



## Eschatology – A Study of the End Times

### Lesson 10: The Results of the Rapture

#### Introduction

The next event to take place in the chronological timeline of end times events is the rapture of the church. When that takes place, great changes are going to take place on the earth. Millions of Christians who are alive during that time and dwelling on the earth will be instantly taken up to be with Christ in the air. These Christians, who are indwelt with the Holy Spirit and who stand for righteousness, will suddenly be gone. Those who are not indwelt with the Holy Spirit will be left behind. This great departure of the church will bring drastic changes. In this lesson, we will look at the changes that are going to take place as a result of the rapture of the church.

#### The Christian's New Body<sup>1</sup>

It is a fact that after Jesus was dead for three days, He was physically resurrected. There were many eyewitnesses who attested to this fact. Peter, preaching his first sermon on the day of Pentecost, said, "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses" (Acts 2:32). In Peter's second sermon he said, "but put to death the Prince of life, *the one* whom God raised from the dead, *a fact* to which we are witnesses" (Acts 3:15). First Corinthians 15:5–6 says, "and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep."

The fact of Jesus' resurrection ensures our own physical resurrection from the dead.

- John 6:39–40. What does Jesus say about those who believe in Him? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- John 11:24–26. What did Martha know about Lazarus? \_\_\_\_\_  
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These verses give us assurance that all who believe in Jesus will be physically resurrected in the future. We can be confident that even though our mortal bodies may pass away in death, they will be raised to glory, never again to grow old and die.

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<sup>1</sup> The following is adapted from *The End Times in Chronological Order* by Ron Rhodes.

### ***Our Present Longing***

While presently living on the earth in this physical body we experience pain, suffering, sickness, disease, and death. These realities cause us to long for something better. The Bible speaks to this longing that all Christians have.

- 2 Corinthians 5:1–4. What does Paul say Christians are longing for? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Romans 8:23. What are Christians eagerly awaiting? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### ***Raised Imperishable, Glorious, Powerful, and Spiritual***

At the rapture of the church, those who have died in Christ will be instantly raised from the dead and given a glorified body. At the same rapture event, those Christians who are alive on the earth will be instantly transformed into glorified bodies, and both groups of people will meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:13–17).

*Who is raised?*

- 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Who does Paul say will rise first? \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Who does Paul say will be caught up? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*How are they raised?*

- 1 Corinthians 15:42, 52. What does Paul say about our resurrection body? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 1 Corinthians 15:43. What does Paul say about our resurrection body? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Corinthians 15:44. What does Paul say about our resurrection body? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Luke 20:34–36. What does Jesus say about those who “attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead”? \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 Corinthians 15:51–53. What does Paul say about those who are alive at the rapture?

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The glorious news of the rapture of the church is that the dead in Christ will be raised with imperishable, glorious, powerful, spiritual bodies that will never die and those who are alive at that time will be changed instantly into the same bodies.

**The “Restrainer” Will Be Removed**

As those who believe in a pretribulational rapture, the rapture of the church is going to usher in the beginning of the seven-year tribulation. At this time the Antichrist is going to be revealed (2 Thess. 2:3) who is going to make a covenant with Israel for seven years (Dan. 9:27).

When the church is raptured, those who are indwelt with the Holy Spirit will be taken out of this world to be with Christ forever (1 Thess. 4:17). This will bring drastic changes to the world as we know it when those who live for Christ and stand for righteousness will be instantly removed. Not only will the church be removed, but the Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Thessalonians 2 that the “restrainer” will be removed as well.

There have been many opinions on the identity of the restrainer in 2 Thessalonians 2. Some have said that it is the gospel that restrains and keeps the Antichrist in check. Some of the early church fathers believed that the restrainer was the Roman Empire. Others have said that the restrainer is human government in general that is able to restrain the Antichrist. Another view is the church’s influence as salt and light in the world. None of the above opinions are satisfactory as they are human forces that are not powerful enough to restrain the supernatural power of Satan who is behind the Antichrist.

Some have argued that Michael the archangel is the restrainer. However, although Michael is a supernatural person, he alone does not have the power to restrain Satan (Jude 9). So, who is the restrainer?

- Genesis 6:3. What does the Lord say about the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Job 1:9–11. Why was Job protected? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Thessalonians 2:6–8. What pronouns are used to describe the “restrainer”? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Who is the restrainer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Application**

1. Keep your focus on eternity (Col. 3:1). If you don't long for and eagerly await the redemption of your body, it may be because: 1) You are not saved; or 2) You are too focused on the things of this world. Be heavenly minded so that you are of earthly good.
2. Praise God for the promise He has made about our future. We will be in a body that will be imperishable, glorious, powerful, spiritual and will never die.
3. Be thankful for the Holy Spirit's restraining power over evil today. Things could be a lot worse than what they are today. In fact, one day things are going to get a lot worse.