

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, “Words of Rapturous Comfort”

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Hartford Bible Church

Dan Hummel 2024-2025 Series “David & the 5 T’s”

1. Ignorance vs. hope

(13) Old Testament believers had sketchy view of afterlife: John 11:23-26

The believer is with Christ at time of death (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21, 23).

The unbeliever is said to be in Hades (Luke 16:22-23).

Not all believers will die, but all will be changed (1 Cor. 15:51).

At the Rapture, believers will be raised (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:16).

The wicked dead will be raised at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ (Rev. 20:5).

The rich man and Lazarus both conscious in death (Luke 16:19-31).

When the believer dies, he is “present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8).

Paul speaks of death as “gain” and “far better” (Phil. 1:21,23). This would scarcely be true if the soul were sleeping!

There is no cessation of being in death. The believer enjoys eternal life (Mark 10:30). The unbeliever suffers eternal punishment (Mark 9:48; Rev. 14:11).

(15) 1 Thes. 1:10, 1 Cor. 7:29 & Phi. 4:5 say Rapture is imminent.

1 Cor. 15:51-52 Paul thinks he will be raptured, but in

2 Cor. 4:14 & 5:1 he has changed to thinking he will die first.

(16) Shout: Jesus, John 5:25; 11:43-44; or archangel

Voice: Michael, Dan. 12:1; Jude 1:9; Rev. 12:4-7; Luke 16:22

Trumpet: Last trumpet of 1 Cor. 15:52, not 7th of Rev. 11:15-18

2. Order of End Times events (List available upon request)

The first resurrection

The rapture of living saints:

The Church in heaven

The believer's rewards

The marriage of the Lamb

The great tribulation per se

The appearing of the Man of Sin

Israel's final sufferings

The destruction of ecclesiastical Babylon

The battle of Armageddon

The destruction of political and commercial Babylon

The Day of the Lord per se

The second coming of Christ per se

Satan bound and confined

The regathering and judgment of Israel

(Continued)

The judgment of the nations:

Human life in the earthly kingdom

The loosing of Satan and the last revolt

The doom of Satan

The passing of the present earth and heaven

The Great White Throne judgment

The destiny of the wicked

The creation of a new heaven and earth

The destiny of the saved: new earth, new heaven

The day of God

3. The Rapture

Whatever our view on a Rapture of the Church or not,
the importing thing to remember is:

The Lord Jesus Christ is coming back!

Some of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's Evidence for the Rapture

The coming tribulation is the judgment of this world. Israel has her part in it since, being not yet saved (Rom. 11:26), she is of the world (cf. Matt. 13:44). The believer, being what he is in Christ, has no more a rightful place in this cosmos world's judgments than Christ Himself or any unfallen angel.

The purifying hope of 1 Thess. 1:9-10 & 1 John 3:2-3 and the tribulation is not the hope of the coming of the Lord, it is not at hand, but “the Lord is at hand” (Phi. 4:5).

“Following the futuristic interpretation of Revelation 4:1 to the end of the book—that interpretation which alone is tenable or in harmony with all Biblical prophecy—it is concluded that the words μετὰ ταῦτα, twice used in Revelation 4:1, mark a turn in the message of this book from the history of the Church on earth, as disclosed in chapters 2–3, to that which will immediately follow that earthly history.”

2 Thess. 2:6-7 “And you know what restrains [the man of lawlessness] now, so that in his time he will be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.” Dr. Chafer declares that only a person of the Godhead would have the power to restrain like this, and the Holy Spirit is the One active during this age. Much of the Spirit's work is in believers and believers cannot be separated from the Spirit, so when the Spirit is taken out, “the church will of necessity be removed with Him.”

The removal of the Church cannot be just before Christ's return, because before the Church returns “she must pass through the judgment for her rewards, be married to the Lamb, and participate in the marriage supper (Rev. 19:1–10). The post-tribulation rapture theory is forced to omit these great events or to contend that they are accomplished instantaneously.”