

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH ...

- CAUGHT UP IN THE CLOUDS ...**
 (1 Thessalonians 4:15–18 NIV) According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.
- OUR BLESSED HOPE ...**
 (Titus 2:11–13 ESV) For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.
- IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE ...**
 (1 Corinthians 15:51–54 ESV) Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall 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 shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the

mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

- WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM ...**
 (1 John 3:2–3 ESV) Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.
- WE AWAIT A SAVIOR FROM HEAVEN ...**
 (Philippians 3:19–21 ESV) Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.



ARE WE READY FOR CHRIST’S RETURN?

FAITH FELLOWSHIP CHURCH: Yes! No!

5 OF THE 7 CHURCHES WERE NOT READY!

LITERAL CITY AND CHURCH	WERE THEY READY?	REASON
Ephesus	NO	Had lost its sense of priorities; no longer loved God first.
Smyrna	YES	A church rich in the eyes of the Lamb, Jesus Christ.
Pergamum	NO	A compromised church; tolerated false teaching.
Thyatira	NO	A compromised church; tolerated false teachers.
Sardis	NO	A dead church; had the gospel wrong in spite of great reputation for being alive.
Philadelphia	YES	Kept Christ’s word; patiently endured; held fast the truth.
Laodicea	NO	A delusional church; thought they were rich and successful when in reality they were wretched and pitiful.

***Please note: 5 of the 7 churches were not ready** to face “the one who is seated on the throne” and “the Lamb.” We cannot ignore or overlook Christ’s purpose in first addressing the state of his Church.