

# sermon notes

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Pastor Tony Caffey, Messiah Bible Church | Final Things Lesson 6  
April 1, 2026 | “The Rapture.”

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## What is the Rapture?

- 1) The rapture \_\_\_\_\_ the church to meet Christ in the air before his return to the earth (1 Thess 4:16–17)
- 2) The rapture \_\_\_\_\_ resurrection bodies for believers who have not died (1 Cor 15:51–52; 1 Thess 4:16–17)
- 3) The rapture \_\_\_\_\_ the pouring out of God’s wrath upon the earth (1 Thess 5:9)

## Seven Reasons for a Pretribulational Rapture:

- 1) It could take place at any time— \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) God pours out his \_\_\_\_\_ during the \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) The removal of the \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) God redirects his attention toward \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Who populates Jesus’s \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- 6) When does the \_\_\_\_\_ judgment take place?
- 7) When does the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lamb take place?

## Questions for Further Application of God’s Word:

### GO DEEPER

Review the lesson notes above. Practice explaining the rapture in 30 seconds or less to someone who asks about it. Of the six reasons for a pretribulational rapture, which do you find most compelling? Why? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the posttribulational and midtribulational views?

Pretribulationists distinguish between Christ’s gathering of His Church at the rapture (cf. 1 Thess 4:13–18) and his return to earth (cf. Rev 19:11–21). Compare and contrast these two passages. How does the rapture relate to Christ’s return? Can we be certain that Christ will return? If so, why? What happens to those who belong to Christ (dead and alive)? What happens to those who reject him?

Pretribulationists believe that the church will be spared the outpouring of God’s wrath in the tribulation. What is the wrath of God? Why does God express wrath? Is God angry? Why or why not? How do we escape God’s wrath? Why is the doctrine of God’s wrath essential to Christianity? Does God’s wrath nullify God’s love? Why or why not? Why is it difficult to talk about God’s wrath in today’s world?

### GET PERSONAL

The rapture is often sensationalized as something terrifying or mysterious, yet in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, Paul presents it as a source of hope. Why is it hopeful? Assess the context of this passage in the book of 1 Thessalonians.

John MacArthur writes, “Paul’s purpose in writing about the Rapture and the Day of the Lord was not primarily theological and eschatological, but pastoral and practical in order to give them hope and comfort.” Do you agree with MacArthur’s statement? Why would the Thessalonian church need hope and comfort? Do we need this in our day?

### PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Jesus calls believers to be watchful and ready for His return (cf. Matt 24:42; 25:13). What does watchfulness look like in everyday Christian life? Does watchfulness mean we should quit our jobs and sit around and wait for Christ to return? If not, why not?

### ADVANCED QUESTIONS

Read the following passages describing the Day of the Lord: Joel 1:15; 2:10–11; 3:14–16; Amos 5:18–20; Zephaniah 1:14–18; 2 Peter 3:10. Consider those passages in light of 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11. How will “The Day of the Lord” come about? How should we prepare for it? Watch the following video from the Bible Project and discuss: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/day-lord/>