

Williamsburg Community Chapel Men's Breakfast



March 22, 2019

1 Thessalonians is *our call to wait well for Christ's return.*

What are you waiting for?

How are you waiting for it?



Thessalonica

Paul's Second Missionary Journey (A.D. 49-51)

The Book of 1 Thessalonians



***#7 – Waiting Well Requires Reassurance
(and Everything in Between)***

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

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Waiting Well Requires Reassurance **(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)**

- The Return of Christ is *a major theme of the NT.*

- **Chapel Statement of Faith:**

We believe ... *In the bodily Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to claim His own people and to set all things in order.*

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Reassurance ... and everything *in between*:

- Reassurance (4:13)
- *Reappearance* (4:14-15)
- *Resurrection* (4:16)
- *Rapture* (4:17)
- Reassurance (4:18)

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Reassurance (4:13)

- These verses are ultimately pastoral in nature.
- **“Sleep”** = a euphemism for death.

*“The sun can set and rise again, But once our brief light sets
There is one unending night to be slept through.”*

(Catullus, 5.4-6)

“Hopes are for the living; the dead are without hope.”
(Theocritus, Idyll 4.42)

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Reappearance (4:14-15)

- Note: An expected order to events when Christ reappears.
- Those living will **certainly not** precede those who have died.
- At this point, Paul and his companions expected they would be alive for the Parousia.

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Resurrection (4:16)

- Jesus Himself will descend from Heaven (***Acts 1:11***)
- A “three-fold” announcement by Christ.
- The dead in Christ will rise *first*.

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

- 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Rapture (4:17)

- “**caught up**” = “seized,” “snatched up,” “carried off by force,” (see Acts 8:39)
- “**clouds**” were often associated with the place of God’s presence in the Bible.
- The term for “**meeting**” was used of Roman emperors when they were received by citizens.

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Rapture (4:17)

“Far from suffering any disadvantage at the Parousia (Christ’s second coming), the faithful departed would actually have precedence over those still alive. Their resurrection would be the first result of the coming of the Lord; only after that would those still alive enter into their heritage.”

- F.F. Bruce

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

An Excursus - Three Views of the Rapture:

- Part of a larger area of theology called “**eschatology**” (“study of last things”)
- Great debate has centered on this issue.
- A matter of **biblical interpretation** rather than one of **biblical authority**.
- Each of these views coincides with a belief in **the Premillennial return of Christ**.

An Excursus - Three Views of the Rapture

1) Pretribulation View:

- Rapture happens before (“pre”) the Tribulation (70th Week of *Daniel 9:27* and events of *Revelation 6-19*)
- The “return” of Christ will happen in two phases.
- This return of Christ could happen at any time.
- This view served as a strong motivation for missions and evangelism.

An Excursus - Three Views of the Rapture

2) Midtribulation View:

- Rapture happens in the mid-point of the Tribulation.
- Signs will precede the rapture (Matthew 24:4-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4)
- Emphasis on 3½ weeks in **Daniel 9:27**:

