

Place: Lurgan Baptist 28:2:2017

Reading: John 14:1-6

THE FINAL FOCUS

1. ON THE TRANSLATION OF THE CHURCH

In the November 1991 issue of People's Weekly, a story bore the headline, "*When a Family Vanishes.*" The article told the story of the Brendle family who vanished in the U.S.A. on the 20th September 1991. The FBI, state and local police searched for the Brendle's with the aid of helicopters, and tracker dogs but all to no avail. Police believe they were murdered and they also believe they have a suspect but still no bodies can be found. Police Chief Charles Brule said, "*The shock factor here is the disappearance of an entire family.*" My one day the world will awake to the news that another family is missing, a family of millions. My have you ever thought of the mark that will be left on earth when the rapture occurs ? Millions of people will be missing.

Can you imagine driving down the motorway then suddenly cars going in all directions not one of them has a driver ? Can you picture sitting down before the class begins, the teacher ready to start, when suddenly some in the class disappear ? "*Caught up to meet the Lord in the air.*" (1 Thess 4:17) You see the next great event in Bible prophecy is the rapture of the church. Now there are those who say "*I don't believe in the rapture because the word cannot be found in the Bible.*" Now it is true

that the word rapture is nowhere to be found among the 774,747 words in the King James Version of the Bible. But then the word Trinity, Bible, and grandfather, these words are not found there either. But there is a Trinity, grandfathers do exist, and we hold in our hands the Bible, and the rapture is a reality. Actually the English word rapture is derived from the Latin verb (rapere) found in the expression "*caught up,*" in the Latin translation of (1 Thes 4:17) This corresponds to the Greek word that Paul uses in (1 Thes 4:17) (harpazo) when he talks about being "*caught up.*" The same phrase is found in (Acts 8:39) where we read "*The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.*" Its also used in (2 Cor 12:2,4) when Paul was caught up into the third heaven. So the translation of living believers is called the rapture of the church.

Now its vitally important to keep in mind that the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus will take place in two stages, or two phases. You see, **marital** imagery and **martial** imagery do not fit into the same frame. A **wedding and a war** are incompatible concepts. In essence the rapture will introduce the great tribulation while the second coming will conclude it. At the rapture Christ comes in the air (1 Thes 4:16) At the second coming Christ comes to the earth. (Zech 14:4) At the rapture He comes for his saints. At the Second Coming He comes with his saints (1 Thes 3:13, Jude: 14) Christ's coming for His saints is never said to be preceded by signs in the heavens but Christ Coming with His saints will be heralded by celestial signs. (Matt 24:29-30) The rapture is presented as a time of blessing. (1 Thes 4:18) The second coming

(1) THE TRUTH OF THE RAPTURE EXPRESSED

is presented as a time of judgment. (2 Thes 2:8-12) The rapture seems to involve the church primarily.

Cor 15:51)The second coming seems to involve Israel primarily then also the Gentile nations. (Matt 24:1 25:46) Scripturally speaking the “ *Come up hither,*” of (Rev 4:1) is the rapture. But the appearance of the white horse rider and his armies in (Rev 19:11) is the revelation of the Lord Jesus. So its important to distinguish between the two phases in Christ’s return, two great events which we call the “ **Rapture,**” and the “ **Revelation.**” One of the most beautiful and homely descriptions is found in (2 Thes 2:1) where Paul says “ *Now we beseech you brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus and our gathering together unto him.*” Isn’t that beautiful ? The Lord Jesus is the great Gatherer. He is the,

Gatherer Historically: “ *His fame spread abroad and all the city was gathered together at the door.*”

(Mark 1:33, 4:1) The Lord Jesus is the,

Gatherer Congregationally: “ *Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.*” (Matt 18:20) One day Christ will be the,

Gatherer Universally: “ *That he might together in one all things in Christ.*” (Eph 1:10) And very soon Christ will be the,

Gatherer Adventually: “ *The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him.*”

(2 Thes 2:1) What a colossal congregation that will be. The happiest of all gatherings “ *Our gathering together unto him.*” Now its to this gathering I want to direct your attention this ! I want you to see, first of all,

