



# Our Blessed Hope

*"I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:3)*

Note: Scripture used in this Bible Study is from the New King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

## The Mystery of Christ's Return for the Church

### Reference: 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

<sup>50</sup>I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup>Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— <sup>52</sup>in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup>For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. <sup>54</sup>When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

<sup>55</sup>"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" <sup>56</sup>The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup>But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>58</sup>Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

### 1. 15:50 - How does Paul describe the resurrected body?

Paul describes the resurrected body as not being the corruptible flesh and blood we currently have, it is incorruptible.

### 2. Can we enter God's kingdom with our sin nature?

We can not enter the kingdom of God in our current bodies because of our sin nature, corruption cannot inherit incorruption.

### 3. What will it mean to have an incorruptible body?

As an incorruptible body, our new bodies will never perish and we will not have the inclination to sin as do now.

### 4. What mystery is revealed to us in verse 51?

Paul describes the translation of the living saints at the end of the church age... There is a generation of the church that will be caught up (raptured) off the face of the planet to meet our Lord Jesus Christ in the air.

### 5. Where does the term "rapture" come from?

It is derived from the Latin word which means "caught-up" in English.

### 6. Why didn't God reveal the rapture in Old Testament times?

We are in the dispensation of grace when God has blessed us with the revelation of His Son...

Hebrews 1:1-2 - God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

With this in mind, here is a humbling thought: *"For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required"* (Luke 12:48, NKJV)

### 7. 15:51-52 - What does "sleep" mean here?

The Greek word koimao which is translated "sleep" here means to be deceased, physical death.

### 8. So what does it mean that we will not all sleep when the resurrection of the Church occurs?

The implication here is that there will be some translated who are living when the resurrection of the church occurs

### 9. Where do the souls of the unsaved go when they die?

The souls of the unsaved go to Hades, a temporary place of torment (see the story of the certain rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31). While Hades is effectively hell, it is not the same as the eternal hell which is the lake of fire where the unsaved go after the Great White Throne judgment (see Revelation 20:11-15).

### 10. 15:51-52 - What two parts of the are mystery revealed?

- (1) the dead in Christ will be resurrected,
- (2) the living will be changed to glorified bodies

### 11. 15:52 - How fast will the change of the corruptible to the incorruptible occur?

Our resurrection will occur in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. This is faster than a blink... people left on earth after the rapture will sure be doing some blinking!

**12. 15:52 - What does the trumpet signal?**

The trumpet signals the last call at the beginning of the change, we will hear this declaration just prior to the change. If we are not listening for the Lord's call, we will miss it. Certainly those who are truly saved will be listening for the Lord's call for Jesus said...

John 10:27 – "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

I believe that this call will be much like the Apostle John experienced when he received the Revelation of Jesus...

Revelation 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."

Note that the book of Revelation is basically chronological per Revelation 1:19, so Revelation 4:1 represents the rapture as the division between the church age described in previous verses and the tribulation described after. John's being taken to heaven represents the rapture by its similarity. This is consistent with a premillennial timing of the rapture since it happened after the letters to the church are given and before the tribulation is described. Also, the church is nowhere to be found on earth in the description of the tribulation.

Revelation 1:19 - "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this."

Certainly when John experienced the glorified Jesus speaking to him, He spoke loud and clear as trumpets...

Revelation 1:10-11 - I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,"

At the rapture, I expect to hear the Lord say to me, "come up here" as the Apostle John heard. Likewise, "come up here" is used for another resurrection of the two witnesses that the entire world sees...

Rev 11:12 - And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

The dead in Christ will be summoned as Jesus raised up Lazarus from the dead:

John 11:43 - He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"

**13. 15:53 - What must be taken off us and put on? How will we be changed?**

- The resurrection of the saved will involve taking off corruption and mortality which includes our sin nature that is resident in our current flesh and blood bodies.
- The resurrection of the saved will involve putting on incorruption and immortality, we will be sinless with completed sanctification in glorified bodies like Christ has right now.

**14. 15:53-54 - How essential is this change to the incorruptible?**

Absolutely essential: "must", it is emphatic. Our current bodies are limited, they are deaf and blind as far as Heaven is concerned. We can only see and hear a small spectrum of God's creation. Heaven will no-doubt have even more elements to sense than what can be sensed in the physical world.

**15. 15:54-55 - What victory does Christ give us?**

Our resurrection is our victory along with our being incorruptible, immortal, with no Hades or second death.

**16. 15:56 - How is death and sin related?**

The sting of death is a direct consequence of sin.

