

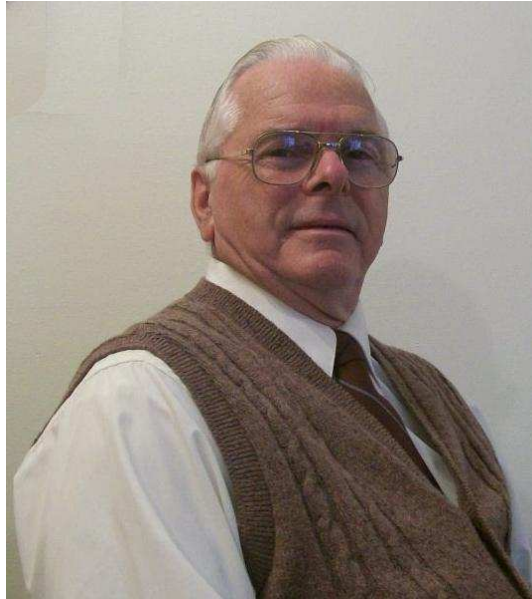


A treatise exposing the

R A P T U R E

Of The

R E A D Y



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All scripture references and quotations are from the King James Bible.

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Introduction

Possibly no subject stirs the heart and soul of a Christian as does the rapture and rightly so. Our hope lies in the prospect of the rapture when Jesus returns to remove Christians out of this world. The Apostle Paul wrote of this rousing hope in a letter to his young preacher friend, Titus.

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13

Often overlooked is the qualifying lifestyle of a Christian who is truly *"looking for that blessed hope."* Paul defined that lifestyle for us in his letter to Titus, a co-worker in the ministry.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Titus 2:11-12

Living a Christian lifestyle is not only commendable it is required for that is what makes a Christian *ready* for the rapture. To not live the Christian lifestyle leaves a Christian *unready* for the rapture. That is truly an unfavorable position. The stark truth is many Christians aren't consciously looking for (living for) the *blessed hope* of the rapture as evidenced by their lifestyle.

Then again, many Christians exhibit a lively interest in the promise of the rapture but they hold false rapture beliefs. I find two particularly disturbing false beliefs about the rapture which once captured me. Inevitably these errant beliefs create casual Christians with false hopes. Christians are urged to truly ponder the following information as it will affect your future.

The first false rapture belief is that of a pre-tribulation rapture. I was weaned on that fanciful event from the earliest days of my Christianity. Later I was fed the same spoiled spiritual food when I went to Bible college. It was many years later through study and prayer that the Holy Spirit illuminated the truth to me. That truth is: **the pre-tribulation rapture is a lie.**

What is so wrong with the pre-tribulation rapture belief? Well, first and most importantly, the Bible does not teach such a rapture. It is not my intent here to prove that. I have written an e-book (80 pages) that explains the rapture in detail. I have been told that it is the absolute best book on the rapture offered on the internet. Send me an email asking for it and I'll send you a PDF copy.

In addition to being a great deception a pre-tribulation rapture gives a false security for Christians. Supposedly a pre-tribulation rapture will remove the church from this world before the tribulation of the Revelation. There are three things wrong with that theory.

- (1) The Bible teaches no such thing.
- (2) It gives Christians a false security.
- (3) They won't be *ready* for the rapture due to unfaithfulness spurred on by the hope of a pre-tribulation rapture belief.

The second false rapture belief is that ALL Christians will be taken in the rapture. That is unanimously accepted by Christendom but it is unsupported by scripture. That had been my belief all my Christian life until recently. Not long ago the Holy Spirit again opened my eyes of understanding. I now vigorously refute a rapture of ALL Christians. Rather it will be a Rapture Of The Ready.

The high hurdle is persuading Christians to listen to this heretofore unheralded and unthinkable rapture truth. Christians are understandably reluctant to hear the truth of a Rapture Of The Ready for two reasons.

- (1) The teaching is contrary to what they have been taught. From personal experience I know how Christians resist any challenge to their beliefs.
- (2) Christians have been taught they will surely be taken in the rapture. The possibility that they may not leave in the rapture is unthinkable.

We Christians are urged to "*...awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*" Rom 13:11 I echo those words with this warning: It is time for Christians to awake from their sleepy rapture beliefs and believe the rapture of God's Word. That rapture is a **Rapture Of The Ready**.

Beginning With The End

We commence our journey to establish the truth of a Rapture Of The Ready with perhaps the most solemn sentence in the Bible. It is perhaps the soberest passage of prophecy found in the Bible. STOP NOW or as soon as you can and read **Rev 20:11-15**

This passage of scripture relates what is commonly known as the great white throne judgment. This is the final judgment of humanity by Christ Jesus following His Millennial Kingdom. It is singularly believed that only lost souls (unbelievers)

will appear at this judgment. It is likewise believed that ALL who appear at this judgment will be sentenced to the lake of fire. Is that true?

I found a list of fifty six translations of Rev 20:15 from which I quote five.

"And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire." (ASV – American Standard Version)

"And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (ESV - English Standard Version)

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (KJV – King James Version)

"Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire." (NIV – New International Version)

"And everyone whose name could not be found among the names written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire." (VOICE - a Bible by Thomas Nelson)

Highly significant is the fact that the language in NONE of the fifty six translations of Rev 20:15 precludes the possibility that some in attendance have their names written in the book of life. Contrarily, the language of all translations implies there are some whose names are registered in the book of life and will escape the lake of fire.

There is a key word in Rev 20:15 which gives understanding to its message but it escapes most readers. That key word is the pronoun "whosoever." "Whosoever" does not mean everyone – it is not ALL inclusive. In other words, not everyone is a "whosoever." Let us look at a few Biblical examples.

"For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." (words of Jesus) Mark 3:35
The whosoever here is he that does the will of God.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16
The whosoever here is one who believes in God's Son, Jesus Christ.

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21
The whosoever here is one who calls upon the name of the Lord for salvation.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God..."

I John 5:1 The whosoever here is one who believes that Jesus is the Christ – the anointed One of God.

It deserves restating that the pronoun "whosoever" is neither all inclusive nor all exclusive. Whosoever is never indicative of ALL. In reading the above verses it surely is NOT to be understood that...

everyone does the will of God. Mark 3:35

everyone believes in God's Son. John 3:16

everyone will call upon the name of the Lord. Acts 2:21

everyone believes that Jesus is the Christ. I John 5:1

Knowing that "whosoever" never includes everyone then we must conclude that there are some at the white throne judgment whose names are written in the book of life.

