

The Rapture Trap

Overview

If you have not heard about the Rapture – you are probably Catholic – as this concept is more popular with Protestants. Read on – to see why I have entitled this as The Rapture Trap.

What is the Rapture?

According to this concept, when Christ returns, all of the believing elect who have died will be raised and transformed into a glorious state, along with the living elect, and then be caught up to be with Christ. The key text used by those



who ascribe to the concept is 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17, which states, *"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord."*

Read all of Chapter 4 and you will see the passage is taken out of content in that it actually refers to our hope for the resurrection.

What is the Tribulation Period?

The Second Coming will be preceded by a time of great trouble and persecution of God's people (2 Thess. 2:1–4). This period is often called the tribulation. Scriptures mentions this period often and as a period of about 7 years – but does not specify what it is or when or how it will occur. Those who subscribe to a rapture believe that Jesus will come for all believers before or during this period of tribulation.

What are the Catholic teachings?

With respect to the rapture, Catholics certainly believe that the event of our gathering together to be with Christ will take place, though we do not generally use the word "rapture" to refer to this event. This is somewhat ironical since the term "*rapture*" is derived from the text of the Latin Vulgate of 1 Thess. 4:17—"*we will be caught up,*" (*Latin: rapiemur*).

The problem with this position is that it splits the *Second Coming* into different events. If Jesus were to come for the Christians before or during the period of Tribulations – He has to come again at the *End of the Times*. This would mean that there is a Third Coming – which has no Scriptural basis.

So – why is it a Rapture Trap?

Have you ever heard the saying: "*If it sounds too good to be true it probably is*". It certainly sounds like wishful thinking that believers in Jesus Christ would be spared any bad things that may occur by being "snatched away" by Jesus.

This belief is a trap because it can deceive us into believing that just because we believe in Jesus that we are saved from persecutions. It is a trap because there are some who will not be ready from our words and deeds here on earth – because they thought that it was not necessary. Recall the parable of the virgins who did not take time to be ready with oils in their lamps – and you should get the point.

The source of this deception is the great deceiver himself – Satan. There are those who think there is neither a Satan nor a hell. If we are not ready nor believe in the consequences after death we play right into the hands of Satan.

Everything that we do or do not do – matters!