



**THE  
OUT  
RESURRECTION**

*by  
Douglas L. Crook*



# ***The Out Resurrection***

## ***The Split Rapture Or Ranks In The Resurrection***

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I believe that the Bible teaches that all true believers in Jesus Christ will be resurrected and translated to heaven. However, I also believe that the Scriptures reveal that not all believers will be caught up to heaven at the same time, nor will all believers occupy the same place or enjoy the same degree of inheritance and reward. This doctrine is referred to by some as the doctrine of a split rapture or ranks in the resurrection. The Apostle Paul refers to this truth as the “out” resurrection in ***Philippians 3:11***

It is not a doctrine that is held by many churches or individuals so it’s not a doctrine that is familiar to a lot of people. Nonetheless, it is not an obscure Biblical doctrine. The Scriptural evidence for the doctrine is abundant. The purpose of this tract is to present the overwhelming Scriptural evidence of this truth so that the reader can examine the Scriptures and ask God for understanding of this doctrine that it might transform their life as they look for the coming of the Lord. When a Scripture is cited in this tract, please, take time to look it up and read it in your own Bible. By doing so, you give the Holy Spirit opportunity to reveal truth to your heart and mind.

We will discover that the doctrine of a split rapture actually encompasses a number of doctrines

including, faithfulness, rewards, inheritance, the Bride of Christ and spiritual maturity. The doctrine of a split rapture is directly linked to the doctrine of rewards so to lay the foundation for understanding a split rapture we must understand the truth about rewards.

**What is not a reward.** To properly understand God's promise of rewards it is necessary to know that salvation, eternal life or justification are not rewards. If you do not understand this you will be confused about every other doctrine of the Bible.

Salvation is not a reward, but a gift. Eternal life is not earned. It is not presented as wages or compensation or as an award. It is given by God by grace and received by faith apart from the individual's own merit or faithfulness - *Romans 4:1 - 5* - by grace. *Romans 6:23* - gift of God. *John 10:27 - 30* - The gift is eternal. It was not received as compensation for works and it cannot be maintained by works. The gift of salvation is never referred to in Scripture as a reward or prize. Salvation is God's work of grace. Our eternal security and destiny are based on the faithfulness of God and not on our own efforts to keep ourselves saved. *Ephesians 1:1—14* / *1 Peter 1:1—5*.

**Scriptural evidence of the promise of rewards offered to believers for faithful service.** After one is saved he or she is now made fit to serve the Lord. *Ephesians 2:8 - 10* - We are not saved by works, but we are saved unto works. It is God that enables and equips us to serve Him by graciously saving us and giving us eternal life, but He also

promises to reward those who render Him faithful, loving service and who choose to walk in the good works of faith and obedience in which He has preordained that we should walk. **I Corinthians 3:5 - 15** - (vs. **8** own reward. Vs. **14** work abide - receive a reward.) Some Christians will enter heaven, saved yet so as by fire. Others will receive rewards that will stand for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. The difference between the rewards of one believer and another is not a question of opportunity or ability, but of choosing to yield or not yield to the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit and of obeying or not obeying the instruction of the sound teaching of the Word of God. Every believer has the ability and opportunity to receive a full reward by surrendering themselves unconditionally to the will of God. It is God working in us both to will and to do His good pleasure. **Philippians 2:13** Our part is to believe, yield and obey. **Romans 6:1—23** Not all Christians make the choice of obedience to righteousness.

God will reward faithful, loving service. A life that is surrendered to the will of God, no matter what temporal sacrifices are necessary, no matter what labor or effort is required, will be compensated with eternal reward that is over and above the gift of eternal life. **I Corinthians 15:58** - your labor is not in vain.

**Different degrees of rewards.** It does not take much investigation to observe that there are many degrees of faithfulness and service to the Lord among believers. Some are just content to know that they are saved and never go on to grow spiritually.

They seldom attend church services or Bible studies. Their fellowship is based on what God can and should do for them, not what they can and should do to honor the One who gave His life for them.