It is generally believed that all who appear at the white throne judgment are lost – unbelievers. If that were true the language of Rev 20:15 should read something like this:

..... and the names of all present were not found in the book of life.

.... and all present had not their names written in the book of life.

.... none of those present had their name written in the book of life.

.... all were cast into the lake of fire because their names were absent from the book of life.

Instead we read: "And if any..." (ASV)

"And if anyone's name... (ESV)

"Anyone whose name..." (NIV)

"And whosoever..." (KJV)

The language of those four Bible versions (and all versions) is not all inclusive. If "whosoever" in Rev 20:15 means everyone present at that judgment it would be the only instance where it is ALL inclusive. The language in all fifty six versions clearly implies that **there are those whose names are recorded in the book of life.**

The question now is: Who are those at the white throne judgment whose

names are recorded in the book of life? The remainder of this study is dedicated to identifying those whose names are found in the book of life. They will not be banished to the lake of fire but will be granted eternal life in heaven.

Now To The Beginning

Here is a dictionary definition of the word warning. "A warning gives notice or intimation of potential danger, impending evil, possible harm or anything unfavorable." A warning aims to alert or put one on guard. To disregard a warning is to subject one's self to possible unpleasant consequences. Many of us have had such an experience at one time or another.

The church has been given a specific warning which, for the most part, goes unheralded and unheeded. Because this warning came from the Savior Himself it could not be more authentic or urgent. May this treatise truly be an instrument of God to raise the awareness of Christians to this compelling warning.

It has been said that ignorance is no excuse for failure. That holds true to the Lord's targeted warning to the church. Ill consequences will befall Christians who fail to heed this repeated warning given to the church. One will not be exempted or excused because they did not know or understand the warning.

What is this warning of undying concern to the church? What is this warning which is not perceived as a warning to most Christians? What is this warning spoken by Jesus Christ no less than nine times? The warning is to *watch*. The gravity of Christ's warning to His church demands serious attention by ALL Christians.

The following quotations were spoken by Jesus in His prophetic preaching of the future.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Matt 24:42

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matt 25:13

"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." Mark 13:33

"And what I say unto you I say unto all. Watch." Mark 13:37

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36

These warnings have failed to arouse the church because the church has not realized that the warnings were directed to it. Contrary to popular belief, Jesus directed His rousing prophetic sermon in Matthew Chapter 24 to the church - NOT Israel. If this truth is missed then His prophecy, along with the Revelation, will be misinterpreted and Christians will suffer for it.

Yes, several times Jesus warned the church (you and I) to *watch* for His appearing. There are three logical conclusions to be drawn from these warnings to *watch*.

- (1) It is the responsibility of each Christian to remain *watchful* of Christ's appearing (rapture).
- (2) It is possible for Christians NOT to be *watching* for His appearing (rapture) otherwise the warnings were unnecessary.
- (3) Like any warning, there are consequences for failing to *watch* for Christ's appearing (rapture).

What did Jesus mean by commanding Christians to "watch?" It does not mean that we walk around gazing into the sky expectant of Christ's return. To "watch" means to give attention to our actions – to our lifestyle. Are we living worldly or righteously? Are we living in expectation of the rapture? The Apostle Paul gave two apt definitions for "watching."

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."
I Cor 16:13

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Titus 2:11-12

A personal question for all Christians is: Will Jesus be pleased or displeased with me when He appears at the rapture? Every Christian will be judged to be one or the other. Know with certainty that many Christians will be found not *watching*, therefore displeasing to Jesus, when He appears at the rapture. A most dreadful consequence (loss) awaits them.

“Watch” In The Parables

In addition to His direct commands to the church Jesus reinforced His command to *watch* in parables.

“But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.” Matt 24:43

“Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning.” Mark 13:35

“Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and he will come forth and serve them.” Luke 12:37

A parable is an earthly story which conveys a spiritual meaning. The three parables above were all spoken by Jesus in the context of His appearing at the rapture. In the parables the “*goodman of the house*” and “*master of the house*” and “*the lord when he cometh*” all portray the Lord Jesus Christ. The constant spiritual message is that Christians must remain *watchful* of His return.

“Watch” In The Revelation

Jesus raised the subject of *watching* three times in His Revelation prophecy. Understandably, being located in the Revelation prophecy adds to the sobriety of these warnings.

In Revelation Chapters 2 & 3 Jesus Christ appears as the Head of His church. (Eph 5:23) He dictates seven letters to seven different churches. In them He commends or corrects or condemns them in preparing them for the future. In His letter to the church in Sardis Jesus let it be known He was displeased with their Christian lifestyle - their Christian testimony. (Rev 3:1-3)

As a corrective measure He commanded them to “*Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die...*” Jesus urged them to be the Christians that was expected of them – to live in a way that would please Him. Further, they were warned that if they did not watch (live expectantly of His coming) He would come upon them as a thief.

"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Rev 3:3

Remember, Jesus is writing to a church - to believers. We must not mistake the time when Jesus comes as a thief or to whom He comes as a thief. The time of His coming as a thief is the rapture. Therefore, Jesus comes as a thief to those Christians who are not *watching* for His coming. Just as today, there will be scores of Christians not watching (not ready) for Christ at the rapture.

Terribly wrong is the idea that Jesus comes as a thief to the lost. The rapture is not for the lost but the saved. The lost aren't directed to watch for His coming. Sadly they spurn the prospect of Christ's return. Anticipation of the rapture excites only those whose faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our next reference is truly prophetically enlightening but it has been badly interpreted or disregarded completely. *"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."* Rev 16:15 What is the warning here? What is the danger here?

Of the many warnings to the church to *watch* this is the most ominous. The first clue to dire consequences is its location. These words of Jesus come when God's wrath is raining upon the earth. The church will be in heaven so why does Jesus voice this warning to the church here?... and it is to the church!

The stark truth of Rev 16:15 has mostly remained uncovered and therefore untold. This has left the church unmindful of the somber warning therein. The point of Rev 16:15 is this: Some Christians will be dressed in white (Christ's righteousness) while others remain shamefully wearing their sinful clothing (worldliness, unfaithfulness). In this next verse Jesus gives understanding to Rev 16:15.

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear..."

Rev 3:18

Jesus advised us to purchase from Him two things, one of which is white raiment. White raiment undoubtedly refers to the white apparel (robes) which Christians receive at the rapture. see Rev 3:4 The cost of this white raiment is our faithfulness to Christ. Christians who fail to obtain this white raiment will be left behind in their sin soaked garments. They will be considered as naked.

