

**The Rapture Number Two**

**Lesson Number 17**

**Hebrews 6:1-3 (KJV)**

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of **resurrection of the dead**, and of eternal judgment. 3And this will we do, if God permit.

We began this study on the “Doctrines of Christ” several weeks ago and we have covered:

1. Repentance from Dead Works
	1. How we repent, or turn, from our sins and live a life that is pleasing to the Lord
2. Faith
	1. We spent a few weeks talking about faith and what faith really is.
	2. Faith may seem foolish to those who don’t know the Lord.
	3. Jesus told us in Mark 11:24, that is we pray according to His will, we can have whatever we pray for and that we actually are to believe we receive what we prayed for before we see it manifest into our lives.

*“****What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”***

Even Christians struggle with this concept because they have not learned what FAITH really is.

1. The Doctrine of Baptisms
	1. We learned that there are “baptisms” (plural) instead of just one “baptism.”
	2. We learned that all three of these baptisms are available to the believer today and all of them will be available to the believer until Jesus returns!
2. The Laying on of Hands
	1. The laying on of hands in churches, other than Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, is a relatively new thing.
	2. Even ten years ago, you would not see the laying on of hands very often in denominational churches.
	3. The same thing can be said of people raising their hands in worship.
3. The Resurrection of the Dead
	1. We talked about what happens when believers and non-believers die.
	2. We learned that death is not a “cessation of existence.”
	3. Man is a 3 part being.
	4. At death, the body returns to the dust but the spirit (the real person) and the soul (the mind, the will and the intellect) go to heaven or hell.
	5. Before the atonement, the righteous dead would go to a place called “Paradise” also known as “Abraham’s Bosom.”
		1. This was a compartment in hell but was not a place of torment.
		2. When Christ ascended, He took everyone in that compartment with Him to Heaven.
		3. Abraham’s Bosom has been empty ever since.
	6. As part of the teaching on The Resurrection of the Dead we are talking about **The Rapture**.

A couple of weeks ago, the last time I was here, we spoke about some objections to the rapture and why some people don’t believe there will be a rapture.

The two main objections to The Rapture are:

1. The idea of The Rapture didn’t get mainstream attention until the 1880’s when John Nelson Darby began to teach about it.
	1. God frequently does not allow things to be revealed until their time.
2. The Rapture is used as an excuse for Christians to believe they won’t have to go through persecution.
	1. The Bible is very clear that Christians WILL suffer persecution.
	2. The Rapture is not a way for Christians to not suffer persecution but the way God will use to start The Great Tribulation. The Church MUST be removed from the earth before the Great Tribulation can start.

We also talked about how some people believe there will be a rapture but they disagree as to when the rapture will occur.

Some people believe:

 Pre-Tribulation Rapture

 Mid-Tribulation Rapture

 Post-Tribulation Rapture

**There will, in fact, be raptures at each of these times!**

There **already have been raptures** even though they were not called by that name!

The word “Rapture” is not mentioned in the Bible. It is simply a term we use that refers to a **“catching away.”**

1. When Enoch walked into Heaven.

**Genesis 5:23, 24 (NLT)**

Enoch lived 365 years, walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.

1. When Elijah was taken to Heaven by a whirlwind.

**2 Kings 2:11 (NLT)**

As they were walking along and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire appeared, drawn by horses of fire. It drove between the two men, separating them, and Elijah was carried by a whirlwind into heaven.

1. After Stephen baptized the Ethiopian. He was taken between twelve and fourteen miles instantly!

**Acts 8:39-40 (KJV)**

And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

The Rapture is not something God has designed to get Christians out of persecution. Christians are being persecuted throughout the earth at this very moment! From the time of Christ until now, many millions of Christians have been murdered for their belief in Christ.

**What is the purpose of The Rapture?**

In order to answer this question, we must realize the “Age” that we are in and how and what God is doing in this age or “Dispensation.”

We are in the “Age of Grace” otherwise known as the “Church Age.”

Think back about how the “Age of the Law” came about.

The Hebrew children were wandering in the desert and they decided that they wanted laws to live by. They approached Moses and demanded that they be given laws. Moses knew this was not what God wanted for His children but God gave them THE LAW.

The reason God went ahead and gave them the law was to show them that there was no way possible for them to actually live by that law and they must have a “Savior” who would pay the price for them.