A Bible believing preacher brought a tremendous message on the second coming. When he had finished one of those modernistic preachers who start nowhere and end up in the same place said to him ‘ *I want you to know that I can’t get that out of the New Testament.*’ The wise old preacher said ‘ *You sure can’t Buddy. It’s in there to stay.*’ Consider the following facts. Of the two hundred and sixty chapters in the entire New Testament there are three hundred and eighteen references to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This is a ratio of one verse out of every thirty verses. Twenty three of the twenty seven New Testament books refer to this great event. Of the other four books there are three single chapter letters written to individual persons on a particular subject and the other is Paul’s letter to the Galatians which does imply Christ’s coming again. My for every prophecy predicting the Saviour’s birth at Bethlehem and His First Coming, there are eight on the Second Coming of Christ.

The truth of the Lord’s Return whither focusing on the Rapture or the Revelation is emphasized time and again. Look for example at,

(a) *The Testimony of the Saviour: DECLARATION*

In His memorable message on the ‘ *Father’s House,*’ Christ declared that He would return for His own. ‘ *I will come again and receive you unto myself.*’ (Jn 14:3) Now this is the first mention of the rapture. Now what did our

Lord mean ? How are we to understand these words ? Well there are those who tell us that the Lord Jesus was referring here to the coming of the Holy Spirit. Others say He was referring to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Still others maintain that He was referring to His coming to meet the the believer at death. But the Greek word here “ *I will come,*” is the same word that is used in (Rev 22:20) where Christ says “ *I come quickly.*” The Lord Jesus said what He meant and meant what He said. He was referring to his personal, bodily and literal return. One thousand years before His birth Christ said, “ *Lo I come.*” (Ps 40:7) He kept that promise. Near the end of His earthly life He said, “ *O Father I come to Thee.*” (Jn 17:11) He kept that promise and all heaven welcomed Him home. Just as He was about to leave His own disciples He says, “ *If I go I will come again.*” (14:3) One thing, and only one must take place before He comes. He must go. And surely the testimony of the Bible is, “ *He is risen.*” (Lk 24:34) “ *If I go,*” He has gone. “ *I will come again.*” Jesus is coming again.

Benjamin Disraeli was a member of the British House of Commons in the days of the Empire. When he was elected to Parliament he stood out from his contemporaries. His dress was different and he was eccentric. And he was Jewish. When he arose to make his first speech he was mocked by his fellow members of Parliament. The uproar was so loud that he had to abandon his speech. He raised his voice in defiance, “ *I’ll sit down,*” he said “ *but you’ll hear from me again.*” He went on to lead Britain to greatness. My this is the day of the Saviour’s rejection. Judas betrayed Him, Peter denied Him, the Jews

mocked Him, and the Romans crucified Him. To this very day, the world generally has no use for the Lord Jesus. He has gone back home now, but do you what He is saying, “ *I will sit down now, but you will hear from Me again.*” You see, as certain as He came the first time, He will come again.

(b) *The Testimony of the Men: CONFIRMATION*

For in the opening chapter of the book of Acts we have two men coming all the way from heaven to earth to tell earth what heaven believes about the return of Christ. There is no mistaking their message. It is Heaven brought. It is Heaven Inspired. “ *This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*” (1:11) This same Jesus was coming again, ***coming to the sky in the rapture, coming to Olivet’s brow at the return.*** Now it’s very interesting to notice that angels were present at Christ’s birth. (Lk 2:13) They were present at Christ’s temptation. (Matt 11:4) An angel attended our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane (Lk 22:43) Angels had almost to be restrained from intervening at the cross. (Matt 26:53) Angels were also present at the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. (Matt 28:2)

Is it therefore any wonder that when the Lord comes “ *to receive his own,*” the voice of the archangel will be heard ? (1 Thes 4:16) Now what did these angels say ? They said that Christ is coming “ *in like manner,*” as they had seen Him go. In other words to understand the nature of the Advent we need to understand that of the Ascent.

