

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Review Last Week's Lesson

Story - page 3

Memory Verse and Review Game

Main Lesson - page 5

• **Theme**

The Rapture is the event during which believers in Christ will be caught up to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the air and taken to Heaven.

- **Jump-Start Questions** - page 1
- **Introduction - Anticipation**
- **What Is the Rapture?** (1 Cor. 15:51-52)
- **Questions Arise From Doubt**
(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3)
- **Waiting and Looking for Him** (Colossians 3:1-4)
- **Object Lesson** - page 1

Crossing the Finish Line - page 2

Review Activities and Preview

- **Review Question Game**
- **Preview Next Week's Lesson**

Take Home Sheet

Visual Aids

- J3-L34-S1
 - J3-L34-1 through J3-L34-3
- Supplies**
Standard supplies
Take Home Sheet J3-L34

Junior Year Three The Rapture

Lesson

34

Review Last Week's Lesson

Last week we learned that God is faithful in every way—He never forgets or fails. Then we ended with a question about wanting to be found faithful at the Rapture. Well, now we can explore all the Bible tells us about the Rapture.

MEMORY VERSE AND REVIEW GAME

“Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Review Game

Try to say as many words as possible within the blink of an eye. Continue repeating the verse while blinking eyes until familiar. If you wish, partner up and have one say the verse while the other blinks his/her eyes. Hold a contest to see who can say the verse in the least amount of blinks.

Jump-Start Questions

Who will be present at the Rapture?
When and where will the Rapture take place?
What will happen to those not included in the Rapture?
How should those waiting for the Rapture live until it occurs?

Object Lesson “In The Blink of an Eye”

If you so desire, perform a simple magic trick, or just talk about magic tricks. Most magic tricks are a sleight of hand, something you’d miss in the blink of an eye. When the Rapture occurs, we will be

changed (given a new, perfect body) in just a blink of an eye—so fast! However, this won't be a trick or magic; rather it will be God's power .

CROSSING THE FINISH LINE

Summary

God has said in His Word that Jesus Christ is coming back for His beloved saints. Since we do not know the day, we should be living our lives so others see Christ in us. Let us participate in those things that bring honor to God. Our promise is not one of God's wrath upon us, but the hope of Christ's appearing and giving us changed bodies.

Gospel Presentation

One great and wonderful gift we can receive from God is salvation. The believer in Christ will not see the day of His mighty wrath because He has provided a way for us to be delivered from it. God sent His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us. His shed blood forgives the sins of every believer—paying a debt we could never pay ourselves. Every time we sin, His blood has already forgiven it! But we must personally believe His blood saves us from our sins. Just as Christ was raised from the dead, we too can know that we will be raised to new life one day. We will be given new bodies when He comes to take us out of this world to live with Him.

Application

Many times when we open our birthday gifts, we share them with our friends or family. If others see us living for Christ, by how we act and treat others, we usually get the opportunity to share the gift of Christ's salvation with them. It's almost like a secret. They want to know what makes us different from other friends. If they

believe in Christ, we, like Paul, have the opportunity to tell them about a wonderful event coming soon...the glorious Rapture!

Encouragement

Don't be discouraged if the wait for His coming at the Rapture seems too long. God is using that time to make you holy as He is holy. He uses the difficult times in our lives to make us more like Christ so we can be witnesses for Him on earth while He is in Heaven. Remember what your hope is and keep looking for that day to come. God's Word is always true.

Titus 2:11-13—"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

REVIEW ACTIVITIES AND PREVIEW

Review Question Game* "No one knows when..."

Draw a worksheet with the review questions on it, and pass out copies to the students, who may work as individuals or groups. The teacher then gives instructions and steps outside the room. The class must attempt to complete the review questions in a timely manner, as no one will know when the teacher may return. This is a picture of the work we have to do for the Lord, since we never know exactly when He will return.

**Attention teachers: The review questions are on the student's take home sheet.*

Preview Next Week's Lesson

So the Rapture is when the Lord will meet us, the Body of Christ, in the air. However, many people confuse the Rapture with the Second Coming, when He'll actually return all the way to earth. Next time, we'll talk about the Second Coming.

STORY

“Let’s Hope!”

“Hurry, the van’s here!” called Cindy. “Look! It’s sunny and windy, perfect for flying kites!”

“Wow, you’re sure excited about flying a kite,” laughed Sarah as they ran out the door and jumped in the Kids’ Club van. Soon they arrived at the park.

“I have some extra kites, for anyone who doesn’t have one,” announced Pastor Paul. “Who needs one?”

“We do!” called Cindy as she reached for a brightly colored kite.

“Do you know how to fly one?” asked Sarah.

“Sure!” said Cindy. “My sister and I used to fly kites with my Dad all the time. It’s easy!”

