

A low-angle photograph of a city street with tall buildings on either side. The sky is bright and hazy. Several people are captured in mid-air, jumping or falling, their bodies silhouetted against the light sky. The central figure is a man in a dark suit with his arms raised high. Other figures are scattered around him, some with arms outstretched, others in various jumping poses. The overall mood is one of chaotic movement and dramatic tension.

TAKEN OR LEFT

Did Jesus Teach the Rapture?



What is the Rapture?

- The rapture is the belief that Jesus will return and take away his true church before a specific timeline of events that begin the rise of His earthly Kingdom. The period of tribulation is taught as a second chance to Believe in Jesus.
 - Sometimes called premillennial dispensationalism.
 - The doctrine is only about 200 years old (Darby)
 - It exists in three forms: Pre-tribulation, Post-tribulation, and mid-tribulation
 - Most who believe in the rapture tie the doctrine to hyper-literalized events of Revelation and associate it with the emergence of a single figure they call the Antichrist.
 - The rapture is highly publicized in our culture because of figures like Tim LaHaye, Jerry Jenkins, and Hal Lindsey, and Cyrus Scofield

Is the Rapture Biblical?



The Theology is based on two passages: Matthew 24:1-28, 36-40; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

- **Matthew 24**

- The tribulation spoken of in Matthew 24 vs. 9 is associated with the destruction of the temple they were told to flee Jerusalem not wait to be called up.
- There is no mention of any signs after verse 36 and it was something that they could not watch for, but needed to live in readiness
- Given the comparison to the flood, is it better to be taken or left?

According to modern proponents of the doctrine, the rapture can't happen until there is a building of a third temple and the restoration of temple worship.

(Hebrews 9:1-14)

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- **1 Thessalonians 4**

- Does use language about meeting the Lord in the air, but it is devoid of any notion of a continued life on Earth.
- Paul's point is that those who are dead at the return of Christ are still saved and awaiting his return and that the living should live in readiness

Is it consistent with scripture?



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- **Other Considerations- The danger of hyper-literalizing Revelation**
 - The language needs to be consistent
 - Does the Bible promise a physical kingdom? Revelation 20
 - If it does, then those who are raised are also only those who are martyred
- **1 Corinthians 15:35-49 –The Physical must come first, and then the Spiritual**
- **The Church is the body, kingdom, and bride of Christ. This doctrine reduces the church to an afterthought. Colossians 1:13-14, Ephesians 1:18-22, 5:25-30**

What did Jesus teach?



Matthew 24:1-28, 36-40; Matthew 25; John 5:25

- **To prepare for his coming and that his return would come suddenly without warning.**
- **Those “taken” in Matthew 24 are compared to those outside of the ark. The taken here is to meet Jesus in judgment in a state of unreadiness,**
- **He taught us to prepare for his kingdom by**
 - **Anticipating it coming at an unexpected time**
 - **Living as stewards who want to meet their master in readiness**
 - **Loving our brethren as He loves them**
- **He taught that we prepare for judgment by doing good works now and not evil.**