The question is “ *How did Christ go,?*” He went Personally, then He will return Personally. He went Bodily, then he will return Bodily. He went Suddenly, then he will return Suddenly. He went Visibly, then He will Return visibly. He went from the Mount of Olives to heaven. Then One day He will return from heaven to the Mount of Olives. (Zech 14:4) Now its reasonable to expect that if the word of the angels was fulfilled at His birth, fulfilled at His resurrection that once more their word will be fulfilled at his second coming. So we have (a) (b) but look at,

(c) The Testimony of the Apostles: REVELATION

Look if you will at (1 Cor 15:51-58) Now what is this mystery or secret concerning the rapture ? Well let’s suppose you began reading the Bible in Genesis (Ch 1) and you read through until you came to (1 Cor Ch 14) Now if you stopped reading there you would have already learned about many important facts. Such as creation, fall of man, the flood, Bethlehem, Calvary, the resurrection, the day of Pentecost and so on. But you would be forced to conclude that a Christian could get to heaven only after physically dying. You would, of course note the two exceptions to this rule, Enoch (Gen 5:24) and Elijah. (2 Kings 2:11) But apart from these two it would be clear that believers have to travel the path of the grave to reach the goal of glory. But now the secret is out, and here it is, “ *millions of Christians will some day reach heaven without dying.*” Paul says “ *Behold I show you a*

mystery, we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed.” (1 Cor 15:51) Now here is the three fold cord of evidence for the Rapture. Here we have (1)

(2) THE TRUTH OF THE RAPTURE EXPLAINED

The two most important passages describing the rapture are found in (1 Cor Ch 15 1 Thess Ch 4) Let’s look together at this latter passage. We are thinking now about the rapture explained or described. When will this event occur ? No-one knows and its wrong to set dates but the fact that Paul uses the pronoun we in (4:15, 17) suggests that he expected to be alive when the Lord returned. Theologians call this the doctrine of the imminent return of the Lord Jesus. Imminent means that “ *it can happen at any moment.*” Does anything have to happen before the rapture can take place ? The surprising answer seems to be yes. One final event must transpire and that event is the adding of the last repenting sinner into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Then when the body is complete the Bridegroom will come for His beloved Bride.

(Eph 5: 22-23) Now the similarity between (Jn Ch 14) and (1 Thes Ch 4) is unmistakable and clearly indicates that these are referring to the one and the same event.

Brian Currie reminds us that “ *the certainty of this thrilling truth is seen in (1 Thes 4:15-17) by the employment of 5 “shalls.”* Have a look at them.

There is the “ Shall of Instruction.” Look at (4:15) There is the “ Shall of Intervention.” “ *The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.*”

There is the “ Shall of Resurrection.” “ *The dead in Christ shall rise first.*”

There is the “ Shall of Translation.” “ *We which are alive and remain shall be caught up.*”

There is the “ Shall of Continuation.” “ *So shall we ever be with the Lord.*”

What a glorious prospect is ours. Now in explaining the truth of the Rapture Paul begins with,

(a) A REASON:

Do you see (4:13) ? When Paul was in Thessalonica he had preached about Christ's returning. (2 Thes 2:5) Since Paul's premature departure from the city some of the Christians had died. Their relatives were deeply concerned and had questions on their minds. ‘ *What happens to the Christians who die before Christ returns ? Do they miss His return ? Will they be at some disadvantage when the Saviour appears ? If they die before the Rapture do they lose all hope of sharing in this event ?*’ You see, they had no answers to these questions so Paul writes ‘ *I would not have you ignorant brethren*,’ (4:13) ‘ *Them which are asleep,*’ (4:13) are identified in (4:16) as ‘ *the dead in Christ.*’ Now it's not the soul that sleeps (Matt 17:3 Rev 6:9) but the body. James says ‘ *as the body without the spirit is dead.*’ (Jam 2:26) At death the spirit leaves the body, and the body goes to sleep and the soul/spirit goes to be with the Lord. Then when the Lord returns He will bring with Him His people and will unite soul and body, and they shall go

forth to meet the Lord in the air. You see, just as sleep has its waking, so death will have its resurrection. What a comfort this must have been to these Thessalonian believers. For into a world which had ‘ no hope,’ Paul brings a word of hope.

(b) A REASONING:

Look if you will at (4:14) The word ‘ *if,*’ could be translated ‘ *Since.*’ You see, the certainty of the Christian's resurrection is based on Christ's resurrection. Since Christ died and rose, there will not be a single believer who has died who will be left in the grave when Christ comes. My this is the basis of our hope and resurrection.