“What’s that?” asked Sarah as a piece of paper fell out of the package with the kite.

“A clue?” asked Cindy.

“Yes!” exclaimed Sarah. “It says, ‘Look up! That’s where it is! Today it means something you want, but in the Bible it means something you KNOW will happen. Who and what are you putting your (blank) in?’ Look up? What’s up there?”

“Is there anything else?” asked Cindy.

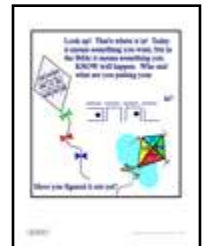
“Yes, there are some funny shapes and dots,” said Sarah. “And there are two kites with letters on them.”

“Oh, that’s a ‘pig pen’ puzzle!” said Cindy. “You find the place on the grid that is the same shape. If there’s a dot, it means you use the second letter. Otherwise, you use the first letter.”

“Well, let’s see what it says!” suggested Sarah. “The first shape is a box that is open to the left. Since it has a top and bottom, it must be either a ‘G’ or an ‘H.’ But the dot tells us it is an ‘H.’ ”

“Good!” said Cindy. “The next one’s open at the bottom, and it doesn’t have a dot, so it’s an ‘O,’ and the one beside it is the same except it has a dot, so it’s a ‘P!’”

“One more,” said Sarah. “It’s an L shape without a dot, so it’s an ‘E.’ ‘H-O-P-E,’ it’s HOPE!”



J3-L34-S1

“That fits,” said Cindy. “Now days, hope means something we want, but Pastor Paul told us that in the Bible it’s different, and it means something we know will happen. But why does it tell us to look up?”

“I remember!” yelled Sarah. “The Bible says our HOPE today is the Rapture. That’s when Jesus Christ comes and catches us away to be with Him forever.”

“How do you know?” asked Cindy.

“We read about it in the Bible. God promised to come again and take us up to Heaven to be with Him. It could happen any time!” said Sarah. “I can hardly wait!”

“Can I go?” asked Cindy.

“Sure!” said Sarah. “Anyone who believes that Jesus Christ died for them, and that His shed blood washes away all their sin can go. Do you believe that?”

“Yes, I do,” said Cindy with tears in her eyes. “I really do.”

“Let’s tell Pastor Paul,” said Sarah as she gave Cindy a hug, “he’ll want to know we’ll all be going there together!”

MAIN LESSON

Introduction - Anticipation

As your birthday draws near, what do you think about? Looking and waiting for that special day! Does your mind keep drifting, thinking about how the event will be celebrated? **Knowing** your birthday will come soon enough, are you on your best behavior eagerly **waiting**? God's Word tells us about a day far more exciting than our birthday; a day all believers should anticipate. On that day, the Lord Jesus Christ will appear in an event in which all believers will be gathered together.

Paul taught the young believers of Thessalonica (which is in modern day Greece), many truths about God's plan of salvation, including a special event known as the Rapture.



J3-L34-1

What Is the Rapture?

The Rapture is simply a Bible truth that explains how the age in which Christians now live will come to a close. God had known about this truth since before the world began, but He kept it a secret, not sharing it with anyone until he told the Apostle Paul. Paul tells the saints that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back for those who have placed their faith in Him! We don't actually find the word "rapture" in the Bible. Rather, we find the phrase "caught up." The Latin root word for "caught up" is "raptor." Interestingly enough, raptors are descriptive of a specific kind of bird, such as a hawk or an eagle. These birds are known to seize their prey so quickly that they are generally unaware of what has happened to them. Swiftly, the prey are carried away. Similarly, when Jesus Christ comes for us at the Rapture; He will swiftly, but lovingly, call us into the air at the sound of the trumpet, change our earthly bodies into new glorious bodies that are in the likeness of Himself, and we will live forever with the Lord. So, the doctrine of the Rapture is our Blessed Hope in which we **know** Jesus Christ will come back for us.



1 Corinthians 15:51-52—"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we all shall be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Questions Arise From Doubt

There was confusion among the saints as certain people had been distorting God's Word concerning the truth of the Rapture. Their intent was to plant seeds of doubt about Christ's return. The believers became worried about those beloved saints who had already died. If they died before Christ had come for them, would they miss out on the joy of the Rapture as promised by God? So, Paul addresses their concern.



J3-L34-2



1 Thessalonians 4:13-18—“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

Initially, those who have died will come back with the Lord in their soul and spirit, and He will raise their old bodies that are still in the grave and give them new bodies just like Christ's! *Then*, we who are still alive at His return, will also be caught up and have our bodies changed in the twinkling of an eye. That is faster than a blink! Those who have died will not miss out on the Rapture.

