

Get Ready For Take Off, Part 2

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

Left Behind – I wish we all been ready { Real deal!

Paul is writing here in 1 Thessalonians 4 about THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH - the next event on the Prophetic Calendar

B) That event where the trumpet is going to sound – and the Lord is going to come from Heaven

1) Bringing with Him all the saints who have died in Jesus –

C) Then those of us who are believers in Jesus who are still alive on the earth – are going to be caught up to meet them in the air.

D) RENUNION TIME - Feasting time in Heaven for 7yrs

E) Folks we are close to the time when that event is going to take place –

1) Nothing left to happen or be fulfilled Prophetically

And when you look at the events happening in our world – we see many things Bible predicted would be a part of the Last days scenario – Happening

Focus on next week – Being aware of the times and the seasons { Invite a friend – Fascinating stuff

So we are living in a day and age when the rapture could occur at any moment –

A) But there has been in the history of the Church confusion over the placement of the rapture in the Prophetic scenario

B) Some suggest - middle of Tribulation - *Mid-trib or Pre-Wrath*

C) Others - end of Tribulation - Post Trib

1) Also those who think not going to happen at all - *usher in Kingdom*

D) Those who believe it will happen before the Tribulation = Pre Trib

E) Some who even **Does it really matter? Won't it all pan out in the end? PanTrib - all pan out in the end!**

1) We will like w/ other controversies find out who is right!

Does it matter ? Answer is yes – You see when you believe the rapture is going to occur will shape the way that you live your life now !

If you believe Jesus will come at the middle or end of Tribulation, you will need to store up gold, food, guns

A.) Your life will be marked by Preparation - preparing to last in the tribulation.

You will be looking for Anti-Christ to come on the scene

B.) But if you believe the rapture can happen at any moment you are going to live w/ anticipation - expectation

1) looking for Him and watching the signs

C.) If you believe He could come at any moment you are going to seek to live a holy life –

1) **watching and praying**

D) I believe the Bible clearly and directly teaches that the rapture will take place before the Tribulation.

1) Next event on the prophetic scene!

E) Today I want to give you **Seven reasons why the rapture will happen before the Tribulation begins**

Reason #1 The Message in 1 Thess 4:18 - "*Comfort one another w/ these words*"

A) In this section where Paul is talking about the rapture – how we are going to be caught up to meet the Lord

B) He ends that thought w/ this Exhortation 18 *Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

C) **See this is a Key thing / This Teaching is to comfort us - not freak us out!**

1) Comfort here means – Be encouraged by !

D) Now if rapture is at the end or middle of Tribulation - that is not very comforting!

Flee and hide – try to avoid Anti-Christ – tortured and Martyred

E) I would rather die now! There is No Comfort in that Message : Bear up / get Ready / SURVIVAL

REASON #2 We are not appointed unto wrath!

A) In 1 Thes. 5 Paul continues discussing this theme of the Rapture of the Church – which He says comes as **a Thief in the night to an unbelieving World**

B) He also begins to discuss the topic of the day of the Lord { A day is 1,000 yrs / 1000yrs is as a day

C) Day of the Lord Begins at the Rapture & ends at the end of the 1000 yr. Reign of Christ

1) So it includes the time of Tribulation. When the Wrath of God is being Poured out –

D) And on that thought Paul offers these words of Encouragement

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Now why hasn't He appointed us to wrath?

A) The wrath we deserve was paid for at Calvary!

B) It was poured out on Jesus **absorbed by Jesus!**

C) If we go through any part of the Tribulation we are enduring part of the Wrath of God .

Reason #3 The Flow of the book of Revelation

Turn to Rev Ch. 1 v.19

The book of Rev. is the only book w/ a Divine outline

A) Understanding this is a key to understanding the book of Rev. (Often confusing but never meant to be)

V.19 3 part outline 19 *"Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.*

B) This is a key to Understanding the book of Rev. / - **SECTION 1** The things that you have SEEN – *VISION OF CH. 1*

C) **SECTION 2** / The things that **ARE** / The letters to the Churches

1) Represents the whole Church age !!!!!