The Age of the Law lasted until the time that Jesus was resurrected and at that time, the Age of the Law was SUSPENDED and we entered into the “Age of Grace.”

The prophets of old did not see this. They could not understand it.

In the “Age of Grace” all men can come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and can be born again regardless if they are Jew or Gentile, black or white. God is no respecter of persons!

Everyone who trusts in Christ and is born again becomes a member of this eternal “Church.” The Church is a mighty force in the earth! It is so mighty, in fact, that it must be taken out of the way before the Anti-Christ can come into power at the beginning of the 7 years of trials and tribulation, better known as “Jacob’s Trouble.”

The “Age of the Law” is suspended right now and we are living in the “Age of Grace” or “The Church Age.”

At some moment, none of us knows when, the Church Age will abruptly end and the last seven years of the Age of the Law will start. At this time, God will begin to deal specifically with Israel as a nation, once again. When the Age of the Law was suspended, Israel was a nation. Israel ceased to be a nation but is now a nation once again. When the Tribulation starts, Israel is a nation again!

**The Church will have a 7 year feast with Christ where we are judged and given crowns for what we have done for Him!**

The Church **MUST be taken out of the way** for this Great Tribulation to begin and for the Anti-Christ to become a prominent player in the World’s situation.

**Jacob’s Trouble**

**Jeremiah 30:7 (NLT)**

In all history there has never been such a time of terror. It will be a time of trouble **for my people Israel**. Yet in the end they will be saved!

The Church will be raptured, taken away to heaven, and God will begin to deal specifically with Israel as a nation and as His people again.

At the beginning of the Great Tribulation, Israel will be surrounded by enemies and the antichrist will broker a seven year peace treaty with them. After 3 ½ years, the antichrist will turn against Israel and things will get really bad. The first 3 1/2 years is known as the “lesser tribulation” and the last 3 1/2 years, as the “greater tribulation.”

**Scriptures About the Rapture**

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NLT)**

And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. 14For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. 15**We tell you this directly from the Lord[1]**: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. 16For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. **First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves.[2]** 17Then, together with them, **we who are still alive and remain on the earth[3]** will be **caught up in the clouds** to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. 18So encourage each other with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-53 (NLT)**

But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. **We will not all die[4]**, but **we will all be transformed!** 52**It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye**,**[5]**when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. 53For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

1. The Revelation of the Rapture came directly from the Lord.
	1. This had to have been through a spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12).
		1. Tongues followed by interpretation of tongues.
		2. Prophecy
		3. Word of Knowledge
		4. Word of Wisdom

These spiritual gifts are SO IMPORTANT for direction and guidance to the Church body!

1. When Jesus died on the cross, many of the righteous dead rose from their graves.

**Matthew 27:50-53 (NLT)**

**50**Then Jesus shouted out again, and he released his spirit. **51**At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, **52**and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead. **53**They left the cemetery after Jesus’ resurrection, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people.

**We believe these people were alive for forty days like Jesus was when He was resurrected.**

We have been taught that all of a sudden all the Christians will be gone from the face of the earth and there will be ensuing chaos. I remember reading a make believe newspaper that said planes had crashed because they had no pilots and ships were foundered in the ocean because the captains were gone.

God is NOT the author of confusion!

**1 Corinthians 14:33a (NLT)**

For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

1. If we REMAIN, we obviously will be ALIVE!
	1. I believe it is talking about those of us who are “Alive in Christ.”
	2. There will be many who call themselves “Christians” who are not ALIVE in Christ. Well over 70% of Americans call themselves “Christians” but not all of them abide in Jesus!

**John 15:7 (KJV)**

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

* 1. I do not believe that everyone who calls themselves a Christian will be taken in the Rapture. Only those who **ABIDE** in Christ shall be taken.

**Matthew 7:21-24 (NLT)**

“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. 22On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ 23But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’ 24“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.