Wouldn't it be exciting to witness an event like Haley's Comet streaking across the night sky? It appears once in a lifetime, every 76 years. What if you planned to watch it only to discover you missed its appearance? Another cause for the saints to lose heart and begin to doubt was that some people had said the Rapture had already come. As a result, they feared they had missed Christ.



2 Thessalonians 2:1-3, parenthesis added—“Now, we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand (present...imminent). Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”

The 'Day of Christ' is referring to Christ's second coming and should not be confused with His coming for the saints at the Rapture. When Christ comes during the Rapture *in the air*, this event will occur in the twinkling of an eye, so fast that no one left on earth will either have seen Him or our departure. But years later, Christ will return again to establish His kingdom *on earth* for a thousand years. At this second coming of Christ "every eye shall see Him" (Rev 1:7). It is the time when God will bring about His wrath upon those people who rejected Jesus as Lord and Savior. Therefore, Christ will come first for the Rapture of the saints in love, while His second coming later will begin in wrath. Paul had already spoken to the believers about these things, but apparently they needed reassurance.

Paul calms their hearts and minds by explaining that the 'Day of Christ' had not come as yet. Two things must occur before the day of God's wrath upon man. First, the 'falling away' that Paul mentions must take place. This 'falling away' means 'the departure' and is a direct reference to the Rapture. Second, the son of perdition will be revealed, the Antichrist. Thus, the day of God's wrath had not begun! Furthermore, God gives the body of Christ a wonderful promise in his Word that He "hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

We must remember we are Christ's ambassadors while here on earth. Just like a United States ambassador who is appointed to live in a foreign country to represent our government, we also are appointed by God to represent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. If our government were prepared to declare war on a particular foreign land, it would first remove our ambassadors as a means of safety. So too, Christ will remove His ambassadors from earth before He brings judgment against the world who rejected Him.

Waiting and Looking for Him

Paul expected the Rapture to occur at any time. He thought it would take place while he was still alive! He and all the saints were looking forward to their gathering unto Christ and having their bodies changed to a glorious body. It has been 2000 years since Paul wrote these letters. Should we still be looking for Him? Of course! While we are hopefully waiting, we should live godly lives for Him. Others should see the love of Christ demonstrated in our lives. We should be having our minds centered in Christ, looking for His return. The enemy, Satan, would like for us to concentrate on worldly things such as something we may want to buy, or being angry with someone we know. However, God would desire that we read his Word, memorize Scripture, and pray, to keep our focus on Christ while we wait for Him.



J3-L34-3



Colossians 3:1-4— “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye appear also with him in glory.”

Object Lesson

What is the Rapture?



The word "rapture" means to be caught up, like an eagle catches its prey up and carries it away. Although the word isn't actually used in the Bible, it teaches that we will be caught up to be with the Lord. Are you ready?

Questions Come from Doubt



Some were teaching that those who died before Christ returned would miss the Rapture. Paul told them that those who died would be raised first, then we who are alive, will be caught up to be with Him in Heaven. Are you waiting for Him?

Waiting and Looking for Him

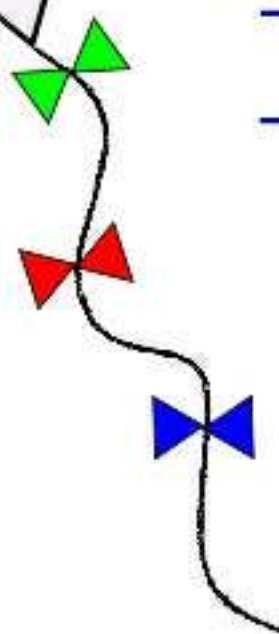


Paul expected the Rapture to happen at any time. While we are watching and waiting, we need to be living for Him.

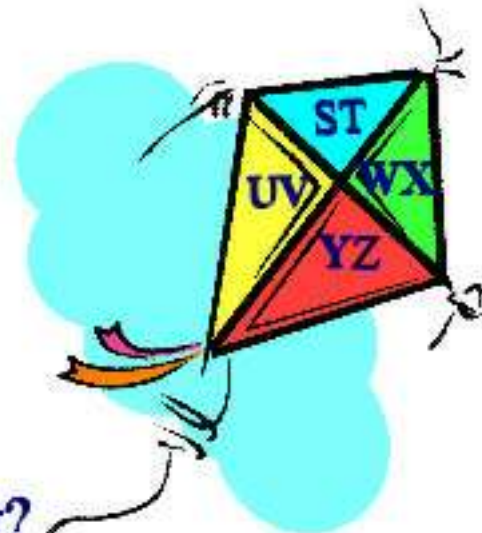
There are so many that need to know about Him.

Have you told them He's coming?

Look up! That's where it is! Today it means something you want, but in the Bible it means something you **KNOW** will happen. Who and what are you putting your



in?



Have you figured it out yet?