As hard as the foregoing thoughts may seem that is the message of Jesus in

Rev 16:15 which says, "*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*" The Apostle John referred to this shame in his first letter. see I John 2:28

We have viewed all instances where Jesus applied the term *watch* to the church. On two occasions He raised the urgency of *watching* with the utterance of the following.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt 24:44

"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." Luke 12:40

Let us not think that these alerts are directed to the lost world as many do. The lost world cannot be ready for Christ's return. Jesus was concerned about Christians being *ready*. What does it mean to be *ready*? Dr. William Hendriksen in his commentary on The Gospel of Matthew defined it this way:

"to be "ready" is synonymous with to be "alert" or "on the alert," prepared in mind and heart."

One question should haunt every Christian. If ALL Christians are going to be taken in the rapture, as most believe, why are there so many warnings for us to *watch* and to be *ready*? Could it be there will be Christians who do not **watch** and therefore are not *ready* for the rapture? I harbor no doubt that that is the exact message to Christians concerning the rapture.

If that be true then it is the responsibility of every Christian to *watch* and to be *ready* for the rapture. By keeping a close *watch* on our faith and living true to the Word of God we make ourselves *ready* for Christ's appearance at the rapture. Let us not foolishly think we can get *ready* after He appears. At that point Jesus has already judged us as being *ready* or *unready*. Actually, every moment we stand *ready* or *unready*!

The Consequence For Unreadiness

We have cited every warning spoken by Jesus for Christians to *watch* and to be *ready*. Warnings carry consequences if unheeded. We now address the woefully unrecognized but inescapable consequence awaiting Christians who fail to *watch*. By not *watching* they will be rendered *unready* for the rapture.

We will scrutinize several Bible verses and passages which together bring us a collective message. We now declare this message forthrightly to eliminate all

mystery and guessing. What is this generally obscure message that the church has a desperate need to know? It is this:

Two separations will occur at the rapture. (1) The church will be separated and removed from the lost world. (2) Christians will be separated on the basis of faithfulness. Faithful Christians will go to be with Christ. Unfaithful Christians, those who fail to *watch* and be *ready*, will be separated and remain on earth. Yes, I know. What a bombshell!! Yet you are blessed to be reading this.

I suspect many who read the above will disgustingly drop this book like the proverbial hot potato. I would have myself not long ago. Before you toss this I challenge you to exhibit some spiritual curiosity and seek to know what truth may have escaped you. If you do you can ensure yourself of being *ready* for the rapture

Important Bible truths escape Christians for many reasons.

- (1) They have believed false preaching and teaching.
- (2) They haven't heard a certain Bible truth.
- (3) They have heard a certain Bible truth but didn't understand it.
- (4) They have heard a certain Bible truth but choose to retain their present beliefs.
- (5) They don't personally know what the Bible says.

Christians are ignorant of the consequence for not *watching* for Christ's appearing at the rapture. This ignorance leads to their *unreadiness* which will result in their separation from Christians who *watch* and are *ready* for the Lord's return. From here onward we'll search Bible references that jointly testify to a Rapture Of The Ready.

We'll begin with Jesus' explanation of a separation at the rapture.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of No'-e were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that No'-e entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other

left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Matt 24:37-42

We must first settle what day is meant by the words "*But of that day and hour knoweth no man...*" It is that day Jesus described earlier in Matt 24:30-31 in which He appears at the rapture. Seeking to spur the church to remain *watchful* Jesus attributed the apathetic mood of the people in Noah's time to the church at the time of the rapture.

Jesus predicted that the unpreparedness of the people for the great flood will relive in the church at the time of the rapture. The story of Noah and the flood is a warning to the church to remain *watchful* and thereby *ready* for the rapture. Pitifully, Christians without number will be found *unready* for the rapture. The question now is: What happens to those deemed *unready* at the rapture?

Jesus described a largely misunderstood separation that will take place at the rapture.

"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Matt 24:40-41

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Luke 17:34-36

Question: Who are they that are taken and those who are left? The answer requires our understanding of Matthew Chapter 24. Jesus described His coming at the rapture in Matthew 24:30-31. All that is written before the rapture (verses 1-29) leads up to it and all that is written after the rapture (verses 32-51) further explains the rapture in verses 30-31.

So... when Jesus said "*one would be taken and the other left*" it is in respect to the rapture (gathering) of Matt 24:30-31.

It is commonly held that the taking and leaving of persons in Matt 24:40-41 (Luke 17:34-36) is the separation of Christians and unbelievers. That is not true. This is to be our understanding of Matthew Chapter 24.

(1) Jesus teaches the church (not Israel) of its future in His prophetic Discourse of Matthew Chapter 24

Rapture Of The Ready

- (2) The whole of Matthew 24 revolves around the rapture in verses 30-31
- (3) The rapture is for Christians only – not the lost or the nation of Israel

Again, in Christ's depiction of the rapture (Matt 24:30-31) He said He would send His angels to gather His elect (Christians). We can therefore understand that the two taken in Matt 24:40-41 are gathered by angels unto Jesus at the rapture. A SEPARATION HAS OCCURRED as two are left behind. Who are they and why are they left behind? I fear the majority of Christians don't know.

Jesus strengthened the possibility of a separation at the rapture with His exclamation in Matt 24:42. "*Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*" Think on these two thoughts concerning that verse:

- (1) Jesus speaks to Christians here NOT to the lost world. They will not watch for His return because He is not their Lord.
- (2) If ALL Christians are destined to be taken in the rapture why are we warned repeatedly to *watch* and to be *ready*?
- (3) The harsh reality is that many Christians will neither be *watching* nor *ready* when Jesus appears at the rapture.

BEHOLD THE TRUTH: Jesus explicitly warned the church to *watch* and to be *ready* for His appearing. Why? Because there will be a separation of Christians at the rapture decided by *watching* and being *ready*. This will become more credible as our exposition of the Rapture Of The Ready continues.

Watch For The Thief

Twice in parables Jesus described His appearing at the rapture as a thief.

"But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up."

Matt 24:43 (Luke 12:39)

This parable must be interpreted in the context of Matt 24:40-42. There Jesus explained the separation that will take place at the rapture. Some individuals (the ready) will be taken while other individuals (the unready) will be left.