1. There is one generation of Christians who will not taste death.
	1. **Hebrews 9:27 (KJV)**

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

* 1. God has set certain laws into motion or into place.
	2. Sometimes those laws are circumvented.
	3. In this case, God declared that, through the fall of Adam, every man has to die.
	4. Two men have not died in their generation up until this point but they will die at the end of the seven years of Tribulation and will be “Raptured” to meet the “Church” as we come down to battle Satan’s people.
		1. Enoch
		2. Elijah
	5. Only one generation of Christians will not taste death because they will be delivered from death through the Rapture.
	6. Paul said in 1 Cor. 15:51, “We will not all die!”
	7. Two men have not died and there is some way that they are alive in Heaven with the Lord. They are Enoch and Elijah. They will be the two witnesses who oppose the Antichrist. The Antichrist will try to have them killed but they won’t die until right before we come back to the earth with the Lord.

After they are killed, they will lay in the streets of Jerusalem for three days and the Bible tells us that the whole world will see them. There has never been another time in history where this would be possible.

At the end of the three days, they will be raised from the dead and we will return to the earth with Christ and we will wage war with those who are following Satan.

1. We will be **changed or transformed immediately** at the trump of Christ.
	1. The Bible does **NOT say we will be TAKEN immediately**.
	2. The way the story of the rapture is told, those of us who are alive and remain will be taken to heaven right after those who have died in Christ, with almost no time differential.
	3. We WILL be transformed immediately after those who have died in Christ have gone on to heaven but not necessarily taken immediately.
	4. What will happen once we are transformed?
	5. One of God’s “laws” that has been set in place is that people must “HEAR” the Word of God in order to be saved.
	6. The Word of God **must be “PREACHED”** in order for people to HEAR the Word of God and for them to be saved.

**Romans 10:13-15 (KJV)**

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

**I once heard a teacher where I went to seminary reverse this for better clarity.**

**If they aren’t sent, how shall they preach?**

**Without a preacher, how shall they hear?**

**If they have not heard, how shall they believe?**

**If they have not believed, how shall they call on Him?**

**When they call on Him, they shall be saved!**

**Jacob’s Trouble**

**Jeremiah 30:7 (NLT)**

In all history there has never been such a time of terror. It will be a time of trouble for my people Israel. Yet in the end they will be saved!

The Church will be raptured, taken away to heaven, and God will begin to deal specifically with Israel as a nation and as His people again.

This will be a time when the world will come against Israel, led by Satan through the Anti-Christ.

**The Church is Hindering the Anti-Christ from Gaining Power and the Great Tribulation from Starting**

The seven years of the Great Tribulation are split into two definitive, three and one half year periods. The book of Daniel tells exactly how many days are in each period. At the very beginning of the first period, the Anti-Christ will come into power. Up until that time, **the only thing that will keep him from coming into power is the Church!**

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-8 (NLT)**

Now, dear brothers and sisters, let us clarify some things about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and how we will be gathered to meet him. 2Don’t be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say that the day of the Lord has already begun. Don’t believe them, even if they claim to have had a spiritual vision, a revelation, or a letter supposedly from us. 3Don’t be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against God and the man of lawlessness is revealed—the one who brings destruction. 4He will exalt himself and defy everything that people call god and every object of worship. He will even sit in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God.5Don’t you remember that I told you about all this when I was with you? 6And **you know what is holding him back**, for he can be revealed only when his time comes. 7For this lawlessness is already at work secretly, and it will remain secret until the **one who is holding it back steps out of the way**. 8Then the man of lawlessness will be revealed, but the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming.

**The Purpose of this Epistle (2 Thessalonians)**

The purpose of this second letter to the Thessalonians was to let them know that the “day of the Lord” had not started yet.

Paul told them that there were some things that had to happen first, a great falling away from the Lord and the rapture, before Jesus would return.

Paul was telling them not to worry about people who came saying they had had a revelation, a vision or if they even supposedly had a letter from Paul stating that the day of the Lord had begun. **When it happens, the whole world will KNOW!**