Others are willing to make any and all sacrifices necessary for their own spiritual growth and for that of others that Christ would be glorified in and through their lives. Scripture acknowledges different degrees of faithfulness and teaches that the reward will be proportionate to the service.

We have already read that every believer will receive his own reward according to his own labor. Our reward is a very individual matter. Some will be scarcely saved. Others will have some things in their life remain standing to receive a degree of reward and others, who have diligently sought to use only sound doctrine and the life of Christ to build their life, will be rewarded with the eternal glory that results from a godly life, a spiritual mansion.

Jesus told His disciples to lay up treasures in heaven (adding to your heavenly inheritance) by serving the Lord with sincerity, godliness and faithfulness. Matthew 6 II John 1:8 speaks of a full reward and the possibility of losing the full reward.

Peter talks about an abundant entrance into heaven in II Peter 1:5 - 11. Paul writes of all believers being an heir of God and then of some who will be joint-heirs with Christ if they fulfill the condition of suffering with Christ by fully identifying themselves with Him and His will. Romans 8:16, 17 Every true believer is a child of God and therefore an

heir of God, but not every believer chooses to suffer with Christ by obeying His will and serving Him with their whole heart. Therefore, not every heir of God is a joint heir with Christ who is the Heir of all things.

These verses make it abundantly clear that believers will not enjoy the same reward or inheritance in heaven.

**But is it possible that the promised rewards for faithfulness are awarded in this life only? Is it possible that we receive the rewards now in this life and that in heaven every believer will enjoy the same place and glory?** Without question the rewards for faithfully serving the Lord begin in this life and are immense. Faithful believers enjoy peace that passes understanding, joy unspeakable, answered prayer, guidance, provision, ect. Carnal Christians do not experience these blessings in this life because such blessings are found only in walking in the will of God. But to limit God's reward for faithfulness to this life only is to lose sight of God's eternal purposes.

Remember, Jesus said lay up treasures in heaven, not on the earth. *Matthew 6* Also, the examining fire that will prove the worth of the works of our life can only be applied after this life has been completed. *I Corinthians 3:5 - 15*

*Revelation 22:12* tells us that His reward is with Him and will be awarded at His coming. *II Corinthians 5:10* declares that every believer must appear, not is appearing, before the Judgment Seat of Christ. The believer will never be condemned, but our works will be judged or examined and rewards

handed out or withheld based on that examination.

To make this present life the time of the Judgment Seat of Christ is to miss the whole character of the context of the verses preceding Paul's declaration. He is speaking of eternity and what awaits us. He speaks of being absent from the body and present with the Lord. What's more, Paul declares that we must or we are bound to appear, not that we are now appearing. The judgment is of things done while in the body. The final judgment of those works can't be given unto we are done with this body and are absent from it. **Romans 14:10, 12** gives the same emphasis by saying that we shall, in the future, all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, not that we are now standing.

**The opportunity and ability to win rewards is offered to every believer, but some forfeit or lose their reward by being unfaithful to Christ in this life.** We have already read about the burning of works for which there is no reward but loss in **I Corinthians 3:15**. **Colossians 2:18** warns against letting others beguile, cheat or defraud you of your reward through false doctrine. **Revelation 3:11** exhorts us to hold fast what we have in order that we not lose our crown. We are never to hold on to our eternal life, lest we lose it. Eternal life is a gift. The crown is a reward.

Unfaithfulness, disobedience to God's will, results in the loss of reward that God's grace has freely offered to all believers. God is able to cause every one of us to abound in His will, but the choice is ours. To what degree do we surrender our will to



His? The greater our surrender, the greater our reward.

**What are the rewards that are offered?**

There are several specific rewards mentioned in the Bible, but the highest reward for faithfulness is not a thing, but a position in Christ's heavenly kingdom next to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the closest place to Christ as His joint, equal heir.