In this parable Jesus warns of the separation of families at the rapture. The "*goodman*" is the head of the "*house*" which can imply family or kin. Because the

family head wasn't aware of the hour of the thief's visitation some of his *house* (family) were not ready for the thief to come. Consequently the thief came and broke up (separated) the *goodman's house* (family). The thief took some family members while leaving others.

Question: Who is the thief in this parable? He is Jesus Christ. He comes to take what belongs to Him – ready believers from all families. It is commonly believed Jesus comes as a thief to the lost world. NOT TRUE. Twice in the Revelation Jesus told the church He would return to them as a thief.

"...If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."
Rev 3:3 (Rev 16:15)

Make no mistake. Jesus will come as a thief to the church - to Christians who do not *watch* and therefore are not *ready*.

According to the Apostle Paul, Christians will either be *sleeping* or *watching* when Jesus Christ appears at the rapture. To the church at Thessalonica Paul wrote: *"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."* I Thess 5:6 Sleep is the opposite of *watching*. Sleeping Christians, which are plentiful in number, live oblivious of Christ's coming.

When Jesus Christ appears at the rapture He will find two types of Christians. Some will be watching (living for His coming) while others will be sleeping (not awake unto righteousness I Cor 15:34)). Guess which Christian type will be taken to be with Him. *Watchful* Christians will leave while *sleeping* Christians will be left behind. This is the Rapture Of The Ready.

Readiness Is Required

So many Christians live with the misguided belief that, because they are a Christian, they will be in the rapture. That is not only untrue but very perilous. The Lord Jesus laid down a requirement for being eligible for the rapture.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt 24:44

"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." Luke 12:40

The only way Christians can maintain *readiness* for the rapture is by *watching* for His appearing. That means that we live every day desiring and anticipating

His return. We live a Christian lifestyle that makes us *ready* for the rapture. *Unready* Christians, which are great in number, are considered to be *asleep* and need to awake to their perilous position.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom 13:11

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame." I Cor 15:34

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." I Thes 5:6

Let us not misunderstand. Those accounted as being asleep in the above verses are not lost people or unbelievers. Christians who are not truly living the Christian faith are considered to be asleep and must wake up or be woken up.

Would you believe many Christians are living today who are not *watching* (living) for Christ to appear at the rapture? They are therefore not *ready* for the rapture. The number will be more staggering when Jesus actually appears. They will experience that horrifying separation from Christians who do *watch* and are *ready*.

Jesus solemnly charged the church to *watch* and to be *ready* for His appearing at the rapture. Why? Did He know there will be Christians who do not *watch* and won't be *ready*? What Jesus knew is not enough. **We must know it.**

The Rapture Of Faithful Christians

In Matt 24:40-41 we learn of two who were taken at the rapture to be with Jesus. A few verses later in a parable Jesus makes known the character of the two who were taken.

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods." Matt 24:45-47

Jesus doesn't expressly say that this parable describes the two who were taken in verses 40-41 but the connection is easily and rightly seen. It further

may be reasoned that Jesus' description of a faithful servant implicates the two taken at the rapture.

- (1) They were faithful and wise servants of their lord. - verse 45
- (2) They were found serving when their lord returned. - verse 46
- (3) They will be blessed and wonderfully rewarded. - verses 45-47

Certainly it is to be understood that the "lord" in the above parable is the Lord Jesus Christ and the servants are servants of Jesus - Christians.

The Fate Of Unfaithful Christians

Beside the two who are taken at the rapture in Matt 24:40-41 there are two who are left behind. In describing them Jesus said:

"But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming: And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt 24:48-51

In this parable Jesus describes the two who were left behind in verses 40-41. Notice what Jesus said of them.

- * They did not live expectantly of their Lord's return
- * They were unruly and unfaithful Christians
- * Their lord (Jesus Christ) will return unexpectedly
- * They will be separated from the faithful servants
- * They will be left behind with the hypocrites (unbelievers)

Jesus did not specifically ascribe the description of the evil servant in His parable to the two left behind in verses 40-41 but surely that is the intent. If Jesus' parable of the faithful and unfaithful servants (Matt 24:45-51) describe those of verses 40-41 then He truly taught a separation of Christians at the rapture. Jesus taught a Rapture Of The Ready.

Having seen Matthew's account of the separation of Christians at the rapture we'll now tackle Luke's account of the separation at the rapture. I ask the reader to read **Luke 12:37-46** as it is too long to copy. A reading of Luke's account

yields the same truths about the separation of Christians at the rapture as did **Matt 24:45-51**.

Luke's account varies from that of Matthew in structure and wording but the message is the same. The major tenets of Luke's separation of Christians at the rapture are:

- * The lord (Jesus) will bless those servants who are found *watching* when He appears at the rapture.
- * Jesus emphasizes the need to remain *watchful* because He will return at a time unknown.
- * Jesus will receive those who watch and reward them with a grand reception.

Luke, like Matthew, also penned the parable of "The Thief" in Luke 12:39. We'll not treat it again here except to say Luke emphasized the urgency of being *ready* for the Lord's appearing. "*Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*" Luke 12:40 Next, Luke reports Jesus' parable explaining faithful and wise stewards.

"Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." Luke 12:42-44

Rightly interpreting the above parable would have us understand that "*the lord*" is Jesus Christ. The "*faithful and wise steward*" translates to a faithful Christian. It is expected of Christians to be found faithfully serving Jesus Christ when He returns. Faithful Christians will be given rule over the things of Christ. The fate of unfaithful Christians is woefully different.

"But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." Luke 12:45-46

Did you notice the two-fold judgment the unfaithful servant (unfaithful Christian) received from his lord (Jesus Christ)? First he was "*cut in sunder*" or

cut off (separated) from the faithful Christians. Having been separated from the faithful Christians he is now left with the fate of the unbelievers – **no rapture!**

TRUTH CAN BE HARD, especially to those who don't know the truth or reject it! Only faithful (serving) Christians will be taken to be with Jesus Christ at the rapture. The unfaithful Christians will remain behind in the world which they esteemed and served more than the Lord Jesus Christ. Tough but true.

The Separation Of Ten Virgins

Our next proof text for the Rapture Of The Ready is the well known parable of The Ten Virgins. This parable expressly emphasizes the spiritual principle of *readiness* for Christians to meet their bridegroom, Jesus Christ. PLEASE READ IT NOW. Matt 25:1-13

Ten virgins (young maidens) were invited to the bridegroom's wedding. Who are these virgins? They are not identified beyond *ten virgins* but we can consider them to be like bridesmaids. We know this about them. They ALL knew the bridegroom and looked forward to being part of the bridegroom's marriage.