(c) A REVELATION:

Do you notice what Paul says ? “ *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord.*” (4:15) Was Paul referring to some saying of Christ found in the gospels ? No. There are none exact or even close. Was Paul talking about a statement of Christ that was spoken but not recorded in the gospels ? (Acts 20:35) No. Indeed Paul affirmed that he taught the Rapture as a heretofore hidden truth, “ *a mystery.*” You see, until Paul revealed it as the revelation from God to him it had been a secret, with the only prior mention, being the Lord's teaching in (Jn 14:1-3) My into a world of uncertainty Paul brings a word of certainty. Death has not robbed our deceased loved ones of their hope of rapture. We who have laid believing loved ones in

the grave do not grieve with the hopeless sorrow of the lost. The Christian has a “*blessed hope*,” the certainty that Jesus is coming again and that at His return He will bring with Him those who have “*fallen asleep*,” in Him. Their souls are already with Him, and at His coming they will be united with their resurrection bodies. (a) (b) (c)

(d) A RETURN:

Do you see how he puts it ? “*The Lord himself*.” Now there are several things I want you to observe here.

1. The Person:

Three main terms are used in the original of the New Testament in relation to the Second Advent. One is apocalypsis from which we get our word “*apocalypse*,” meaning “*an uncovering*.” The second is epiphaneia from which we get “*epiphany*,” meaning “*appearance*.” But the Greek word most frequently used in the Bible to describe the return of Christ is “*parousia*.” That is the word Paul uses here. It means “*presence*.” (2 Cor 10:10) It stresses the coming bodily presence of Christ for His people. Now remember it was a body not a spirit that was buried in Joseph’s tomb. It was a body that was “*received up*.” (Mark 16:19) “*carried up*,” (Lk 25:51) and “*taken up*.” (Acts 1:9) into Heaven. Thus it is the same body that shall descend from heaven. “*The Lord Himself*,”

**Some golden day-break Jesus will come
Some golden daybreak battles all won
He’ll shout the victory break through the blue
Some golden day break for me for you**

2. The Power:

He comes “*with a shout*.” The word “*shout*,” means “*command*.” (John 5:28-29) Now three times in the Gospels we are told that the Lord Jesus shouted and each time resurrection resulted. The first shout was at the tomb of Lazarus “*Lazarus come forth*,” (John 11:43) At once Lazarus responded. The second shout was at the moment of His death. “*Jesus when He had cried again with a loud voice, and the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints which slept arose*.” (Matt 27:50-53) The third shout will be at the rapture. Now at the first shout ***one man*** arose. At the second shout ***many arose***. But at the third shout ***millions*** will arise “*the dead in Christ shall rise first*.” (4:16) 1. 2.

3. The Protection:

For the Lord is coming with “*the voice of the archangel*.” Will this be Michael ? (Jude 9) Certainly Michael is specially commissioned to protect the saints. (Dan 12:1 Heb 1:14) And here he is protecting the saints from the devil and his angels as they are passing through the aerial and stellar regions. (Eph 6:12)

4. The Period:

This is indicated by the phrase “ *trump of God.*” The trump is primarily for Israel. For remember the various corporate activities of Israel were heralded by trumpets. (Num 10:1-10) These trumpets were blown to direct Israel’s walk, warfare, and worship in the wilderness and to alert them that the time had come to be on the move again. The period of time introduced at this time is the 70th week of Daniel, the 7 years of tribulation. You this trumpet will be used to usher in the final movement of God in relation to Israel but at the same time will assemble the church into that meeting arranged in the air.

