



# TEEN TREE OF LIFE The Rapture of The Church

Part 6  
December 13, 2020

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

When something is described as imminent, it means it is about to happen or is likely to happen soon. The Bible teaches us that The Rapture is imminent. In fact, we are told in many scriptures to live in the light of the imminent return of The Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord and Savior tells us this himself in JOH 14:2-3 (New International Reader's Version): *There are many rooms in my Father's house. If this were not true, would I have told you that I am going there? Would I have told you that I would prepare a place for you there? If I go and do that, I will come back. And I will take you to be with me. Then you will also be where I am.*

The apostle Paul taught these specific facts about The Rapture: *Behold, I am telling you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in 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. (1CO 15:51-52)* Knowing these things should motivate you to look forward to His imminent Return in a cloud. Paul's words should also assure you that The Rapture can happen at any minute.

In JAM 5:7-8 (The Message Bible) the apostle James wrote a wonderful analogy about the imminence of The Rapture: *Meanwhile, friends, wait patiently for the Master's Arrival. You see farmers do this all the time, waiting for their valuable crops to mature, patiently letting the rain do its slow but sure work. Be patient like that. Stay steady and strong. The Master could arrive at any time.* So, we are taught to wait for Our Savior

Jesus Christ's return and to be patient as we wait. Living in the light of the imminence of His Return means we should never lose sight of it – despite how bad things get in the world. Think of what an important lesson this is for us today – in the time in which we live. With all the evil and hatred that's going on around us in the cosmic system, we need to remind ourselves that He will come back to get us. And we should be comforted and assured by that fact!

After Our Savior died on The Cross, He appeared to His apostle over a period of 40 days. He did this to prove that he was still alive and to assure them He was capable of returning to earth from Heaven. **ACT 1:9-11 (New International Reader's Version)** tells us about one of those times: ***After Jesus said this, he was taken up to heaven. The apostles watched until a cloud hid him from their sight. While he was going up, they kept on looking at the sky. Suddenly two men dressed in white clothing stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking at the sky? Jesus has been taken away from you into heaven. But he will come back in the same way you saw him go.*** Living in the light of His Imminent Return was such an important message for Our Lord to convey to His apostles that He arranged for two angels to appear suddenly to emphasize it to them! Do you see how important that message is for us?

Now let's look at **The Message Bible's** translation of **1TH 5:8** for more about living in the light of the imminence of The Rapture: ***I don't think, friends, that I need to deal with the question of when all this is going to happen. You know as well as I that the day of the Master's coming can't be posted on our calendars. He won't call ahead and make an appointment any more than a burglar would. About the time everybody's walking around complacently, congratulating each other — "We've sure got it made! Now we can take it easy!"—suddenly everything will fall apart. It is going to come as suddenly and inescapably as birth pangs to a pregnant woman. But friends, you are not in the dark, so how could you be taken off guard by any of this? You are sons of Light, daughters of Day. We live under wide open skies and know where we stand. So, let us not sleepwalk through life like those others. Let us keep our eyes open and be smart. People sleep at night and get drunk at night. But not us! Since we are creatures of Day, let's act like it. Walk out into the daylight sober, dressed up in faith, love, and the hope of salvation.*** Paul is telling us that "when" is not the issue with respect to The Rapture but that its imminence is. In other words, he is telling us that we can count on Jesus Christ's Return and (here's the BIG lesson) we have to prepare ourselves for it!!!

In **TIT 2:11-14 (New International Reader's Version)** Paul explains to us that we must be prepared: ***God's grace has now appeared. By his grace, God offers to save all people. His grace teaches us to say no to godless ways and sinful desires. We must control ourselves. We must do what is right. We must lead godly lives in today's world. That is how we should live as we wait for the blessed hope God has given us. We are waiting for Jesus Christ to appear in his glory. He is our great God and Savior. He gave himself for us. By doing that, he set us free from all evil. He wanted to make us pure. He wanted us to be his very own people. He wanted us to desire to do what is good.***

**REV 3:3** is part of a letter by The Lord Jesus Christ. In His letter, He Himself warns us about what we have to do while waiting for His Return at The Rapture: ***So remember what you have been taught and have heard. Hold firmly to it. Turn away from your sins.***

***If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief. You will not know when I will come to you. REV 3:3 (New International Reader's Version)*** He is also confirming that The Rapture can occur immediately and that it is imminent!

With respect to The Rapture, its imminence is used to teach us that no prophecy must be fulfilled for The Rapture to occur. In other words, by learning that The Rapture can happen at any moment, we should not be looking for something to occur that might warn us it is about to take place. God didn't plan it that way as we clearly read in **1TH 5:8** (above). No incident is going to tip us off.

The Church-Age is the first dispensation in which there are no prophecies except The Rapture. So, this is the dispensation of historical trends. This means that the Bible points out trends that indicate when a client nation is going to prosper or to decline or when the time of the Rapture may be at hand. The things the apostle Paul describes in **2TI 3:1-7 (New International Reader's Version)** are not prophecies, they are historical trends: ***Here is what I want you to know. There will be terrible times in the last days. People will love themselves. They will love money. They will brag and be proud. They will tear others down. They will not obey their parents. They will not be thankful or holy. They will not love others. They will not forgive others. They will tell lies about people. They will be out of control. They will be wild. They will hate what is good. They will turn against their friends. They will act without thinking. They will think they are better than others. They will love what pleases them instead of loving God. They will act as if they were serving God. But what they do will show that they have turned their backs on God's power. Have nothing to do with these people. They are the kind who trick their way into the homes of some women. These women are ready to believe anything. And they take control over these women. These women are loaded down with sins. They give in to all kinds of evil desires. They are always learning. But they are never able to come to know the truth.***

**The Message Bible** translates Paul's writing in an incredibly graphic way which is so fascinating to read: ***Do not be naive. There are difficult times ahead. As the end approaches, people are going to be self-absorbed, money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane, contemptuous of parents, crude, coarse, dog-eat-dog, unbending, slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, treacherous, ruthless, bloated windbags, addicted to lust, and allergic to God. They will make a show of religion, but behind the scenes they are animals. Stay clear of these people. These are the kind of people who smooth-talk themselves into the homes of unstable and needy women and take advantage of them; women who, depressed by their sinfulness, take up with every new religious fad that calls itself "truth." They get exploited every time and never really learn. These men are like those old Egyptian frauds Jannes and Jambres, who challenged Moses. They were rejects from the faith, twisted in their thinking, defying truth itself. But nothing will come of these latest impostors. Everyone will see through them, just as people saw through that Egyptian hoax.*** This describes a very scary time in the future of the world, but Church-Age believer should take great comfort in knowing that Jesus Christ controls history. Even though history is the record of man's thoughts, decisions, actions, and motivations, it is Jesus Christ who is in control.

Interestingly, The Church-Age began with an event that was prophesied – The Baptism of The Holy Spirit. Our Lord prophesied this in The Upper Room Discourse just before He ascended into Heaven. The Baptism of The Holy Spirit is one of seven Salvation Ministries by God The Holy Spirit. At the moment of Salvation, the Baptism of The Holy Spirit, by means of His Omnipotence, enters the believer into union with Christ, making the Church-Age believer a part of the Royal Family of God forever.

The Church-Age ends with The Rapture, which was also prophesied. But there is no prophecy between these two events. The fact that there is no prophecy between The Baptism of The Spirit and The Rapture tells us that The Rapture is imminent and could occur at any time. Only God The Father knows the day and the hour. The resurrection of the church at The Rapture, like our physical deaths, is completely out of our control.

{to be continued}