The ten virgins were separated into five wise virgins and five foolish virgins. What separated them? *Readiness!* Five of the virgins were *ready* to meet the bridegroom making them wise. The five foolish virgins failed to prepare to meet the bridegroom leaving them *unready*. What was the necessary preparation for meeting the bridegroom?

"They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."
Matt 25:3-4

The bridegroom didn't appear until midnight after the virgins had fallen asleep while waiting for him. Suddenly the cry came that the bridegroom was coming and the virgins scrambled to get up and light their lamps. The lamps of the five foolish virgins either would not light or stay lit because they had no oil. They begged oil from the five wise virgins but were refused and advised to go and get oil for their lamps.

The five foolish virgins suffered a very humiliating consequence for not being *ready* to meet the bridegroom as we will see.

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Matt 25:10-12

How shocked the foolish virgins must have been. They find oil for their lamps and hasten back and knock on the door crying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us." The bridegroom answers with, "Verily (truly) I say unto you, I know you not." They were refused entrance to the Bridegroom's marriage creating a separation of the ten virgins. This pictures the separation of ready Christians from the unready Christians at the rapture

It is easy to misinterpret (extract the wrong meaning) of Jesus' reply to the foolish virgins, "...I know you not." It is also confused with a similar statement by Jesus in Matt 7:23. There Jesus responds to those who feigned (put on an appearance) righteousness but didn't know the righteous One, Jesus Christ. He informed them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." They were lost.

The situation is different with the five foolish virgins. To them Jesus said, "I know you not." The word "know" here can rightly mean "to recognize." Jesus didn't recognize the foolish virgins as being like those who were ready and present at His wedding. He didn't excuse their tardiness and unreadiness and separated them from the five virgins who were ready.

Keep in mind that the virgins in this parable represent Christians as we take special note of what Jesus didn't say to the foolish virgins. He didn't say (1) I never knew you (2) depart from me or (3) ye that work iniquity. Why? Because they knew Christ and He knew them but because they did not prepare themselves for the bridegroom's wedding they were rejected.

Jesus closed the Parable of Ten Virgins with this oft spoken warning. "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matt 25:13

Remember, a parable relates both earthly and spiritual truths. In the Parable of Ten Virgins the bridegroom in reality is Jesus Christ. The wise virgins translate to faithful Christians and the foolish virgins equate to unfaithful Christians. The faithful ones will gain access to the marriage feast and the unfaithful ones will be separated and denied the marriage feast.

I believe this is exactly what happens at the "marriage of the Lamb" described in Rev 19:7-9. Christians will be separated at the rapture which is the door to the marriage of the Lamb. The faithful Christians will go on to join the marriage of the Lamb. The unfaithful Christians will be separated and left behind with the lost world. The rapture is a Rapture Of The Ready.

The Lesson Of Lot's Wife

Please read Luke 17:28-36 before proceeding. It is too lengthy for copying. In that passage Jesus spoke three words which critically define the rapture. You may have read these three words many times without grasping their prophetic significance. Just three words, "*Remember Lot's wife.*" Luke 17:32

It bewilders me how the lesson of Lot's wife, to which Jesus gave special mention, has totally escaped Christianity. To remain ignorant of this lesson could lead a Christian to becoming a prophetic wife of Lot. Do you remember the story of Lot's wife? To refresh your memory please read her sad story in Genesis Chapter 19.

Our focus lies with the warning the angels gave to Lot, his wife and two daughters. "*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.*" Gen 19:17

Alas! We know what Lot's wife did. She longingly looked back toward her home of Sodom and was turned into a pillar of salt. Why did she look back? If she hadn't looked back she would have safely escaped. She looked back because that is where her heart was. She longed for her home there – not for a new home.

Let's see how Jesus' message to the church in Luke 17:28-36 relates to Lot's wife. Here is a verse by verse commentary.

Verse 28: Jesus tells of the general apathy and unconcern for the coming judgment of God

Verse 29: Lot and family escape from Sodom safely before God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah

Verse 30: Jesus warns that this is how it's going to be in the day when He appears at the rapture. In the next verses He explains the situation of believers when He appears.

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Verse 31: Jesus forewarns the church to be ready to leave when He appears and not to attempt to save (take) anything with them. If you are somewhere else don't attempt to return home.

Verse 32: "*Remember Lot's wife.*" That is a veiled warning for the church – be *ready* to leave this world behind.

Verse 33: Reveals the problem of Lot's wife. She looked back because that is where her heart was. She longed for the life she had in Sodom.

Verses 34-36 Jesus tells how one person will be taken to be with Him at the rapture while another person will be left behind.

How does Jesus' warning, "*Remember Lot's wife,*" apply to the church? There will be many Christians at the time of the rapture having a heart like Lot's wife. She was so joined to this world she didn't want to leave. She apparently lacked the wisdom of the Apostle John's words in I John 2:15 "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Worldly Christians will be left in the world at the rapture.

The rapture is for Christians who love His appearing (rapture). "*Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*" II Tim 4:8

The rapture is for Christians who look for His appearing (rapture). "*So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*" Heb 9:28

Here is the sum. When Jesus Christ returns at the rapture some Christians will be enraptured and *ready* to leave this world. That will not be so with many Christians who have a heart for this present world. They will be left behind in the world they cherished. The rapture is a Rapture Of The Ready.

Separation In The Revelation

In Revelation Chapters 2 & 3 Jesus dictates seven letters to seven churches. The seventh letter was addressed to the church in Laodicea (Rev 3:14-19). This church was very prosperous by worldly measures. With striking metaphor Jesus

intimated the coming separation of Christians at the rapture. Just two verses serve our interest here.

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Rev 3:15-16

Those words sharply express the Lord's displeasure with the Laodicean church and all churches that emulate it. The *lukewarm* believers were neither hot nor cold - neither passionate nor dispassionate. Does that not describe much of Christianity today? They are *lukewarm* Christians who are neither on fire for Christ nor are they cold embers.

Jesus told the lukewarm Christians He would spue (spit; vomit) them out of His mouth. Is that not an expression of rejection? How or when will Jesus spue (reject) them? Could that rejection be a separation at the rapture? What else could it be? A lukewarm Christian is defined in Rev 3:17 as being a worldly Christian.

Lukewarm Christians are worldly Christians living for self rather than God or Jesus Christ. Jesus will spue (spit, vomit) them out of His mouth when He appears at the rapture which means He will separate them. That makes the rapture a Rapture Of The Ready.