(e) A RESURRECTION:

For Paul says “ *And the dead in Christ shall rise first.*” (4:16) How can we be so sure? Because the Lord Jesus died and rose again. You see, the resurrection of Christ is the absolute unconditional guarantee that those who belong to him will rise also. Now please note that the reference here is not to all the dead but only to the resurrection of the dead in Christ “ *believers only.*” Now I am fully aware that the word “ *first,*” here is used to mean that “ *dead in Christ,*” shall rise first before the living ones are changed. ***But a point to made here is that there is no reference to the resurrection of the unsaved.*** They will be raised ***but not*** at the resurrection of the saved at the rapture. Do you recall the words of the Lord Jesus ? “ *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.*” (John 5:28)

So there are two distinct resurrections. Before the rapture some will come forth unto the resurrection of life. This is the first resurrection. But at the end of time there will be another resurrection this is called the second resurrection or the resurrection of judgment (Rev 20:11) I think it will help us greatly if we remember that the first resurrection has three parts to it. Christ, (1 Cor 15:20) the Church, (1 Cor 15:23 4:16), and the Tribulation and Old Testament saints. (Rev 20:4 Dan 12:1) You see, this term “ *first resurrection,*” is a ***resurrection of kind which includes all the righteous who are raised from the dead before the millennial kingdom begins.***

Now remember Paul is addressing these Thessalonian believers who were concerned about their loved ones who had died in Christ. Would they be handicapped in some way ? Would they be at some disadvantage if Christ returned ? No. Our Christian dead will not be at some disadvantage when the Lord comes. Until Christ comes their bodies sleep (4:14 John 11: 1-13) But when Christ comes our holy dead return with Jesus (God bring) At that moment dust is wrought upon and soul meets body on the resurrection morn (Phil 3:20) My if God can bring forth a body from a womb He can certainly bring back a body from a tomb. What a thrilling hope this is. Our holy, happy, dead shall rise again.

(f) A RAPTURE:

‘ *Then we which are alive and remain,*’ (4:17) Some scholars tell us that the rapture will include only spiritual Christians and that carnal saints will be left behind to

endure the tribulation. But this theory is refuted by one little word in (1 Cor 15:51) where Paul says, “ *we shall all be changed.*” As John Philips says “ ***The Lord is going to have a raptured church not a ruptured church.***” (1 Thes 5:5) Think of this fact. Millions of graves are dug every year but its wonderful to think that one generation of Christians will cheat the undertaker. Paul says “ *We which are alive and remain shall be caught up.*” The great Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest explains the various meanings of the Greek word here (harpazo) for “ *caught up.*” It means,

1. To Catch Away Speedily:

This is the translation in (Acts 8:39) where “ *the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.*” When the Lord returns in the air we who are alive will be caught away quickly in the “ *twinkling of an eye.*” It means,

2. To Seize By Force:

I wonder does this imply that some of us will be so attached to this world that we will be literally dragged away ? (Jn 6:15) Like Lot being delivered from Sodom will some of us scarcely be saved ? (Gen 19:16)

3. To Claim for One's Own Self:

This views the Rapture from our Lords point of view as He comes to claim his Bride. It means,

4. To Move to a New Place:

Christ has gone to prepare a home for us and when he comes He will take us to that place. (Jn 14:3)

5. To Rescue from danger:

This suggests that the Church will be taken home before the time of tribulation begins. (1:10, 5:9 Rev 3:10 Acts 23:10) Think of it. Millions of people will suddenly vanish instantly, and no doubt there will be chaos and confusion. But what a way to go. What a thrill it would be to be found living for Christ, labouring for Christ, looking for Christ when He appears.

***Oh joy ! Oh delight ! Should we go without dying
No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying
Caught up through the clouds with our Lord into glory
When Jesus receives His own***

(g) A REUNION:

How delightful is the word “ *together.*” (4:17) Separation is the order of this day. Reunion is the order of that day. Now we are not together. Some of you have empty homes. Loved ones have been called home. Half of your heart is in heaven but Christ is coming and when he appears we are to be reunited immediately to “ *those we have loved long ago and lost awhile.*” “ *Caught up together with them,*” Can you think of loved ones on the other side and their parting at the river you recall ? Will we see them and know them again ? On the Mount of Transfiguration Peter recognized Moses and Elijah. (Matt 17: 1-5) My we will know each other in glory. “ *For now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face.*” (1 Cor 3:12) “ *Together with them,*” Oh I think of all the divisions among Gods people today. Believer's who will not speak to each other. Unhappy divisions,

bitter estrangements but there is a day of total reconciliation coming. When all our little systems and sects will be at an end and as one complete body the church will gather around her adorable Lord. But there is something else here.