**17. 15:57 - How do we achieve victory?**

We are victorious through the provision of our Lord Jesus Christ who died in our place to pay the penalty for our sin so that our sin may be forgiven.

**18. 15:58 - What conclusion does Paul draw from his teaching on resurrection at the rapture?**

That those who have been redeemed by Christ should be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

**Who will be Resurrected?**

**Reference: 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18**

<sup>14</sup>We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. <sup>15</sup>According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

<sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage each other with these words. (NIV)

**19. 4:14 - Who gets to be with Christ when they die?**

Those who believe that Jesus died and rose again will get to be with Him when they die.

**20. 4:15 - When does the resurrection happen and in what order?**

The resurrection happens when the Lord comes, the dead Christians rise first, then "we who are alive and remain."

**21. 4:16 - What will happen just prior to the resurrection of the church?**

The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.

**22. 4:17 - Where is Christ during the resurrection of the church?**

Christ meets the church in the air at the rapture.

**23. 4:18 - How are these verses comforting?**

We have been promised that if we trust in Jesus, we will be saved at His coming... verse 14 – *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.”* (*“lest you sorrow as others who have no hope”*, verse 13)

## **Two Phases of Christ's Coming**

**24. Why is the timing of the rapture important?**

It is not possible to properly interpret Bible prophecy if you have a wrong view of the timing of the rapture of the Church. If this basic aspect of Bible prophecy is not correct, there will be problems with the rest of your interpretations leading to discouragement or, in the extreme, the formation of dangerous false doctrines.

**25. Besides properly interpreting Bible prophecy, how does holding to a pre-tribulation rapture benefit your Christian walk?**

With a pre-trib rapture, there are no prophetic events which must occur before it. This is the doctrine of imminence which says the Lord could return for His Bride, the Church, at any moment. Applying this truth to your life is strong medicine against procrastination about what God is calling you to do (or rationalizing about what you should not do). One of the paradoxes of the Christian faith is that we must live as if the Lord is returning today and also be executing a plan to build knowing that He may not come back in our life-time.

**26. If you are not expecting the rapture to occur at any moment, what are you doing?**

Alternative views about the timing of the Rapture have it occurring during the Great Tribulation, after it, or at the end of the millennial reign of Christ. All these views put the Church in the dubious position of looking for the Antichrist rather than our Lord (see Matthew 25:1-13). Both the Great Tribulation and the millennial reign of Christ have very clear periods of time associated with certain key events. If the return of the Lord for His Church was not imminent, it would be possible to have a pretty good idea when it will happen. And this is contrary to the instructions He gave us...

Matthew 24:44 - Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

**27. What kind of dangerous doctrines can come from other than a pre-trib rapture?**

Thinking that the Church will have to go through some or all of the Great Tribulation has turned some people into survivalists stock-piling weapons and food in anticipation. This is a dangerous doctrine because it teaches people to depend on their own resources for deliverance rather than the power of God. Another dangerous doctrine is thinking that the Church has replaced Israel in the promises of God. This is one of the roots of anti-Semitism which is devil-inspired and it will keep you from discerning prophetic truth.

**28. How does 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 indicate that the rapture precedes the tribulation?**

Per verse 18, the Rapture must happen before the tribulation because it a comfort to the Church. Knowing that we have to face the tribulation before we are resurrected is no comfort yet this is what many people teach.

**29. How does verse 17 show that Paul expected the rapture to be an imminent event even back in his day?**

Paul expected that the rapture could happen at any time because he included himself in those who would not face death, *“we who are alive and remain...”*

**30. How does 1 Thessalonians 5:9 indicate that the rapture precedes the tribulation?**

1Thes 5:9 - For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ  
Wrath is a reference to the tribulation which is also known as the Day of God's Wrath (revelation 6:17. God does not intend for His children to suffer through this time of wrath. This is the comfort we have in knowing that the rapture is imminent and will occur before the Tribulation. The Lord has promised that He will keep us from *“the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world”* (Revelation 3:10).

**31. How does 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 indicate that the rapture precedes the tribulation?**

2 Thes 2:7-8 - 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. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

The Apostle Paul wrote the second epistle to the Thessalonians to put their mind at ease that the persecution they had been suffering was not the Great Tribulation. This would have meant that they missed the Rapture he described in his first epistle.

**32. Who is He who restrains?**

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 tells us the Holy Spirit Who indwells the Church restrains the lawlessness in the world.

**33. Where is the Holy Spirit in the world?**

The Holy Spirit indwells believers.

