

The Inscrutable Question: The Doctrine of Eternal Life: In An Interim Body, 2 Cor 5:6-8; Luke 16:19-31; In A Resurrection Body, 1 Thess 4:14-17

- 30) This passage documents the fact that we receive eternal life at the moment of salvation and it mentions several doctrines that make our relationship with God possible in time.
 - 31) Although we remain in this life in mortal and corrupt bodies, we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we are a new spiritual species, and we have eternal life.
 - 32) This arrangement continues until the moment of our physical death.
 - 33) At physical death the believer's human spirit, which possesses eternal life, and his immortal soul are dismissed from the body of corruption and they enter into the eternal state.
2. The segment of eternal life that takes place after physical death but before the resurrection of the Church is referred to as the believer's "interim life."
- 1) This segment of our eternal life transpires for an unknown duration but begins with physical death and ends with the resurrection of the church.
 - 2) Since interim life for Church Age believers occurs before the rapture of the Church then we must conclude that there is no distinction between winners and losers during this segment of our eternal life.
 - 3) Further, there are indications in Scripture that we will also possess an interim body during this segment. It will be visible to others and we will be recognizable to those who know us.
 - 4) This is brought out first of all by the grammar of:
- 2 Corinthians 5:6** - Therefore, being always of good courage knowing that while we are at home in this body, we are absent from the Lord.
- v. 7** - For we walk by faith [**led by means of Bible doctrine resident in our souls**] and not by sight.
- v. 8** - Therefore, we are of good courage and prefer rather to be absent from the body [**human body of corruption in time**] and to be at home face-to-face with the Lord [**interim body in heaven**].
- 5) The phrase "face-to-face with the Lord" is derived from the preposition **πρός / pros** / plus the accusative of the noun **Κύριος / Kurios** /. This proposition plus the accusative case is best translated, "face-to-face with the Lord."
 - 6) This indicates that our presence in the third heaven includes an interim body to accompany our human spirit, soul, and eternal life. This segment of eternal life is called "interim life" and the body is called the "interim body."
 - 7) The Lord Himself provides us documentation of the interim body in **Luke 16:19-31**.
3. The final segment of eternal life begins at the resurrection of the Church called the Rapture and continues to infinity.
- 1) The Rapture is a term that refers to the resurrection of all Church Age believers. The biblical term is the noun **ἁρπάζω / harpazo** /, which means, "to seize, take suddenly, or take away." The English word "rapture" is taken from the Latin noun **raptus**, defined by the:

Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "rapt" and "rapture":

Taken and carried up to heaven. The act of seizing and carrying off. The act of conveying a person from one place to another, especially to heaven.

- 2) We can see from these definitions that the Greek **ἁρπάζω / harpazo** / and the Latin *raptus* are synonymous. The word **ἁρπάζω / harpazo** / appears in several verses but the one that is best known is in 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 -If we believe that Jesus died and rose again [**and we do**], even so God [**omnipotence of God the Father**] will bring with Him [**Jesus Christ**] those who have fallen asleep [**Church Age believers who have died physically**].

v. 15 - For this doctrine we communicate to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord [**those who are physically alive in human bodies at the Lord's return for His Church**] shall not precede [**not receive their resurrection bodies first**] those who have fallen asleep [**Church Age believers, who died physically during the dispensation, return with Christ and receive their resurrection bodies first**].

v. 16 - For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout [**the voice command of the archangel, Gabriel**] and with the trumpet of God [**the reveille of resurrection**]; in fact, the dead in Christ shall rise first [**those who died physically beforehand**].

v. 17 - Then we who are living and who remain on the earth shall be caught up [**future passive indicative of ἁρπάζω / harpazo /: raptured**] together with them [**dead believers**] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord [**eternal life now in resurrection bodies**].