James and John valued and esteemed a closeness to Christ in His kingdom and asked Jesus that they might occupy the closest place of privilege and honor next to Him. *Mark 10:35 - 45* Though their understanding of that place was incomplete and their motives may or may not have been tainted with selfishness, Jesus does not deny that such a place will be enjoyed by some. In fact, the indication is that such a place is reserved for those to whom the Father will give it. It is not obtained by merely asking to be placed there, but by being willing to drink the same cup of suffering that Jesus did. Jesus' cup or portion in this life was one of being rejected by the world while doing the will of God. James and John did drink of the same cup of the suffering of Christ, but they were promised a different place, a different throne, as the Lord's disciples. *Matthew 19:28* Because of their faithfulness they will sit on those promised thrones, but to sit on Christ's right hand is offered to the rest of us of this Church age.

The greatest place in the kingdom is the closest place to Christ and that place will be given to those who have faithfully served God and others according to the will of God. *II Timothy 2:12* reveals the

requirement for reigning with Christ to be the same requirement that Jesus mentions to James and John when they asked about occupying the closest place to Him in glory. If we want to reign with Him, we must suffer with Him or be denied that place of privilege. The Greek word translated “reign” in this passage does not refer to reigning in just any degree or position, but means a co-regent, one who reigns jointly and equally with another.

**Revelation 19:7 – 9** pictures for us the future scene of the marriage of the Lamb. The company of believers that will be found worthy to be the Lamb’s eternal partner, joint heir and co-regent are those who have adorned themselves with the wedding dress of righteous acts. The wedding dress does not represent the imputed righteousness of Christ that every believer possesses, but, as the Greek bears out, the righteous acts, works or deeds of the saints. The Lamb’s wife will be clothed in the beauty of their works of love and obedience done in this life.

Every believer is espoused to Christ for the purpose of being the Lamb’s wife. This life is a time of engagement and some are being unfaithful and are not preparing themselves to be the Lamb’s wife. **II Corinthians 11:2, 3** By announcing the good news of the Gospel, the Apostle Paul espoused all who believe to be the Lamb’s wife. However, he feared that some believers were being deceived and would lose their opportunity to occupy the closest place to Christ in eternity. Paul was not afraid that they would lose their salvation, but rather their opportunity to be the Lamb’s wife. Those who will occupy the place of

the Lamb's wife are those who are driven by the simplicity that is in Christ. The word in the Greek translated "simplicity" means single-mindedness. Our single purpose for all that we do must be that we desire to please the Lord.

Many Christians live selfishly for themselves and though engaged to Christ are being unfaithful to Him and His will. When the day of the marriage of the Lamb has come, they will be disqualified to occupy the highest place in glory offered to God's people.

**Crowns.** Several different crowns are mentioned in the New Testament and are described as being offered to those who faithfully serve the Lord out of love for Him. Though several different descriptions and names are given for these crowns, I believe they all speak of the same close place next to Jesus that James and John sought after. The requirements for winning these crowns are the same for winning Christ or for reigning jointly with Christ. Therefore, I believe they all speak of the same reward, the privilege of being the Lamb's wife. The requirements are a life of service, godliness, obedience and suffering motivated by love for the Lord Jesus Christ. *I Corinthians 9:24 - 27* - incorruptible crown. Paul did not fear losing his salvation, but of being disqualified for the crown. *II Timothy 4:6 - 8* - crown of righteousness. *James 1:12* - crown of life - *Revelation 2:10* *I Peter 5:4* - crown of glory. All believers will receive an incorruptible body. All have been made the righteousness of God in Christ. All in Christ have

eternal life, but the crowns speak of the highest and fullest reward of the things found in Christ.

**Philippians 3:7 - 14** - With this passage in Philippians we now begin to see a connection between the reward of winning a place of close fellowship with Christ in heaven and of a “special” resurrection or rapture. In other words, a part of the reward for faithfulness is the promise of a special resurrection or as Paul puts it in **Philippians 3:11** an “out” resurrection. In the Greek the word translated “resurrection” has the prefix “ex” which indicates an “out” resurrection.

Paul desired more than anything to win Christ which, according to this passage, required abandoning everything that would hinder him from knowing Christ more intimately and from identifying himself with Christ in unconditional obedience. Paul cannot possibly be talking about merely being saved or being resurrected to go to heaven. If so, then the Apostle Paul doubted his own salvation and eternal destiny. (**verses 12, 13**) If Paul is speaking about salvation, then he contradicts all of his other proclamations that justification is by faith alone, apart from works.

He clearly speaks of winning Christ as a prize given as a reward for faithfulness. This closeness to Christ is offered as a reward, not a gift. Without question we are only able to win Him, by His grace, but we must chose to surrender ourselves wholly to Him. Paul’s goal was to win Christ and to know Him in a closer way which would result in Paul attaining to the “out” resurrection. Winning and knowing

Christ in this deeper way is language that is consistent with the promised reward of being a joint heir and co-regent with Christ. The language is consistent with the picture of the love and closeness of the Lamb and His wife. Winning Christ is the same as being rewarded the crown of life, righteousness, glory and incorruption. Winning Christ is synonymous with being the Lamb's wife and with being His joint heir and co-regent.

**What is the “out” resurrection a reference to?** Jesus taught that there are two resurrections, one to life and another to eternal judgment. **John 5:26 – 29** – Jesus is speaking in very general terms. Because Jesus doesn't go into detail about when and how these resurrections take place we might mistakenly think that it all takes place at the same time on the same day in the exact same hour. In reality, as we study the book of Revelation, we discover that right before and all during the tribulation period there are various groups that are translated to heaven including some of the tribulation martyrs. These all belong to the resurrection unto life. Then 1,000 years later the wicked that are destined to the resurrection of eternal judgment are raised. **Revelation 20:5 – 14**

Paul desired to win Christ and obtain to a resurrection out from among the righteous dead. Such a special resurrection was promised to the faithful saints of the Philadelphia Church. **Revelation 3:7 – 13** The faithful of the Philadelphia assembly are promised an open door and the assurance of escaping the tribulation period in its entirety. These promises are given as rewards for faithfully

persevering and obeying God's Word despite trials and persecutions. These promises are not given to them simply because they were saved, but for having patiently kept God's Word. Not every believer is faithful to obey God's Word in all the temptations and trials of life. Therefore, the promise of an open door and of escaping all the 7 years of tribulation is not given to every believer.

**What does the promise of an open door refer to?** The answer is found in John's experience as recorded in *Revelation 4:1* John sees an open door in heaven and is caught up through that door into heaven. The open door is a door of translation to heaven. John is caught up through that door before the seven seals are opened which mark the beginning of the seven years of tribulation. John's experience is an illustration of the promise made to the faithful of the Philadelphia assembly. Because they kept the Word of God's patience, they are promised an opened door of translation into heaven before the seven years of tribulation begin.

*I Thessalonians 4:13 - 18* – John's experience seems to be very similar to what is promised the faithful saints of Thessalonica. Won't this be the experience of every believer? Yes, but not all at the same time. Only those who persevere in loving obedience are promised to escape all of the tribulation period by being part of this "out" resurrection.

The split rapture becomes even more clear when we examine the scenes in heaven as described for us by John in the book of Revelation. John gives

us glimpses of different groups seen in heaven at different times. They arrive in heaven at different times and have different descriptions and occupy different places in heaven.

**Revelation 4:4, 9 - 11** – We see the Four Living One and the 24 Elders in heaven before the tribulation begins, before the 7 seals are opened. I believe that these two groups represent two different aspects of the faithful saints of this Church Age. The Four Living Ones picture for us the priestly nature of faithful saints by their worship and service. The 24 Elders represent for us, by their thrones and crowns, the kingly nature of those who have learn to reign over sin in this life.

The 24 Elders cast their crowns at the feet of Jesus. How did they get crowns? They were given to them as rewards according to the promises given to the faithful of this Church Age. They are close to Him and rule jointly with Him as a reward for their faithful service in this life. The Four Living Ones are in the midst and around the throne of the Lamb and exercise great authority and power in reigning with Christ.

In **Revelation 7:9 – 17** we see another group arriving in heaven about midway through the 7 years of tribulation. John is asked if he knows who they are. I believe we can and should know who they are. They are said to have come out of great tribulation. The question we must ask ourselves is, does that statement refer to the time of their conversion or to the time of their translation to heaven? I believe it speaks of the time of their translation or resurrection.

This group is described as innumerable and made up of people from every nation, which makes them primarily gentiles, unlike the 144,000 who are distinctly made up of Jews and who are caught up to heaven about the same time. The book of Revelation is a book of numbers. Many of the numbers are symbolic and represent different groups that actually number more than the symbolic number. For example the Lamb has only one wife, but she represents a body of faithful believers. The Four Living Ones and 24 Elders represent a relatively small percentage of the body of Christ who are faithful to persevere in obedience to the will and word of God though they may actually be many when the total is added from every generation of believers in this Church Age. The number may be great, but the percentage is small like the numbers one, four and 24.

The Spirit numbers nearly everything and everyone seen in heaven, but when we come to the group translated to heaven in the middle of the tribulation, all of a sudden the number is too great to name. How did such a large group get to heaven at this time? Many believe that they are gentiles that are saved during the tribulation period and who are then translated to heaven. Many teach that there will be a great revival after the plagues and judgments of the 7 years of tribulation begin. The only problem with that explanation is that the book of Revelation does not support such a conclusion.

**Revelation 6:14 – 17** reveals that there is no repentance or trusting in the shed blood of the Lamb for protection from the wrath of God only a desire to



hide from and escape the wrath of God in this life by a premature shortening of their life. **Revelation 9:20, 21** and **Revelation 16:8 – 11** clearly state that men will not repent because of the judgments of the tribulation period. In fact, they will curse God. The evidence appears to be quite clear that there will not be a massive revival among the gentiles during the tribulation period.

The description of the great innumerable company is more consistent with understanding them to be the vast number of Christians from the entire Church Age that were truly born again, but who were distracted from the simplicity that is in Christ. This of course, was Paul's fear for the carnal Corinthians. **II Corinthians 11:2, 3** Because of their carnality and unfaithfulness they do not receive the reward of an open door of translation before the 7 years of tribulation begin. Their resurrection and rapture is delayed until the middle of the tribulation.

Notice that the great innumerable company are not said to be given white robes at this time, but are said to wash the robes they already have. They are not said to receive the robe of righteousness, but to wash them. At this time they are cleansed from the carnality that stained their testimonies while in this life. Also notice their song reflects the depth of their understanding. Salvation! The songs of the 4 Living Ones and the 24 Elders express a deeper revelation of the holiness and power of God who created us and redeemed us and made us kings and priest to rule and reign with Him. **Revelation 4:8 – 11 / 5:8 - 10**  
From John's scenes in heaven, together with Paul's

teaching on rewards, winning Christ and the “out” resurrection, we can conclude that the faithful believers of this Church Age will be resurrected and translated to heaven before the 7 years of tribulation begins and that carnal, unfaithful believers will not be raise or translated until latter, after the tribulation begins.

Paul gives us further doctrinal evidence of a split resurrection in *I Corinthians 15: 20 - 23*. The phrase, “each in his own order” is a military term meaning an “orderly arraignment, like a troop or company, a series of succession.” This is where we get the term ranks or companies. Paul teaches us that there will be ranks in the resurrection of the believers.

*I Corinthians 15:51 – 53* doesn’t say that we will all be changed at the same time, but that at the last trump, all believers of the Body of Christ will be changed. We hear that last trumpet of resurrection for those of this Church Age sounding when the Great Innumerable Company is caught up before the middle of the tribulation. If that is the last trumpet, the open door of translation promised to the Philadelphia saints before the tribulation begins must be the first. The hearing of that first trumpet is illustrated for us by John’s experience in *Revelation 4*.