**34. Where will the Holy Spirit be immediately after the rapture of the church?**

Once the Lord removes the Church from the planet, the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit will be removed with it and the lawless one who is the Antichrist will be permitted to come to power. So the Antichrist will not come to power or be revealed until after the Church is raptured out of the world. James and Peter also echoed Paul's expectation...

**James 5:8-9** - You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

**1 Peter 4:7** - But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

**35. How does 1 Peter 4:17 indicate that the rapture must occur prior to the tribulation?**

1 Peter 4:17 - For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

The judgment of non-believers can not begin until it is completed in believers first.

**36-42. Explain the distinction between the following sets of verses describing the second coming of Jesus:**

**36. 1Thessalonians 4:17 and Zechariah 14:4**

**1Thessalonians 4:17** - Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

**Zechariah 14:4** - And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.

There is a difference in where Jesus will be seen; at the rapture we will meet Him in the air, at His Second Coming, He will set feet on earth.

This same prophecy is recorded by the apostle Luke...

Acts 1:10-11 - And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who

was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

**Who were the men in white apparel?**

These men were angels.

**Which is Acts 1:10-11 talking about, the rapture or the Lord's second coming?**

From Luke 24:50 we know they saw Jesus ascend from Bethany which is on Mt. Olivet so this is a reference to His Second Coming.

**37. John 14:2-3 and 1Thessalonians 3:13 or Jude 14**

**John 14:2-3** - "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

**1Thessalonians 3:13** - so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

**Jude 14** - Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,

These verses represent the difference between where the church will be; at the rapture we will be with the Lord in heaven, at the Lord's Second Coming, we will return with Him to the earth.

**38. Hebrews 9:28 and Revelation 1:7**

**Hebrews 9:28** - so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

**Revelation 1:7** - Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

These verses represent the difference between who will see Jesus when He comes; at the rapture only believers will see Him, at His Second Coming all people on earth will see Him.

**39. 1 Peter 1:7 and Matthew 25:31-32**

**1 Peter 1:7** - that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Note: The apostle Paul refers to testing by fire as well and makes clear it is for rewards, not salvation...

1 Cor 3:13-15 - each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a

reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

**Matthew 25:31-32** - "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats."

These verses represent the difference between who is judged when the Lord comes; at the rapture only the works of believers are judged to determine degrees of reward, at the Lord's Second Coming the nations of the earth are judged.

- The book of Revelation also talks about how Christ will come in judgment of the nations...

Rev 19:11 - Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

#### **Which nations will God bless when He comes?**

Those nations who helped God's children as symbolized by giving them a cup of cold water in Matthew 25 will be blessed when Jesus returns. God told Abraham which nations he would bless when He judges them...

Genesis 12:2-3 - "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

#### **40. Titus 2:13 or James 5:8 and Daniel 12:11-13**

**Titus 2:13** - looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,  
**(Does Paul say we should look for the appearing or a sign?)**

**James 5:8** - You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

**(What does the term "at hand" mean?)**

The term "at hand" means He is close and can come at any time. Since his coming is at hand, we should live like it now - not after we see the signs...

1 Peter 4:7 - But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

**Daniel 12:11-13** - "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

**(How can a prophecy be more specific?)**

These verses represent the difference in predictability; the rapture can not be predicted, it is imminent, the Lord's Second Coming follows given signs to the day.

#### **41. Psalms 12:1-2 or Micah 7:2 or Genesis 5:24 and Daniel 7:13**

**Psalms 12:1-2** - Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men. They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

**(note that this is from Israel's perspective)**

**Micah 7:2** - The faithful man has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; every man hunts his brother with a net.

**(note that this is from Israel's perspective clearly during the tribulation)**

**Genesis 5:24** - And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

**(note that this is a prophetic type of the rapture)**

**Daniel 7:13** - I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.

**(note that this is just one representative example)**

These verses represent the difference between where in Scripture the two phases of the Lord's coming is revealed; the rapture is veiled in the Old Testament, His Second Coming is described many places in the Old Testament.

#### **How does Enoch represent a type of the rapture?**

Enoch was removed from the earth prior to the flood in Noah's day. He was saved from the wrath of God while Noah was preserved through the wrath. This makes Enoch a type of the church with Noah and his family a type of Israel...

Hebrews 11:5 - By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

#### **What is a type?**

A type is an example that is intended to help us understand a deeper truth. Consider:

1 Corinthians 10:11 - Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

The word translated "example" is from the Greek word *tupos* which means "form, figure, or pattern." The English word "type" is developed from the Greek word and provides the basis for why Bible students coined the word "typology." Typology refers to Old Testament patterns that illustrate doctrine, usually New Testament doctrine.

