

Dr. Allan MacRae  
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ago, a very fine commentary. It has been reprinted over and over. But in this commentary, looking at his comments on this passage on I Thessalonians 4 he says "This rapture of the church. . ." and then goes on to describe it and that term which he used then has come to be used to describe this event mentioned here. Now, today we think of rapture as simply some kind of pleasure, some kind of extreme joy. Well, there will be that when we are lifted up but that is not why they call this the rapture of the church. It is from the original Latin root of it, being snatched up, being caught away  $\theta$  the rapture of the church and it is one of the great teachings of the scripture even though never explained in clear detail in any one passage except in this beautiful passage here in I Thessalonians. How much this will mean to us, how wonderful this rapture of the church. Now when will this rapture occur? Naturally that is the thing that interests us all. Is this something way off in the future? Something we don't need to worry about, it is so far off; something <sup>there</sup> ~~is~~ is no use looking forward to yet because ~~there~~ there are so many things to happen between? Or is it something that might come rather soon?

The disciples certainly thought that the establishment of Christ's kingdom would be very, very soon. We noticed yesterday in Acts 1 how they said, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" But Jesus said No, there is a period of witnessing ahead. You are to witness to Jerusalem and ~~in~~ Judaea and Samaria, to the very ends of the earth. This must come first. But how long will that take? Paul tells us in two places that the Word of God had already been preached to every creature under heaven. The word went out and it spread through the earth, but every generation we have a new generation to hear the word. How long must this witnessing continue?