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## Facts About the Rapture I Thessalonians 4:13-18

INTRO: Before the time of Jacob's trouble, before that time known as the Tribulation, God will rapture out the church. He will rapture out the saints.

There are many scriptures that teach us that the church will not go through the tribulation:

1. In Revelation 1:1-3:22, the church is mentioned nineteen times. The seven churches of Asia are found in these chapters, seven local, visible churches. From Revelation 4:1-19:21, there is not even one mention of the church here on the earth.
  - a. The church and the pre-tribulation saints are in heaven during this time.
  - b. During the tribulation, the Judgment Seat of Christ and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb take place in heaven.
2. I Thessalonians 5:9 says: "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul tells the church at Thessalonica that "God hath not appointed us to wrath." That means the wrath of hell nor the wrath of the Tribulation. Sodom and Gomorrah could not be destroyed until Lot was removed. Tribulation cannot begin until believers are removed.
3. In II Thessalonians 2:1, the church at Thessalonica was told about the coming of the Lord and the gathering of the saints to Him. In vs 2-8, we find that the Anti-Christ will not be revealed until the Holy Spirit is taken out of the world. That means that believers are gone when the tribulation starts.

Friends, you and I who know the Lord are told by the Father, "to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thes 1:10).

### I. THE RAPTURE IS FOR BELIEVERS

A. I Thes 4:14a, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again...."

1. Faith in the bodily resurrection of Jesus is essential to salvation (I Cor 15:13-18).
2. Without the bodily resurrection of Christ, there is no salvation (Rom 10:9).

B. "...them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (I Thes 4:14b).

1. The believers at Thessalonica did not have to worry about their departed loved ones who died in Christ because their loved ones had believed in

Christ. They had believed in the full Gospel of how Christ died, was buried, and rose again; thus they were saved.

2. The saints at Thessalonica had no need to worry about their departed loved ones. They had no need to sorrow as the world would (I Thes 4:13).
  - a) The lost have no hope.
  - b) The believer's hope is in the Lord.
3. The Bible teaches that at the death of a believer the soul immediately takes it flight and goes to be with the Lord (II Cor 5:6-8).
  - a) We also have this assurance that when Jesus comes at the Rapture He will bring the souls of the righteous dead with Him (I Thes 4:14b).
  - b) The soul and new body will be united at the Rapture.
4. When Christ comes in the clouds, we that are alive and remain will not be taken up before the dead saints (I Thes 4:15).

## II. AT THE RAPTURE, JESUS COMES AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

A. In I Thes 5:1-3, we are told that the Lord "cometh as a thief in the night."

1. I Thes 5:3, "then sudden destruction cometh upon them..."
  - a) Sudden destruction is coming to the lost during the tribulation.
  - b) The Lord will come unannounced. His coming will be unexpected.
  - c) Only the saints will hear His shout. Only the believers will hear the voice of the archangel. Only the believers will hear the trump of God (I Thes 4:16). Only the believer hears the call, "Come up hither" (Rev 4:1).
2. When Christ comes, the world will not be expecting Him.

B. He is coming as a thief. A thief takes only valuable things; he takes treasures. The thief leaves more than he takes.

1. When Jesus comes in the air (I Thes 4:17), He comes to gather up His Jewels, the redeemed, the blood bought!
  - a) Believers who are driving a car, flying a plane, mowing a lawn, engineering a train will be snatched away.
  - b) Every saved policeman, teacher, judge, etc. will be gone.
  - c) Think of it. Planes will crash; buses will run off the highways; cars will be driver less. Factory worker and office workers will be taken.
2. When it is daytime in one part of the world, it is night in another. Although Luke 17:34-36 primarily deals with the second phase of the second coming, it does picture what will happen at the rapture.

## III. BEFORE THE RAPTURE, WE ARE TO BE WATCHING AND WORKING (LUKE 12:35-48).

A. There are two pictures of what believers are to be doing until the Lord returns.

1. Serving all believers are called to be servants (Rom 6:17-18, 22-23).
  - a) "Servant" means a "bondslave," one who has been bought out of the slavery of sin and set free. The bondslave chooses to serve the

one who picked him out for redemption.

- b) Our precious Lord Jesus bought us back with a great price so that we might be His (I Cor 6:14-20).
- c) He gave Himself for us; He redeemed us to be a peculiar people (Titus 2:14).
- d) A girded loin also pictures one who is taking a journey. We are strangers and pilgrims here. We are waiting for our Lord to snatch us out and carry us home (I Pet 2:11).

2. Lights Burning

- a) The shining light comes from a lamp. The lamp is the Word of god (Psalm 119:105).
- b) We are to get the Gospel out; we are to let the Gospel light shine.
- c) We are to shine as lights (Matt 6:16).

B. Luke 12:36-39, We are to be waiting, watching, and working; because Friends, He is coming again.

CONCLUSION: The Rapture is an event of separation and reunion:

- 1. Of separation, there will be a separation of the righteous from the unrighteous, of the saved from the unsaved.
- 2. Of reunion, the saved will be reunited with redeemed loved ones who have gone on before.