### **Should we use a type to teach doctrines?**

No, doctrines should be taken directly from the Biblical text however types can be used to illustrate a doctrine to help us understand it better.

There are several more types of the rapture in Scripture, see my full Bible study on the Our Blessed Hope: Lot and family, Elijah, Isaiah, Paul, Philip, the two witnesses in Revelation, and believers as ambassadors for Christ.

#### **42. 1Thessalonians 5:9 or Revelation 3:10 & Isaiah 13:9**

**1Thessalonians 5:9** - For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**Revelation 3:10** - Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

**Note that "wrath" refers to the tribulation which is part of the Day of the Lord...**

Zephaniah 1:14-15 - The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

**Isaiah 13:9** - Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it.

These verses represent the difference in timing between the rapture which occurs before the tribulation and the Lord's Second Coming which occurs during the day of wrath.

## **The Rapture Precedes the Tribulation**

### **Reference: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

<sup>1</sup>Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, <sup>2</sup>not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. <sup>3</sup>Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for (that day will not come) until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. <sup>4</sup>He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

<sup>5</sup>Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? <sup>6</sup>And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. <sup>7</sup>For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one

who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup>And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. <sup>9</sup>The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, <sup>10</sup>and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. <sup>11</sup>For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie <sup>12</sup>and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. (NIV)

#### **43. 2:1-2 - What is Paul consoling the Thessalonians about?**

Paul wrote this passage to the Thessalonians to assure them that their persecution is not the tribulation, they have not missed the rapture.

#### **44. 2:2 - What is "the day of Christ"?**

(see **Jeremiah 46:10**)

The day of Christ is "the great and awesome day of the Lord" (Acts 2:20) which is the tribulation...

Jeremiah 46:10 - For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself on His adversaries. The sword shall devour; it shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord GOD of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the River Euphrates.

#### **45. 2:3 - What must come before the day of Christ?**

The falling away comes first and then the man of sin is revealed .

#### **46. 2:3-4, 8 - Who is the man of sin (a.k.a. son of perdition & lawless one)?**

The man of sin is the Antichrist, the Beast of Revelation.

#### **47. 2:3 - What is the falling away?**

The Greek word "apostasia" which is translated "falling away" here means a falling away from or departure from the faith. The Greek root is from where we get the word apostasy.

#### **48. When will the great apostasy happen?**

The great falling away from the faith is given as a sign that the rapture is near since it will occur prior to the rapture. Please note that some Bible say that this "falling away" refers to the church "falling away" from the earth... so this is either saying that the turning from the faith or the rapture occurs before the Day of Christ.

#### **49. 2:6-7 - Who restrains the lawless one?**

The Holy Spirit who indwells the church...

1 John 4:4 - You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

**50. When will the Holy Spirit be "taken out of the way"?**

The Holy Spirit will be "taken out of the way" when the church is removed at the rapture.

**51. Does this answer the question Jesus asked in Luke 18:8?**

Luke 18:8 - "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

The answer to Jesus' question is no, He will not find faith on the earth when He comes because all those of faith will be gone in the rapture.

**52. 2:8 - When will the lawless one be revealed?**

"And then" is key here, it is after "He who restrains" is taken out of the way. The lawless one (the Antichrist) will be revealed after the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way.

**53. 2:10-12 - Is it a good strategy to wait until the rapture to put your trust in Christ?**

No, it is not a good idea to wait until the rapture to receive Jesus into your life. People who think they can wait are fooling themselves since there will be a strong delusion that will explain away the rapture.

**54. 2:10-12 – Does this say that people can not be saved after the rapture if they have heard and rejected the gospel prior to the rapture?**

No, people who say this are reading more into the passage than it says. God will send a strong delusion so that those who have hardened their hearts to Him will have an explanation they can latch onto but God's Word does not return void (Isaiah 55:11) so seeds of the truth planted prior to the rapture will bear fruit after the rapture if the ground of the heart has been prepared by the Holy Spirit who does not retire at the rapture. A great many people will be saved following the rapture (Revelation 7:14, 20:4).

**55. What explanations do you think will be given for the rapture?**

Jesus said during His Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24) that there would be great deception during the tribulation. I'm sure a lot of this deception will be explanations to dismiss the rapture as something other than what it really is...

- New Age Religious people will say something like this is the cosmic god taking away the "bad seed" to prepare the way for a quantum leap into a new state of existence.

- Secular people may believe space aliens zapped them: "We have a common foe so we must all work together". -OR- "We have a common friend so we must all work together." Note that Jesus said there would be signs in heaven preceding His return...

Luke 21:11 - "And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven."