

Doctrine of the Rapture

The Problem with the Rapture Theory

1. The Rapture refers to a passage in First Thessalonians 4, where Christians are "caught up" in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."
 - *1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*
2. Many Christians believe that this being "caught up" to meet the Lord will occur before a Great Tribulation Period of seven years which is still in the near future.
3. According to the Rapture teaching, prior to the Great Tribulation, Christians will simply disappear to meet Jesus in the air, return to heaven with Him to and await the end of time which will come seven years later when everyone returns to earth with the Lord who will set up a millennium kingdom.
4. But notice, in 1 Thessalonians 4:15, Paul says that "...we who are alive," meaning, "we who are left behind," shall be caught up.
5. This is a very important point to notices because those who are "left behind" get caught up to meet the Lord. The word for "meet" is the Greek word which means, "a friendly encounter." It was a moment of greeting someone coming.
6. In Luke 17, and in a similar passage in Matthew 24, Scripture compares the coming of the Lord to the days of Noah and the days of Lot.
 - Matthew 24 puts it this way: "As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of man ... [they ate, they drank, they married] and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of man. Then two men will be in the field, one is taken and one is left. Two women grinding at the mill, one is taken one is left."
7. "One is taken, one is left" — the Rapture right? Jesus takes the Christians and leaves behind non-Christians. That is what the System teaches.
8. However, there are two fundamental problems with this interpretation
9. First, in the passages from Luke 17 and Matthew 24, Jesus' coming is compared to the days of Noah and to the days of Lot.

10. What happened in the days of Noah? Well, after the flood, some were left behind? Who was left behind? Noah and his family, who were righteous. The unrighteous were taken and the righteous were left behind.
11. After Sodom and Gomorrah was destroyed by fire, who was left behind? The Bible teaches that Lot and his daughters were left behind. The unrighteous were destroyed and the righteous were left behind.
12. Another problem with the Rapture theory is found in 1 Thessalonians 4 says that those who are "left" get to meet Jesus in the air.
13. Since that is a wonderful event, every Christian should want to be left behind in order to meet and greet Jesus as He returns.
14. For the third time the Biblical illustration is that the unrighteous are destroyed while the righteous are left behind.
15. In this discussion, Matthew 13:39-43 is important. "... and the enemy who sowed them [the bad seed] is the devil; the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. The Son of man will send His angels and they will gather out of His kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."
16. When Scripture says that "one is taken and one is left," as it does in Luke 17 and Matthew 24, it is not talking about the Rapture, it is talking about the harvest at the close of the age.
17. The ones, who are taken, as it says in Matthew 13, are the evildoers. The angels have taken them and tossed them into the furnace of fire.