THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH
PART 1: FOUR ALTERNATIVES TO THE PRE-TRIBULATION VIEW
(1 Thessalonians 5:15-16)

I. The POST-Tribulation Rapture View

A. Proposition: The Rapture and Christ's return to establish His kingdom are parts of the SAME EVENT

B. Essential Arguments

1. Historical argument: Pre-Tribulationism is "NEW"
2. Argument against imminency: watch for SIGNS
3. The promise of TRIBULATION (John 16:33; Romans 5:3; 12:12)
4. The HISTORICAL fulfillment of Daniel 9:24-27
5. The argument from RESURRECTION
6. The argument from parable of WHEAT and TARES

II. The MID-Tribulation Rapture View

A. Proposition: The Rapture will occur at the end of the first 3 ½ years of Daniel's 70th Week, at the sounding of the "LAST TRUMPET" and the catching up of the TWO WITNESSES (Rev. 11)

B. Essential Arguments

1. Arguments against imminency and promise of tribulation—see 2 & 3 above
2. Denial of the Church as a MYSTERY with a program distinct from that of ISRAEL
3. Places Revelation's SEALS and TRUMPETS in the first half and the BOWLS in the second
4. The RAPTURE of the two witnesses is symbolic of the CHURCH
5. Denies that the seals and trumpets constitute GOD'S WRATH
6. Insists that "Last Trumpet" always refers to the SAME EVENT

III. The PRE-WRATH Rapture View (Marvin Rosenthal, 1990)

A. Proposition: The Rapture will occur just prior to the Day of the Lord in which God will POUR OUT HIS WRATH on the earth

B. Essentially a Mid-Trib view with a modified CHRONOLOGY

IV. The PARTIAL Rapture View

A. Proposition: The Rapture will include ONLY those believers who are WATCHING and WAITING for Christ's appearing, or who have achieved a certain level of SPIRITUALITY, evidenced by MEMBERSHIP in a BAPTIST church

B. Key Scriptures used for support

1. Luke 21:36—Actually applies to ISRAEL in the TRIBULATION
2. Matthew 24:41-42—As above: one taken to JUDGMENT, the other left to ENTER THE KINGDOM
3. Also 1 Corinthians 15:23; Philippians 3:11; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:8; and Hebrews 9:28

C. DOCTRINAL difficulties

1. Misrepresents the VALUE of Christ's DEATH
   a. As our Propitiation, He SATISFIED God's wrath
   b. As our Reconciliation, He established PEACE with God
   c. As our Redemption, He purchased us as God's POSSESSION
2. Denies the UNITY of the BODY of Christ
3. Denies the COMPLETE resurrection of believers at the RAPTURE
4. Confuses Scriptural teaching on REWARDS
5. Confuses the distinction between LAW and GRACE
6. Denies the distinction between ISRAEL and the CHURCH
7. Places PART of the BELIEVING CHURCH in the period of TRIBULATION