



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Suddenly! The Rapture of the Church

SPEAKER

SP Daniel Foo

THEME Time of the End (4)

DATE

23 & 24 Jan 2021

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This sermon, the fourth in an 8-part series on the end times, focuses on the rapture of the Church. Its purpose is to remind us to continually pray and reach out to our pre-believing loved ones, and to appreciate the Cross and mercy of God.

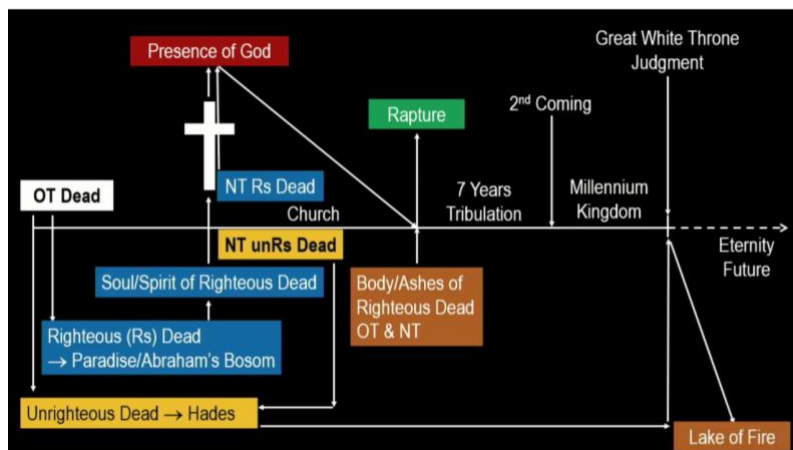
(I) THE RIGHTEOUS ALWAYS DELIVERED FROM THE WRATH OF GOD

We need to distinguish between trouble in general [the fallen-ness of Man (Jn 16:33) and the persecution-martyrdom of believers (2 Tim 3:12, 1 Pet 2:4)] and the wrath of God.

God specifically unleashes His wrath on unbelievers who reject Him (Jn 3:36). There are three categories of judgment in the seven years of the Tribulation – the Seal Judgments, Trumpet Judgments and Bowl Judgments. God’s wrath begins with the Seal Judgments at the start of the seven years of the Tribulation and ends with the Bowl judgments (Rev 15:1, Isa 13:6-11, 13)

However, God always saves, preserves and rescues the righteous (i.e. those who have received Jesus as their Lord and Savior, are born again, sealed with the Holy Spirit and justified and have the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus) before His judgment (1 Thess 5:9, Rom 5:9, 2 Pet 2:9, 1 Thess 1:10, Zeph 2:3, Isa 26:20-21, Jn 14:1-3). For example, the Lord raptured Enoch (Gen 5), rescued Noah and his family in the ark through the Flood (Gen 6-8), spared Lot from His judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18-19), and parted the Red Sea for Israel before He unleashed His judgment on Pharaoh and the armies of Egypt (Exo 14).

(II) NEW RAPTURED, IMMORTAL, INCORRUPTIBLE AND GLORIFIED BODIES



Before the Rapture: The righteous dead either go to a place called Paradise/Abraham's Bosom and their souls go to the presence of God (for those in the OT/before the Cross) or go immediately into the presence of God (for those in the NT/after the Cross). The unrighteous dead go to Hades.

After the Rapture: When the Rapture occurs, the body/ashes of the righteous dead will be reunited with their souls and spirits. The dead in Christ will rise, meet the living in the air and together as one, they will rapture together to go with Jesus. Once raptured, we, who are originally flesh and blood and therefore cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor 15:50-55), will receive new raptured immortal, incorruptible and glorified bodies (i.e. flesh and bone) (Jn 20:17, 27, Phil 3:20-21). As for the unrighteous dead, they will be resurrected at the Second Coming (Rev 20). This will be followed by 1000 years of the Millennium Kingdom and then the Great White Throne Judgment. If the names of these people do not appear in the Book of Life, they will end up in the Lake of Fire.

(III) THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN

The Rapture is imminent and can happen anytime. When the treaty of Israel is confirmed by the Anti-Christ, the seven years of the Tribulation Judgment will be triggered. During these seven years, the Church will be in Heaven where two things will occur:

- ♥ Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10-11): God is not only loving and kind but also just and righteous. As believers, we should not mock God. We will reap what we sow - there are consequences in this life and when we meet the Lord. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we should persuade each other to live sober, righteous and godly lives.
- ♥ Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:6-9): This is when the Church returns with Christ at the Second Coming. Jesus judges first with righteousness and after the judgment is made, there will be war on the unbelieving nations that hate and despise God and will not repent.

(IV) TAKE HEED, WATCH, PRAY, LOOKING FOR THE BLESSED HOPE!

The Rapture of the Church can happen anytime and will come in the twinkling of an eye (1 Thess 5:3, 1 Cor 15:51-52). We must take heed, watch, pray and look for the Blessed Hope (2 Tit 2:11-14, Phil 3:20, 1 Thess 1:10, 2 Tim 4:8). It is crucial to understand what is happening and what is going to happen. As a church, we should comfort one another that Jesus is coming back (1 Thess 4:14-18).

CONCLUSION

The bottom line is that we need to consider both the goodness and severity of God (Rom 11:22). God is good but just as well; If we reject Him, He will cut us off like how He cut Israel off. The more we appreciate the wrath and fierceness of God, the more we will appreciate His lovingkindness, mercy and grace. The Rapture is imminent. Therefore, we need to reset our values and re-think what matters for eternity, holding on tightly to the Word, the promises of God and our relationship with the Holy Spirit, while holding on loosely to everything else. We do not need to fear God's wrath if we are righteous as God has promised that He will save, preserve and rescue the righteous.

QUESTIONS

1. Share some new takeaways or perspectives that you have gained from the sermon on the Rapture of the Church.

Leader's notes It is important for us to understand what is happening and going to happen so that we will always be in preparedness and godliness. This question encourages members to internalize what SP Daniel Foo preached, reflect on how the Rapture affects them and clear misconceptions that they may have regarding the Rapture.

2. We need to consider the goodness and severity of God (Rom 11:22). How have you experienced God's grace and mercy in your life?

(Leader's notes) Part of the sermon focused on God's wrath and what will happen to those who reject God. Members need to remember that God is not just good but righteous. It is common for people to only focus on His goodness. The more we appreciate the wrath and fierceness of God, the more we will appreciate His lovingkindness, mercy and grace. This question encourages members to reflect on God's goodness, and build a stronger altar of thanksgiving, praise and worship to Him.

3. We are to take heed, watch, pray and look out for the Blessed Hope. What do you understand by this? What are you doing while waiting for the Second Coming of Christ?

(Leader's notes) There are many things vying for our attention nowadays. Have we set aside time to commune and build on our relationship with God? Encourage members to share their walk with God and what they intend to do differently in terms of their spiritual walk this year. Remind members that this should not just be in terms of QT but our words, deeds and truth towards others (Jn 13:34-35).