Clothed Christians

One of the most alarming statements uttered by Jesus shows the cause for separating Christians at the rapture. Unfortunately it has been misunderstood or overlooked leaving the church to be ill informed or uninformed.

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, they see his shame."

Rev 16:15

This verse is truly portentous because of its location and prophetic truth. Jesus uttered it during the time of God's wrath. The armies of the world are gathering in Israel for the Battle of Armageddon. The rapture happened before this so why does Jesus interject this warning pertinent to the church here?

READ CAREFULLY. When Jesus appears at the rapture there will be Christians who are dressed and Christians who are *naked*.

Who are they that are *dressed* when Jesus appears? They are Christians who *"watched and kept their garments."* By *watching* they lived a true Christian lifestyle. By *"keeping their garments"* they refrained from soiling themselves with sin. As a reward they will be outfitted in white apparel as confirmed by the following.

"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment...." Rev 3:4-5

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear...." Rev 3:18

"And to her (the church; the Lamb's wife) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Rev 19:8

At least ten times in Revelation white raiment (clothing) is to be worn by Christians (saints). Why white? White is the color of righteousness – the righteousness of Jesus Christ. (Rev 19:8) All Christians taken in the rapture will be clothed in white. Before we can be clothed in white, however, we must first experienced another spiritual change. The Apostle penned this passage of that required change.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." II Cor 5:1-4

What a beautifully worded sentiment of Christians receiving new bodies from God at the rapture. He will dress ALL Christians, both dead and alive, with a new eternal body. In doing so we are not left naked after He destroys our earthly bodies at the resurrection. Paul explained this also in I Cor 15:51-53.

True...Christians will walk with Jesus Christ clothed in white apparel after the rapture but before that we must be clothed with a new heavenly body. Returning

to Rev 16:15, those who *"watch and keep their garments"* are faithful Christians who will be clothed with both a new body and white garments at the rapture.

Naked Christians

Rev 16:15 bears repeating. *"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, they see his shame."*

Jesus wants Christians to understand that we are responsible for *"watching and keeping our garments."* That means that we are to remain faithful and to refrain from a sinful lifestyle. In doing so we will remain in the company of Jesus dressed in white as he promised the church at Sardis.

"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment..." Rev 3:4-5

On the other side are those who fail to *"watch and keep their garments..."* making them unfaithful servants. They will not receive that new body and white clothing at the rapture. They are left behind wearing their sin stained garments of this world. They will appear as being naked before the returning Christ and the church. Add to that the shame that will overtake them because of their horrible situation.

Let it not escape us that the unfaithful servants in the Lord's parables typify unfaithful Christians. Unfaithful Christians are not *ready* for the rapture. Unless they become faithful they will stand *naked* and *ashamed* in the day of God's wrath which immediately follows the rapture. The rapture is a Rapture Of The Ready.

Believe It Or Not

I know most Christians will not accept the idea that some Christians will miss the rapture. Regardless there is undeniable Biblical evidence that Christians will be separated at the rapture. Here are two such verses which have not been exposed as you will see here and that puzzles me. The problem is Christians do not properly identify the two separate events of Christ's return:

(1) His Appearing at the rapture and (2) His Advent or return to earth. The following verse contains both events of Christ's return.

"And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." I John 2:28

First, Christians are exhorted to "*abide*" in Christ which means to continue or remain in Him. It is advantageous for Christians to continue living for Christ because one day He will return for us.

Second, this verse clearly shows there will be a separation of Christians at the rapture. The truth of this verse has been lost in the fact that the words "*appear*" and "*coming*" are seen as the same event. THEY ARE NOT!

"*appear*" is from the Greek word *phaneroo* meaning to appear; to make known; to show (one's self)

Jesus will appear in the air at the rapture but He doesn't come to earth. (Matt 24:30-31 I Thes 4:16-17))

"*coming*" is from the Greek word *parousia* which means *advent* or *return* to earth; specifically, the case of Christ's *return* to to punish Jerusalem and/or finally the wicked

At His "*coming*" Jesus returns to earth to defeat His enemies and to set up His Millennial Kingdom for a thousand years.

Jesus will return as KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS! (Rev 19:16)

The message of I John 2:28 is one of division. Christians will be divided at the rapture according to their abiding in Christ. Those who abide in Christ will stand *confidently* before Him when He *appears* at the rapture. Christians who do not abide in Christ will be left on earth to *shamefully* face Him when He *comes* to rule. That is Jesus' chilling message to the church in Rev 16:15 as God's wrath is being poured out upon the earth and godless humanity.

The Rapture Is A Judgment

I don't recall the rapture ever being described as a time of judgment but the next verse identifies it to be just that.

II Tim 4:1 *"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."*

Jesus Christ will appear at the rapture as a judge of the "*quick*" and the "*dead*." Who are the *quick* and the *dead*? The word *quick* means alive. More

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accurately, it means to be alive in Christ – to be a Christian. The word *dead* refers to one who is spiritually dead – lost and condemned without Christ.

Jesus will judge the *quick* (Christians) at His appearing which is the rapture. On what grounds will Christians be judged? How about faithfulness? Would that be a legitimate basis for judgment? I believe the next verse sets faithfulness as the bar for judgment. *“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”* I Cor 4:2

Christians are to be *stewards* (good managers) of the things received from God. A *steward* wisely manages things entrusted to him by another. That applies to our precious faith which God freely entrusts to us. Christians are responsible to treat their gift of faith wisely. Nothing better can a Christian do than to be faithful to God in the faith He gives us.

Yes, the rapture is a time of judgment for Christians. We will be judged by the faith we display here on earth. Will we be seen as faithful or unfaithful? Faithful Christians will be taken to be with Jesus Christ at the rapture while the unfaithful will be left behind.

Go back and read **Matt 24:50-51** and **Luke 12:45-46** to once again see what Jesus said of unfaithful servants. Remember, unfaithful servants in those parables equate to unfaithful Christians.

Did God Lie To Us?

Many Christian readers will adamantly reject any notion that some Christians will miss the rapture. Their argument is the Bible tells us the church will escape God's wrath. Here is what God's Word says about that.

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him (Jesus).” Rom 5:9

“And 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

“For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” I Thes 5:9

We will focus on **I Thes 5:9** which demands more than a casual reading. Two steps are necessary to gain understanding of this verse. First is the necessity to identify the context (main thought structure) by reading verses before and/or after. Interestingly, I Thessalonians Chapter 4 ends with the rapture. Chapter 5

brings the *day of the Lord* (verse 2), *sudden destruction and travail* (verse 3) and God's *wrath* (verse 9). God's wrath is the context for I Thes 5:9.