D) Ephesus – Early church – to Present day / Phil. & Laodicia

Section 3 Write the things that will take place After this – after what? –

A) After the Church age is completed /

B) **Think about this** : the Word Church is used 19 times in the first 3 Ch.'s of the book of Rev. /

C) From ch. 4 on never used again/ Why ?

1) Church is not seen again on the earth

D) In fact the next time that we see the Church is when the Lord coming Back Ch. 19

So the 3rd Phase of the Book deals w/ this section that John is writing about that takes place after the Church age / After these things

A) That Phrase in Greek **Meta tauta** (Important) – see it again Ch. 4

4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

B) Now Catch this – Ch. 4 Begins **Meta tauta** / *After these things* – WHAT THINGS –

1) After Ch. 2,3 which represent the Church age

C) After the Church age is completed John sees a door standing open in Heaven – voice like a trumpet – says

Come up here and I will show the things that must take place after this

D) Now what does this remind you of Voice like a Trumpet – 1Thes. 4 / 1 Cor. 15 – trumpet of God – Calling us up

This I believe is a wonderful picture of the Rapture – Trumpet sounding & John being called up to meet the Lord

A) And See the things that take place after the Church age – Church is not seen again **on the Earth** in Rev. – until after the tribulation at the 2nd coming

B) So reason #3 The Flow of the book of Revelation

REASON #4 The Tribulation Is Known as the Time of Jacobs Trouble Jeremiah 30:7 -

A) Purpose of that time is To Wake up Israel - called time of Jacob's trouble - not the churches trouble

B) In ROM 9-11 - God not through with Israel - time coming Jews will be saved some now! All then

C) Tribulation is for a Christ rejecting world **and for Israel.**

Reason #5 We are to be Looking for the Coming of Jesus Christ.

Titus 2: 11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

A) So here in Titus we are instructed on how we are to be looking for the coming of Jesus Christ

B) But those who **embrace the mid & Post Trib. view points are not looking for Jesus appearing / but the appearing of Antichrist** { Has to come first

C) LISTEN: No where in scripture are we -told to be looking for Anti- Christ !

1) Why? We are not going to be here!

Reason #6 The types in the Old Testament.

A) Luke 17:26 **Like the Days of Noah.....**

B) In the story of Noah we have a beautiful picture of what will take place in last days

C) At the time of Noah God was judging the earth w/ the flood .

1) God's wrath is being poured out on wicked mankind! Gen. 6

Conditions in the days of Noah

A) A world – forsaken God – Given over to Sexual Immorality / { **Teachers and Kids** } **Women**

B) Violence – Selfishness – Perversity – just like our World

C) Now during the flood the Lord protects Noah & his family in the ark –

1) **They are a type of the nation of Israel** - Who God is going to protect during the time of the tribulation.

D) Ok where is the church in this picture ?

1) Gen. Ch. 5 the church is seen in the person of Enoch / **a contemporary of Noah**

E) Told of *Enoch walked w/ God & he pleased God – and one day He was nottook Him ! Rapture!*

1) Example – He walked with God and He pleased God

F) Enoch is a type of the church taken out **before judgment. begins!**

2nd Type look at found in Gen. 18,19 Story of Lot!

A) Again in Luke 17:28 Jesus said it would be like the times of Lot rampant (**Homosexuality**)

B) We see that growing as well{ Homo. marriage act

1) TV Shows and Movies – Homosexual Characters the norm now

C) There is a new video being sent to 61,000 elementary schools. “We Are Family” { Promoting Homosexuality to elementary kids

D) We Are Family Foundation is, Delivering videos this week – march 11

E) On the news - Rosie O’Donnell's – partner – Homosexual family vacations -

1) Hotels in Palm Springs – Advertise – Homosexual hotspots

It was this type of perversity that led God to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah

A) In the Story God sends angels to destroy the cities of Sodom & Gomorrah for their wickedness!

