

In A Moment of Great Expectation

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The most anticipated event in human history is the second coming of Christ. It is the ultimate fulfillment of our Lord's promise to return. It is also the culmination of all biblical prophecy.

For _____ can, and _____ will, be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

I. First, there is the _____ of Christ Himself.

Jesus' parting words to these anxious disciples, in Acts chapter 1, was for them to always expect that He would come again.

First, The Bible tells us that Jesus will return _____.

Second, The Bible also tells us that Jesus will return _____.

Third, we also know that Jesus will come _____.

Forth, He will also return _____.

Jesus said, **"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."** [Matt. 24:36]

Peter tells us that **"the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..."** [2 Peter 3:10]

Peter tells us: **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."** [2 Peter 3:10]

II. What will _____ when Jesus returns?

There are two phases to His coming. He will come _____ His church in the Rapture and then He will come _____ His church at the second coming.

The Paul writes that first of all, there will be the _____ of the Dead.

Then there will be the Rapture when the church will be **“caught up”**.

Scriptures that note the difference between the Rapture and the Second Advent. For the Rapture note John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. For the Second Coming note Zechariah 14:1-11; Matthew 24: 29-44 and Revelation 19:11-21.

1. At the Rapture, Jesus will come in the air, at the Second coming, Jesus will come to the earth. In the Rapture, the saints are **“caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.”** (1 Thess.4:17) In the Second coming, Zechariah 14:4 says, **“And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives.”**
2. At the Rapture, Jesus will come FOR His saints, and the Second Coming, He will come WITH His saints. In the Rapture Christ will return for His saints, the Bride of Christ. In the Second Coming, the saints will accompany Christ.
3. At the Rapture, Christ will return with His saints to heaven followed by the seven-year Tribulation period. At the Second Coming, Christ will remain on earth to establish His Kingdom followed by the Millennial Reign at the end of the Tribulation time.
4. At the Rapture believers are removed and unbelievers are left to begin the tribulation. At the Second Coming, unbelievers are removed, and believers are left to enter the Kingdom.
5. The Rapture brings a message of hope for the believers. The Second Coming brings a message of judgment for the unbelievers.
6. The Rapture is related to God’s program for His church and His saints. The Second Coming is related to God’s program for the lost world.
7. The Rapture is a **“mystery”** which was never revealed in the OT. The Second Coming is a clear teaching of both the Old and New Testaments.
8. Following the Rapture, believers are judged at the **“Judgment seat of Christ.”** Following the Second Coming, Israel and Gentiles are judged at the Sheep-Goat Judgment, the Great White Throne Judgment.
9. After the Rapture, creation remains unchanged; the earthly curse remains. After the Second Coming, creation is changed; the earthly curse is lifted.
10. After the Rapture, sin runs rampant, and Satan rules the earth. After the Second Coming, sin is judged and Christ rules on earth.
11. The Rapture will occur before the **“day of wrath.”** The Second Coming will occur after the **“day of wrath.”** Revelation 1:7 says, **“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”**

12. The Rapture will involve believers only. The Second Coming will involve the whole world. The Rapture will come suddenly, instantly, leaving the earth in confusion and chaos. The Second Coming will come at the height of a worldwide military conflict in Armageddon. Everyone will witness it.
13. The Rapture is the expectation of believers. The Second Coming is the expectation of believing Israel. Philippians 4:5 says of the Rapture, “**the Lord is at hand.**” Matthew 10:7 and 24:14 says of the Second Coming tells us that “**the Kingdom is at hand.**”

Jesus is coming! Will you be one raptured when Jesus comes or will you be left behind. You can know, you can have confidence today that you know Him.