After determining the context we must examine the meaning of critical words. The first critical word in I Thes 5:9 is "appointed" which means reserved or destined. Next is the word "obtain" which means to acquire by one's own efforts; to earn and make one's own. Paul spoke of "obtaining salvation." This salvation is not the salvation of our souls but salvation (deliverance) from God's wrath.

Paul urges Christians to have the "hope of salvation" which is explained in I Thes 5:9. We can have hope because God has not appointed (reserved or destined) us to His wrath. God does not pre-judge anyone to suffer His coming wrath. Rather we can obtain (acquire or earn) salvation (deliverance) from His wrath through His Son Jesus Christ. It is the Christians choice as to whether he/she will suffer God's wrath.

God has provided a way for Christians to escape His wrath through His Son Jesus Christ. That way, however, is not simply by being a believer – a Christian. There are certain standards to be met in order to obtain salvation from God's wrath. Those standards are defined earlier in Thessalonians Chapter 5.

Verse 5 - "*Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.* Christians are the children of the light of Jesus Christ to which He said "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*" Matt 5:16

Verse 6 - "*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*" Christians are to remain watchful of themselves and the world around them – of their own behavior and that of the world. We are further advised to remain sober. This is not in reference to drunkenness but to one's mind set. We are to remain discreet; discerning; wise.

So.....How can Christians obtain (acquire; earn) their salvation (deliverance) from the future wrath of God? It is first required that we be saved by Jesus Christ. That alone, however, is not sufficient. Christians are expected to meet certain standards of Christianity which Jesus will judge. Those who fail these standards will be deemed unready for the rapture.

Concerning the unready, there will be a multitude of Christians who will not obtain (earn for themselves) salvation (deliverance) from God's wrath. Therefore there will be a multitude Christians who will needlessly suffer the coming wrath of God. Understand, the rapture is a Rapture Of The Ready.

No, God did not lie to us about His wrath because He cannot lie. (Titus 1:2) He never promised that all Christians would escape His wrath. Rather, God gave Christians a way to avoid His wrath by faith in His Son Jesus Christ and living the Christian faith.

Nations Of The Saved

We will now tackle the vaguest verse in Revelation Chapter 21 as it pertains to Christians in the eternal state. Rev 21:24 reads:

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."

I grew weary reading commentators for enlightenment on Rev 21:24. As is often the case, there were many different interpretations and theories. I finally concluded that the understanding the Holy Spirit brought to me was as valid as the others.

One point that many of the commentators made concerning the "nations of the saved" was that the words "of the saved" are not in some of the original manuscripts. Personally, I can't imagine anyone but saved souls in heaven. Notwithstanding, that doesn't alter my basic question about Rev 21:24. Who are those *saved nations*?

There are several opinions as to who those "saved nations" are to which I will add mine. These saved nations might be:

- (1) The saints before the church age
- (2) They are the saints from the Millennial Kingdom
- (3) They are a completely new race created for the new earth
- (4) They are the saved souls who had their names in the book of life at the white throne judgment of Rev 20:11-15 (My theory)

Those whose names are in the book of life at the white throne judgment (and there will be many) will go to heaven. They are those who were not ready for the rapture and were left behind. It doesn't seem reasonable they will join the faithful believers in the new Jerusalem. Rather they will make up the *nations of the saved* on the new earth.

We are told in the next verse, verse 25, that the kings (rulers) of the saved nations on the earth will take the "glory and honor" of those nations into the new

Jerusalem. It isn't given what this glory and honor is but I surmise it reflects their service to Father God and their Savior, Jesus Christ. I may be wrong in my thoughts about the *nations of the saved* as others may be. Nevertheless, at this time I have related what I perceive to be possible.

Christians Will Be Awake Or Sleeping

Much emphasis has been given to the truth that Christians will be either *ready* or *unready* for the rapture. That can metaphorically be stated this way: Christians will be either *sleeping* or *awake* when the rapture occurs. In both cases we are addressing the spiritual condition of Christians. Spiritually speaking, Christians will be *awake* and *ready* or they will be *sleeping* and *unready* for the rapture.

In respect to the nearness of the Lord's return the Apostle Paul exhorted Christians to act accordingly writing, "*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation (the rapture) nearer than when we believed.*" Rom 13:11 If Paul sensed believers of his time needed to awake out of spiritual sleep what might he think of Christianity today?

Again, Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica who were asleep spiritually saying, "*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*" *Sleeping* Christians are not watching and therefore not ready for the rapture. To the church at Corinth Paul admonished them to "*Awake to righteousness, and sin not...*" because their life-style was not such that turned people to God. They were *asleep* and *unready* for the rapture.

Paul further explained that Christians are children of light (that light being Jesus Christ) but there were Christians living as children of the night (night being of Satan). He persuaded them to come from the night into the day – to act as children of light – to show themselves as "*sober*" or serious minded Christians.

Jesus Himself intimated He will find sleeping Christians when He comes for His church. After prophesying of the future Jesus prompted Christians to "Take ye heed, watch and pray..." Again He repeated the command to "*Watch ye therefore...*" Mark 13:33,35 Jesus ended this teaching session with an alarming revelation which has been egregiously overlooked. "*Lest coming suddenly he (Jesus) find you sleeping.*" Mark 13:36

What was Jesus telling Christians? What was he telling you and I? Simple. When Jesus comes at the rapture He will find many *sleeping* Christians making them *unready* for the rapture. What does that mean? It means they won't go to

be with Jesus. They will be left behind with the hypocrites (Matt 24:51) and the unbelievers (Luke 12:46).

Following that grave revelation Jesus again impressed upon Christians the need to watch. "*And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.*" Mark 13:37 Remember, *watching* doesn't mean we walk about gazing into the sky for Jesus to return. *Watching* means that we live the Christian lifestyle laid out for us in God's Word. Are we doing that?

Question: How is it that Christians are not hearing of the Rapture Of The Ready? Why are Christians not being informed of the separation of Christians at the rapture? It surely seems plain that the rapture is for Christians who are *awake, watching and ready*. Christians failing to live in that fashion will be refused the rapture. They will be left to continue with the lost of this world.