B) There wasn't 10 people in that city who worshipped God!{ Not that bad yet!

C) Lot was spared – He was led out along with his daughters

1) Lot & His daughters are a picture of the church that is not preserved through the judgment

D) But are taken out - removed before the judgment can begin!

E) Remember Lots wife { Enamored with the World – looked back – longing look – she was lost

1) last days love of many grow cold - people enamored with the World.

3rd illustration in the book of Daniel 3 / Shad/ Mesh/ Aben.

A) King Neb. makes a statue . demands to be worshipped much like the anti Christ will during the Tribulation.

B) Shad. Abendgo refuse & are thrown into the fiery furnace

1) Neb. *Didn't we throw 3 men into like the Son of God!*

C) A beautiful picture of What the Lord is going to do for Israel during the Tribulation. time

D) Question where is Daniel ? He is absent from this story most likely taken away on Business /

1) Dan. is a type of the Church.

So we have the Diff. types in the Bible that also pt. to the fact that the Rapt. will take place before the Tribulation.

A) God taking out Enoch , Lot , Dan. (The Church) Before the judgment begins

B) And Preserving/ Noah Shad.Abendego
(Israel) thru the time of Judgment !

Reason #7 The Jewish wedding Ceremony

A) Beautiful picture In Jewish culture marriages were most often Arranged (EXPLAIN)

B) Now when the Kids came of age where they could actually be married –

1) one thing that needed to take place first was home prepared

C) So the boy - bridegroom would begin to build a dwelling place for he and his bride

1) the wedding couldn't take place until it was finished!

D) Now Who determined when it was finished? - His Father

This is so great in comparison to our situation

A) John 14 - Jesus says - *going to heaven prepare a place for you - my bride - (betrothed to the Lord)*

B) He said - *I will come again and receive you to myself*

1) but also says - *no man knows the day or the hour of that coming except - Father!*

C) But Jesus said - *we should know the times and seasons - understand when things are getting closer!*

So the bridegroom would be working on the house A) And the bride would get reports from friends – relatives

B) (Times / Seasons – Next week – Invite a Friend)

1) Walls are up / roof is on / windows in / front door is up/ it could be any day now! - finished

C) Now Over the years it became the custom of the bridegroom to surprise his bride in the middle of the night - early morning

Matt 25 Parable of the ten virgins is about – 5 ready 5 who were not ready

D) He and his groomsmen come into town to her house making a lot of noise!

1) Awaken **Bride and her bridesmaids -needed to be ready**

E) Now **Check this out!** Bridegroom and bride would then go to this house he prepared - stay 7 days!

1) family and friends - party - celebrate - at the end of the 7 days - bride would be presented!

Incredible picture of what the bible teaches of Christ and His church

1.) betrothed to Him

2.) Gone to prepare a place

- 3.) No one know day or hour except Father
- 4.) Bride gets reports - we know times and seasons
- 5.) Bridegroom comes - 7 year feast - presented at 2nd coming

So there You have 7 Reasons why the Bible Clearly teaches that the Rapture will take place – before the Tribulation.

A) Nothing preventing this from happening – the world gets more and more like the days of Noah & Lot everyday

B) Why does the Lord wait?

2 Peter 3:8-9

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

C) Waiting for you – today is the day of Salvation

D) The Devil wants you to think other wise !

William Barclay - fictional story - meeting Satan held w/ demons where trying to figure out how to trick people into eternal damnation

A.) **1st demon:** *"There is no God"* - **no Satan said** - *creation declares the reality of God.*

B) *People too smart to deny His existence
A few idiots might get sucked in but not the masses*

B.) **2nd demon:** *"No Hell". No said Satan* - *"People understand there needs to be retribution and judgment - people won't buy that*

C.) **3rd demon:** *"Instead of saying no God or no hell - no hurry!*

1) **Satan responded that is it!** no hurry! Spread the word

D) Sad but true many have lost their sense of urgency but the cry will soon come.

"The bridegroom is coming"

2 Pet 1:10 - *Brethren, give diligence to make calling election sure.*