

Comparing/Contrasting the Rapture & The 2nd Coming of Christ

Many people ask about the **difference between the Rapture & the Second Coming of Christ**. Below is a chart providing a summary of the ways they differ. There are other biblical events that could be included, but this listing is an attempt to be clear, concise, and simple, avoiding further details that would require more space and explanation.

The **primary purpose** of the **Rapture** is to rescue the Church from the wrath that God intends to unleash on the world during the Tribulation. The purpose of the Tribulation is (1) to initiate/introduce God’s judgment on the earth because of the rampant unlawfulness, wickedness, evil, and sin that dominates society; (2) to get Israel’s attention in preparing them for the promised Millennial Kingdom; (3) to demonstrate to Israel that Jesus is their Messiah by placing an emphasis on Jesus Christ’s complete and total triumph/victory over Satan.

In view of the purpose of the Tribulation, it must be noted that God promised that during the time between Acts 2 (the actual beginning of the Church) and the Rapture, every individual who has trusted in Christ as Lord and Savior will be exempt from facing His judgmental wrath due to sin. Romans 8:1 says it best by explaining that there is no condemnation coming for those who are “in Christ!” The Lord Jesus will appear in the clouds to rescue those in the Church who are alive and resurrect those who have physically died.

The **primary purpose** of the **2nd Coming of Christ** is to establish the Millennial Kingdom where Christ rules on earth (seated on the Throne of David) as King! This appearance of Christ has more to do with Israel than the Church because it’s the culmination of God’s judgment upon the world in preparation for the New Heavens and the New Earth mentioned in Revelation 21–22.

The main distinctions between the Rapture and the 2nd Coming include:

The RAPTURE	Christ’s 2 nd COMING
Jesus doesn’t return to earth (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17)	Jesus steps onto the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 12 & 14; Revelation 19)
Jesus <u>rescues</u> the CHURCH from wrath	Jesus delivers wrath to unbelievers
Jesus raises NT saints (dead in Christ) from the grave (1 Corinthians 15:50–54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16)	Jesus puts ungodly people into the grave (Revelation 19:21)
Jesus returns to take the CHURCH to <u>Heaven</u>	Jesus returns to earth from <u>Heaven</u> with the CHURCH
Following the Rapture, Jesus rewards believers at the Judgment Seat of Christ	Following the 2 nd Coming, Jesus establishes the Kingdom on earth (2 Samuel 7:8–17; Revelation 20:1–6)
The Tribulation follows	The Millennium follows