(h) A RENDEZVOUS:

For Paul says “ *to meet the Lord in the air and so such we ever be with the Lord.* ” (4:17) Now the word translated “ *meet,* ” carries with it the idea of meeting a royal person an important person. We have walked with Christ by faith her on earth but in the air we shall see Him as He is.

(1 John 3:2) This is the church’s hope. This is the believers prospect “ *Face to face with Christ my Saviour* ” My we are not looking for an event, or program we are looking for a person “ *the Lord himself.* ” Is this your prospect ? Are you living day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment with the expectation that the Lord may come at any time ? (1) (2)

(3) THE TRUTH OF THE RAPTURE EXPERIENCED

Did you know that you can experience the truth of this future event in the present ? How ? Well,

(a) Understanding the Rapture is Comforting:

Do you see how Paul applies it to a church that had known bereavement ? “ *Comfort one another with these words.* ” (4:18) Does the truth of the Lords return not

bring comfort to your heart ? Is there a husband who has gone from your presence ? Has life been less than full since he left ? Oh, you will meet him in the air when the Saviour comes. Is there a wife whose absence has made life hard ? My take encouragement for the Lord is coming and you will meet her in the air. Is there a parent, a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister whom you’ve laid in the cold earth ? My they are not lost or forgotten. They are with the Lord and when He comes again they shall rise first. Does that not comfort your soul ?

(b) Understanding the Rapture is Cleansing:

John says “ *And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.* ” (1 Jn 3:3) A soldier went through all the battles of the European campaign. Amid the revelry and all that went on, this man kept himself above reproach. The others noticed that he would not participate in some of the things they were doing. Finally, they asked him about it. Do you know what Bill said, “ *Back home there is a girl I love with all my heart. When this war is over, I am going to be married to that girl and I am keeping myself just for her.* ” My just over the clouds there is a Saviour who loved us and gave Himself for us. One of these days the clouds will burst and “ *the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout* ” (1 Thes 4:16) ***Will you keep yourself holy just for Him ?***

(c) Understanding the Rapture is Challenging:

Challenging in relation to **Our Worship:** “ *Not forsaking*

the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.” (Heb 10:25) Don't tell me that you are living in the light of his coming if you are failing to support the services regularly.

Challenging in relation to **our Witness**: Jude says “ *Keep yourselves in the love of God looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion making a difference and others save with fear pulling them out of the fire.*” (21-23) Does His coming motivate you to service ? Does it give you a concern for the lost? (1 Thes 2:19-20)

Challenging in relation to **our Walk**: For the apostle says “ *And now little children abide in him that when he shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*” (1 John 2:28 Titus 2:12-13) The word “ *ashamed,*” means “ *to feel shame, be disgraced.*” Is it possible that we could be embarrassed when we stand before the Lord ? While on a South Pole expedition, British explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton left a few men on Elephant Island, promising that he would return. Later, when he tried to go back, huge icebergs blocked the way. But suddenly, as if by a miracle, an avenue opened in the ice and Shackleton was able to get through. His men, ready and waiting, quickly scrambled aboard. No sooner had the ship cleared the island than the ice crashed together behind them.

Contemplating their narrow escape, the explorer said to his men, “ *It was fortunate you were all packed and ready to go.*” They replied, “ *We never gave up hope. Whenever*

the sea was clear of ice, we rolled up our sleeping bags and reminded each other, ‘ The boss may come today.’” My Christ may come today. Do you believe that ? Are you living in the light of it ? Martin Luther said, “ **Live as if Christ died yesterday, rose this morning and is coming back tomorrow.**”

*There's a man in yonder glory I have loved for many years,
He has cleared my guilty conscience and has banished all my fears.
He is coming in a moment in the twinkling of an eye,
And no time will be allotted for you to utter one good-bye.
No time to kiss the husband or embrace the loving wife,
If they are but united in the bonds of holy life.
Are you ready, Christian, ready, for shout and trump and voice ?
Will His coming make you tremble or cause you to rejoice ?
Are you walking, talking with Him daily, taking Him your care,
Do you live so close to heaven that a breath would waft you there ?*