

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Great in Power, Jesus, How Great Thou Art

WELCOME

Answered Prayer. Share at least one of your prayers which God answered this week.

WORD

1 CORINTHIANS 15:51–52

⁵¹Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Believers of Jesus Christ will not remain in death forever. When they physically ‘die’ in this world (fall ‘asleep’ as the Bible often say by way of metaphor), God will one day resurrect their bodies and take them home to be with Him. They would be gone from this world, because they don’t really belong here. Their citizenship is in heaven.

The Bible also tells us that not everyone will experience death on earth. Some will actually still be alive when Jesus comes to take His Bride – the church. Apostle Paul says that while not all of us are going to be ‘sleeping,’ all of us are going to be changed (**v. 51–52**). In as fast as a twinkling of an eye, our body will become incorruptible. When that happens, our body cells that are aging every day will not age anymore. Gravity will not hold us down and other laws of nature will no longer apply to us.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT RAPTURE

The word rapture comes from the Greek word “harpazo” which means “to snatch” or “take away.” Translated in Latin, the word is “rapturo” where the English word “rapture” came. The original term for rapture is found in the Bible, whereby people of God are shown to be ‘taken away’ or ‘raptured’ to another place (**Acts 8:39; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 12:2–4**).

In the Old Testament, Enoch was the very first man raptured (**Genesis 5:24**). Elijah was also raptured with chariot and horses of fire (**2 Kings 2:12**). Jesus was also ‘taken’ to heaven (**Acts 1:9**). But unlike Enoch and Elijah who was taken by God alive, Jesus had to die first. This is because He needed to offer His life as a ransom for us — He died, resurrected and

then ascended to heaven. Jesus is the first to be resurrected and is never to die again.

In the Bible, the rapture could be taken as:

1. The promise of Christ to us
2. The blessed hope of the believers
3. The rescue from the evil one
4. The gathering of the saints

WHY WE HAVE TO BE RAPTURED

Jesus keeps His promises (**John 14:3**). Jesus is in heaven today and we are on earth. He is preparing a place for us in heaven and He promised that He will come back to take us and receive us where He is now. But the Bible tells us that flesh and blood cannot inherit the heavenly kingdom nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable (**1 Corinthians 15:50**). We have to be raptured and our bodies.

Furthermore, there shall be a spiritual warfare in heaven, one that we cannot see but will have tangible effects upon the world. Two battlefields shall be involved in this war: heaven which is dominated by God and from where Jesus reigns, and earth which is dominated by Satan and ruled by man’s wrong choices. Jesus will have to come for His Bride, the church, when this grim war begins (**Revelation 12 and 19**).

WHO WILL BE RAPTURED

Recent research show that more than half of church attendees are only acting as Christians. They are not truly believers and they will miss the rapture. There is only one way to be sure that we will be part of rapture: believe in Jesus Christ who is the resurrection and the

WORD (cont'd)

life. The Bible says that everyone who lives and believes in Jesus Christ will never die (**John 11:25–26**).

WHEN THE RAPTURE WILL HAPPEN

Nobody knows the day and the hour of the rapture. People will be merry-making and doing things the way they usually do but it will happen in a sudden flash just like how the Great Flood came in the days of Noah. (**Matthew 24:35–39**). While no one can know the exact day and the hour, believers can nonetheless understand the time and the season of when the rapture will occur.

We are ambassadors of heaven to this world we live in (**2 Corinthians 5:20**). Our heavenly Father will surely deliver us, His ambassadors, from the wrath that is to

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

- 1. In a Twinkle.** How will the rapture happen according to **1 Corinthians 15:51–52**?
- 2. Rapture Ready.** If the rapture happens any moment now, are you ready? How can you be prepared for it?
- 3. Renewed Perspective.** What is your new learning about the rapture? How does this change your perspective on how you should live your life now?

WORKS

ORDER OF RAPTURE

Study in groups or pairs, the sequence of events around Biblical rapture.

1. Jesus Christ descends from heaven (**John 14:1–3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16**)
2. He comes to receive us unto Himself (**John 14:13**)
3. He comes in a twinkling of an eye with a shout and with a trumpet call of God (**1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16**)
4. He resurrects those believers who “have fallen asleep” in death (**1 Thessalonians 4:14–15**)
5. Those who are alive will be caught up in the air (Rapture)

References: Titus 2:11–13; Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:30; Zechariah 12:10

come to the world (**Revelation 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:10**).

*“Set your mind on the things above,
not on the things that are on earth.”*
- **Colossians 3:2**

If we are living soberly, righteously and godly in the present age, then we are actually looking forward to the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (**Titus 2:11–13**).

Can you readily say, “Come, Lord Jesus, come” (**Revelation 22:17, 20**)? Upon His return, we will reign with Jesus in heaven and on earth. Are you ready for the rapture?

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends