

## Christian Doctrine

### The End Times (Part 6)

#### The Question of the Rapture

#### *Three Main Views as to the Timing of the Rapture*

I Thessalonians 4:13-17 makes reference to a time when believers will be caught up (raptured) to meet the Lord in the air. There are several views as to when this will occur:

##### ➤ **Post-tribulation View**

This view states that the church will go through the tribulation period, and then be raptured at the time of Christ's Second Coming. Support for this view would include:

- Many passages discussing Christ's return only emphasize one future appearance (Matt. 24:30-31; I John 3:2).
- Revelation 3:10 seems to imply that believers will go through the trib period, yet be protected in some way.
- Passages have believers on earth during the trib, believed by this view to be the church (Matt. 24:22; Rev. 13:7).

##### ➤ **Mid-tribulation View and Pre-wrath View**

These views state that the church will go through part of the tribulation and then be raptured midway through:

- Since believers are told we will experience tribulations on earth (II Thess. 1:5-10), but not God's wrath, these views state that we will be on earth until it is believed (by these views) that God's wrath begins.
- Mid-trib views the rapture at Rev. 11:15-19 (7th trumpet); Pre-wrath places it at Rev. 6:17 (between 6th & 7th seal).
- These views see the early judgments as being "man caused," and only the final judgments as God's wrath.

##### ➤ **Pre-tribulation View**

This view states the church will be raptured before the tribulation begins. Reasons the church may be gone include:

- Revelation 3:10 says the church will be kept from the "hour" of testing, not just the tests themselves.
- Believers are exempt from God's wrath (including the entire trib period) (I Thess. 5:9; 1:10 with Rev. 6:17; 15:1).
- Christ returns "with" saints at the 2nd Coming, implying He had already come "for" them (Jude 14; Rev. 19:14).
- The church has no purpose in the trib. It is God's wrath on the unbelieving world. Note, the church is mentioned 19 times in Revelation before the trib begins (chapters 1-3), but not once during the trib chapters (chapters 6-18).

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