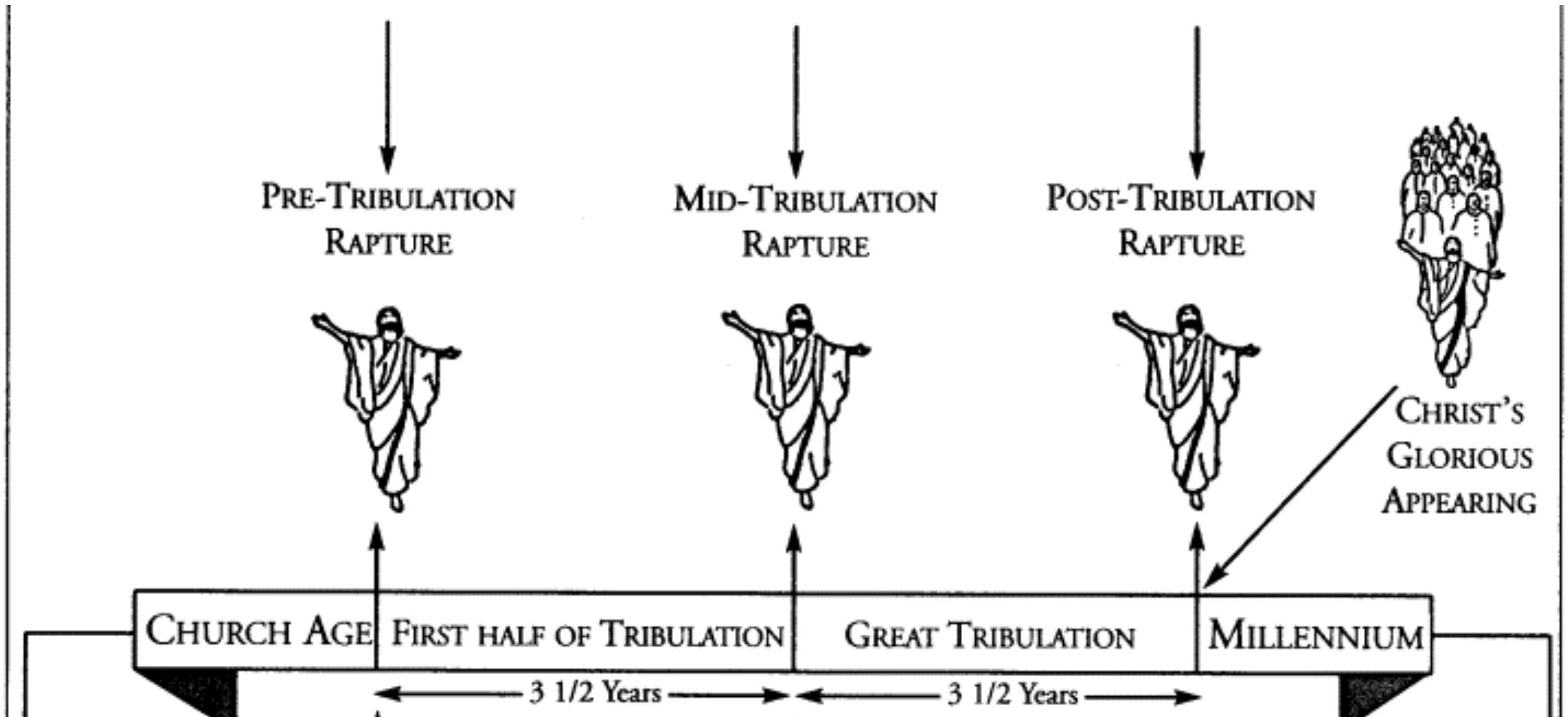
And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.

An Excursus - Three Views of the Rapture

3) Posttribulation View:

- Rapture happens after (“post”) the Tribulation.
- Signs will precede the rapture (Matthew 24:4-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4).
- Seems to be the “simplest explanation” view.

An Excursus - Three Views of the Rapture



An Excursus - Three Views of the Rapture

“May the Lord give us all the grace to live and labor in the vineyard of Christ as workmen who do not need to be ashamed. And as His servants who love Him with all our heart, let us look eagerly and expectantly for His soon return, at whatever point of the final seven years He may make His appearance.”

- **Gleason L. Archer**

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Reassurance (4:18)

- Hope certainly is the key theme of this passage!

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

- John 14:1-3

Waiting Well Requires Reassurance

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Questions:

- 1) Do you look forward to the return of Christ with great fear or great expectation?
- 2) Why should 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 give us great hope as Christians?
- 3) Do you know someone who needs to hear this message of hope today?

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Next Week: *1 Thessalonians 5:1-11*

(The Day of the Lord, and events that precede it).

1 Thessalonians is *our call to wait well for Christ's return.*

Have a great week of waiting well.

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