True Christianity Is The Continuance Of Faith

Our last Biblical reference for validating a **Rapture Of The Ready** is the well known parable of "The Sower" found in Luke 8:4-8. Jesus explains the parable in Luke 8:10-15. As you know the sower is Jesus and His seed is the Word of God. Four groups of people heard the Word with four different outcomes. Let us see what they were

The first group heard the Word of God but Satan snatched it from them by his lies and wiles and they could not believe. Will those in this group be ready for the rapture?

The second group heard God's Word but did not ground themselves in the Word. They did not become strong in the faith and in time fell victim to the temptations of this world. Will they be ready for the rapture?

The third group believed (weakly) but let themselves be overcome (entangled) with issues of life. Consequently they became fruitless (spiritually deficient). Will this group be ready for the rapture?

The fourth group had what is required for the flourishing of God's Word. They had a good heart – a ready heart - a receptive heart for the Word of God. They not only heard the Word but kept it – lived it out. Will these people be ready for the rapture? YES!

All four groups exist in the world today just as they were portrayed in the "Parable of the Sower" but only those of the last group will be ready for the rapture. Why are they alone ready for the rapture? Simple. They remained

faithful – they continued in the faith. They were fruitful meaning their lives were filled with works of faith.

These three Bible references speak of “continuing in the faith.” Acts 14:22, Col 1:23 and I Tim 2:15. That is the key for Christians being ready for the rapture. Those who do not continue in the faith but fall away or leave the faith cannot be ready for the rapture. Tough but true!

Back To The End

Our search to validate the **Rapture Of The Ready** began with **Rev 20:11-15** and we end with it. There we read of the great white throne judgment which comes at the end of this world. It has long been thought that only lost souls appear at this final judgment but one verse in that passage indicates otherwise.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev 20:15

We began this treatise giving much attention to this verse. The point was made that there will be those at the white throne judgment whose names **are in the book or life**. We can now identify them as Christians who were not *ready* for the rapture and were left behind. Because their names are in the book of life they will not be sentenced to the lake of fire. They will go from there to enjoy eternal life on the new earth under the new heaven.

The Judgment Of Deceased Christians

All that has been written to this point has concerned the fate of Christians living at the time of the rapture. What about the great host of Christians who live and die before the rapture? Will they all be resurrected at the rapture to join Jesus in heaven or will they be separated as those living at the time of the rapture?

Doesn't it seem reasonable and just that Christians who die before the rapture will be judged by the same standard as those who are living when Christ returns? That standard is *faithfulness*! Deceased Christians will be judged by the Lord at the rapture. Those who are judged as having been *faithful* will be resurrected and go to be with the Lord.

At this point we should be curious to learn the fate of those Christians who, because of their *unfaithfulness*, are not resurrected at the rapture. What is their fate? Don't they also go to heaven? Yes, at another time and another route.

Jesus straightforwardly told us there will be two resurrections.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28-29

It therefore must be concluded that the deceased Christians who are not taken in the first resurrection must be included in the second resurrection. The second resurrection (Rev 20:13) occurs at the great white throne judgment at the end of this world. That final judgment is portrayed for us in Rev 20:11-15.

As with the rapture, the great white throne judgment will result in the final separation of souls. This separation is based on whether or not one's name is recorded in the book of life.

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev 20:15

In the beginning of this treatise the word "whosoever" was explained. Never does the pronoun "whosoever" mean ALL or EVERYONE! Whosoever may include a few, some or many but never ALL. Therefore, it must be concluded that there will be some at the great white throne judgment whose names are in the book of life.

Who are they whose names appear in the book of life? They are the unfaithful Christians who were separated from the rapture. They include the unfaithful Christians living at the time of the rapture and the unfaithful Christians who died before the rapture. Those whose names are found in the book of life will go to be with their Savior in heaven for eternity. PRAISE GOD!

The Revelation Closes Our Treatise

Interestingly we find a fitting end to this treatise in the last chapter of the Revelation. Six times in the Revelation Jesus says, "*I come quickly*" - three times in the final chapter. The last utterance is in Rev 22:20. "*Surely I come quickly.*" That declaration has a dual nature as it offers dual consequences.

This warning concerns Jesus' appearing at the rapture. Let us go back and read an earlier verse. "*And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*" Rev 22:12 Every Christian will be rewarded for his/her work. What Work? The good works which make us *ready* for the rapture or the lack thereof by which we are *unready*.

There can be no doubt that the repetition of the Lord's cry, "*I come quickly*" serves as a warning to the church. As is the intent of all warnings there are consequences for not heeding them. What could possibly be the consequence for failing to react favorably to Jesus' warning, "*Surely I come quickly?*" It seems highly possible this repeated warning is the reason for an earlier warning Jesus gave to the church.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." Matt 24:44

What is the consequence for not heeding Jesus' warnings – for not being ready for His *quick* appearing at the rapture? **Christians who are not ready for the rapture will not go in the rapture.**

Closing Points

We close this treatise **Rapture Of The Ready** by reiterating key points presented herein.

Key point #1: The rapture is a form of judgment. "*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.*" II Tim 4:1

The "*quick*" are those who have been made alive in Christ (born again). They are Christians. "*His appearing*" occurs at the rapture. Christians will be judged by Christ at the rapture. This judgment determines who goes to be with Christ and who will be left behind.

Key point #2: The basis for this judgment will be *faithfulness* – remaining true to the faith taught and demonstrated in God's Word. "*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*" I Cor 4:2

A "*steward*" is a manager or overseer. A Christian is to carefully manage all things granted him/her by God. As our benefactor He expects us to be faithful. That is every Christian's duty.

We know, do we not, that not all Christians will remain faithful. "*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.*" I Tim 4:1

It is painful to say but the truth is many Christians are departing from the faith in our days. The Apostle Paul wrote of this situation calling it a "*falling away.*" II Thes 2:3 I think the Lord Jesus alluded to this very thing when He

said, "...when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"
Luke 18:8

The pitiful result of this "*departing the faith*" or "*falling away*" is that those who do so will not be *ready* for the rapture. They will be judged unfaithful and separated from the faithful Christians and left behind.

Key point #3: Whether a Christian is judged to be faithful or unfaithful - whether he/she goes in the rapture or is left behind - is not for you or I to decide. Jesus alone is the judge. "*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*" John 5:22

Knowing that every Christian will be judged by Jesus at the rapture – judged for being *ready* or *unready* – ALL Christians should strive to urge others to be *ready* for the rapture. In the end, however, every Christian is responsible to himself/herself for being *ready* for the rapture.

This concludes this treatise on [Rapture Of The Ready](#)