support some staff members, assistant pastors in foreign countries. You're helping Rob and Joni Dingman do the work in London, which is a very difficult work.

Not to mention the request that we get to send, please send me Bibles, please send me tapes, please send me all over the world. It's not free. Seems to me God's got a problem.

Okay, now we're going to be building a church. So all this can do more until he comes back. Affect more people.

Get the gospel out to further places, more far away places. You might say, well, how come we don't reach our own neighborhood? If your neighborhood hasn't been reached, it's probably because you weren't home. Because there's a host of people that leave this location every week of the year and knock on doors and visit you.

I hear all about it. I get the report every week. Seems to me God's got a problem.

Or are we going to collect money for the building fund? We're not going to have a building fund. Some of you have been asking, where do I direct money for the building? Just put a note on there. I'm directing money to the building.

There's no building fund. You're not going to see a thermometer. What, God's got a fever or what? Seems like God's got a problem.

You know what his problem is? He doesn't have a problem. Every time there's a problem in our perspective, it's a huge opportunity for God to show himself mighty. You got a problem? It's an opportunity for God to show himself mighty.

The return of Jesus Christ compels us. Are we going to build that building down the street? I don't know. If God wants it built, he's going to have to build it.

Jack, that's a rather simplistic view. He uses his people. Of course, he uses the people who listen to him.

Okay? You got to listen. Yes, we all have to listen. But if we have to sacrifice the mission field ventures to build a building, then it seems to me God's got a problem.

Because never shall the righteous be seen begging bread. Yeah, we have a problem. We have a problem or a huge opportunity.

We have to be out of this building by issue of the city. We'll either be homeless as a church, and it will come to a conclusion, or God will continue the program that he started. Okay? I'm not going to worry about it.

I can get a job. But is that what it's all about? Will you join with us to get the gospel to every corner of the globe until Jesus comes, even though we'd be such a small church, seemingly insignificant? God is doing insane things here. God is putting our teachings now on CD, and they're just, the guys that are here, they're going to market this thing for digital bread.

It's going to go out around the world. Digital bread on CD. Teachings, 24 hours of teaching on CD called digital bread.

And Jesus said this gospel shall be preached in all the world, and in the end shall come. Isn't that fun? Isn't it fun just to get close to something that he might be doing? I think it's fun. Jet lag and all.

Father, we ask you to come. We ask you to come right now, Lord. We pray that you'd call us up.

Wouldn't it be awesome if that little cue for the trumpet blast to go off at that point, you interrupted it and blew it about 20 minutes earlier? Freaked out the sound man and all of us. Who would have been left behind? Who would have gone up? We all know, Lord, that if we trust in the blood of Jesus Christ and ask you to forgive us of our sins and to look to you as our King and Savior, we would have been up there right now. Oh, just think where we would have been right now.

We would have all been running right to Noah and said, how was it? What was it like? Running over to Paul and shaking his hand and Martin Luther and Dietrich Bonhoeffer and saying hi to Charles Spurgeon, Dwight L. Moody, wondering is he as fat as he was in heaven as he was on earth? Wow. Can you imagine? God, it's great to be here. Thank you, Lord, for saving me.

This is too cool. Where would you have been? My friend, if that trumpet blast startled you, if that blast of the shofar startled you, you can change that right now by saying, Jesus Christ, God's risen son from the dead, come into my life. I exchange my sin for your righteousness.

And I'm asking you to write my name in your book of life and to save me from my sins. I'm not going to goof off anymore. If you're having sex outside of marriage, dedicate your life to God and get married or get separated one or the other.

If you're pursuing dollars, seek first the kingdom of God. If you got to have that little drink to calm you down at night, why don't you learn how to pray? If you want to be ready, look up for your redemption draws near, choose Christ today and live.

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