**Two Events that Precede the Day of the Lord**

**1. The Falling away.** Greek: *apostasia* (GSN-<G646>), defection, revolt, apostasy. Used only here and in Acts 21:21, but the same as apostasion, divorce, in Mt. 5:31; 19:7; Mk. 10:4. The Greek here has the definite article, "the apostasy," referring to the great apostasy during the tribulation days between the rapture and the second coming of Christ (Mt. 24:4-31; Rev. 6:1 -- Rev. 19:21). At the rapture of all dead and living in Christ in a moment (1Cor. 15:23,[51-58](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Co+15%3A51-58); 1Th. 4:13-18), **not one soul will be left on earth who is a Christian** **(This is the general feeling of most Christians concerning the Rapture. I do not believe this can be so though because, according to God’s law of preaching and believing, there MUST be someone to preach to those who are not saved in order for them to believe in Christ! Jay McMullan)**. Multitudes will soon be saved afterward through an awakening (Acts 2:16-21; Rev. 6:9-11; 7:1-17; 12:17). The rest will become so hardened as to seek to destroy these being saved in those days (Rev. 9:20-21; 16:2,[9-11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+16%3A9-11)). The great whore of Rev. 17 will destroy multitudes of Christians during the first 3 1/2 years of Daniel's 70th week, while the Antichrist is coming to power over the 10 kingdoms inside the old Roman Empire (Rev. 6:9-11; 17:6). When Antichrist comes to full power over the 10 kingdoms in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, he, together with the 10 kings, will destroy the great whore, establish the worship of the beast, and kill multitudes who will not worship him and his image or take his brands (Rev. 7:9-17; 13:1-18; 14:9-13; 15:2-4; 16:6-11; Rev. 2-4; 17:16-17).

**2. The man of sin is revealed** (2Th. 2:3).

The man of sin will be revealed as quickly as the Church is removed from the earth. He cannot be revealed until we are all taken off this earth. So his revelation will correspond with the Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

**The Hinderer of Lawlessness**

1. It is something already known (2Th. 2:6).

2. It now hinders lawlessness (2Th. 2:6-7).

3. It is strong enough to prevent the revelation of the Antichrist (2Th. 2:6-8).

4. It will hinder lawlessness until it is removed from the earth (2Th. 2:7-8).

5. It is called "he" (2Th. 2:7).

6. It will be removed from the earth before the second coming (2Th. 2:7-8).

7. It will not be here when Christ comes to destroy Antichrist (2Th. 2:7-8).

**2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 (KJV)**

For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

**The Hinderer is One of Three Things:**

1. Governments (Rom. 13:1-7; 1Pet. 2:13)

2. The Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:7-15)

3. The Church (Mt. 5:13; 1Cor. 2:15-16; Eph. 6:12-18; 2Cor. 10:4-7)

The **hinderer of lawlessness** must be the one that will be taken out of the world before Antichrist can be revealed (2Th. 2:6-8). Will governments be taken out of the world? No, because Antichrist reigns over many kingdoms (Dan. 7:24; 11:40-45), and other kings reign over the rest of the earth all during the time the hinderer of lawlessness is removed (Rev. 11:15; 16:13-16). Will it be the Holy Spirit? No, for He will be here all through the tribulation and forever (Jn. 14:16; Acts 2:16-21; Rev. 12:17 with Rev. 19:10; Zech. 12:10-13:1). Multitudes will be saved by the Holy Spirit during the tribulation, as now (Acts 2:16-21; 12:5,[17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+12%3A17); 15:2-4; 20:4-6). **So it must be the church. The church will be raptured before Antichrist comes and this is the only one of the hinderers of lawlessness that will be removed from the earth (1Th. 4:16).**

Dake's Annotated Reference Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments of the Authorized or King James Version Text.

This is one of the proofs of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. The Church must be taken out of the way because the Anti-Christ cannot be revealed until the Church is out of the way!

In an article entitled, [“Who Sent This Curse”](http://club.bobyandian.com/who-sent-this-curse/) by Bob Yandian, he states the following:

**When God Sends Judgment and Destruction**

1. God gives warning far in advance.
2. God give opportunity to repent and be spared.
3. God only destroys the wicked who do not repent.
4. God spares the righteous, even those who are carnal.
5. God **removes the righteous before sending destruction or He protects the righteous during destruction**.

An example of this is Noah and his family. They were delivered by the ark when the rest of the world was destroyed.

* 1. During the tribulation, people will be saved BUT if all of us Christians are taken off of the earth, how will those people be saved without anyone to preach to them?
	2. I believe we will immediately put on immortality, our bodies will be changed and will all preach around this world to Jews and they will be born again.
	3. We will travel at the speed of thought as the Lord directs us to different places in the earth.
	4. We will not be limited by time or space!
	5. After 40 days and 40 nights of supernatural ministry to the Jews, I believe we will walk into Heaven just like Enoch.