**What determines our order or rank in the resurrection?** I believe our rank is synonymous with our glory in the resurrection. *I Corinthians 15:35 - 44*—Paul begins to point us to the glory of our resurrected bodies by first explaining to the scoffers of the resurrection that we will be raised to live in a new body. The resurrected body will be much

different than the one that was put into the grave. As different as the stalk is from the seed and yet from the seed you can know what sort of stalk will come forth. That body will be different than this one because it will be made fit for heaven, just as there is a difference between one flesh and another. Fish & birds are different because they were made for different environments.

But then Paul goes on to explain that there are differences between like bodies as well. The sun, moon and stars are all celestial bodies, made to exist in the same heavenly environment. Nevertheless, these like bodies, that occupy the same heavenly realm, are very different from one another in their degree of glory as seen from earth. So also, is the resurrection Paul declares. By this Paul indicates that not all glorified bodies will be raised to the same glory though all will be fit to live eternally in heaven. Some will enjoy greater glory than others. In other words some will enjoy a place of greater privilege. There will be a minimum glory that is vastly superior to any earthly glory, but there is also a sun glory that exceeds that of other heavenly, glorified bodies.

All believers will share in the glory of Christ, but in differing degrees. It is hard to define glory, but I believe that the glory of Christ is a general term describing all that Jesus is and possesses. Some believers understand and appropriate the glory of Christ in this life more than other believers. The difference in spiritual maturity between one believer and another is seen now and will be manifest in eternity as well.

**Romans 12:1 - 2** - Our rank over there is being determined now in this life as we allow ourselves to be transformed by knowing and yielding to the will of God. When your life is over and your body is planted in the ground, what kind of seed will it be? Was that body surrendered to the will of the Lord to be used as an instrument of righteousness or was it used to follow after the lust of the flesh and the love of the world?

We have the choice today as to what kind of seed we want to plant for eternity. Are we seeking the will of God and allowing Him to transform us to the image of His Son? The degree that we are transformed now will determine the degree of glory over there.

**II Corinthians 3:17 - 18** - We behold the glory of God now in the Word of God. As we obey His Word and apply it to our life, we are changed from glory to glory. We become more like Christ. That change is within the seed and the glory of that seed will be revealed on the day of resurrection. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but one day all will see the degree to which we have allowed God's grace to transform us and purify us in this life. **I John 3:1—3**

Why is it important to understand the truth of the “out” resurrection or split rapture? Many teach that all believers will receive the same glory in heaven no matter how they lived in this life.

**Ephesians 1:15 – 23** – Paul prayed that we would know the hope, certain expectation, of our hope in Christ. Understanding that the highest place

in glory is given as a reward for faithfulness will cause us to seek to know what is required to be found faithful and to diligently occupy ourselves in those things. **I Corinthians 9:24 - 27** A knowledge of the prize offered will stir within those who love Christ an appreciation for the prize and a longing for it. That longing leads to a lifestyle that is appropriate for one who is running to obtain the prize.

It is also important to know the extent of the provision of God's love and grace. A revelation of His love for us will stir a response of love in us. The more of God's purposes that are revealed to us the more we will desire to submit to them - (salvation, Holy Spirit, prayer, provision, sanctification, Joint heir, Co-regent...) - **Philippians 3:7 - 13** - Everything the Apostle Paul did and said was motivated by this revelation that he could and should win Christ and attain to the "out" resurrection. By faith he trusted in and applied God's grace to his life which enabled him to live godly and to always abound in the service of the Lord. He was committed to seeking the spiritual well-being of God's people that others would also bring glory to Christ. Because it was revealed to him that he could and should win the prize, he purposed to live his life in such a way as to win Christ. He purposed to yield himself fully to the work of God's grace in his heart, mind, body, spirit and soul. I trust that this revelation of the "out" resurrection will stir within your heart the same godly desire.

All God's children will bring Him glory.  
**Ephesians 2:7** All will reign with Him in one degree

or another. All will be happy in their eternal home and glorified bodies, but those who love Him enough to submit to the work of His grace in their life now will bring Him the greatest glory. The greater your revelation, the greater your commitment. The greater your commitment, the greater your inheritance and eternal glory. I want God's best in eternity because I know that's what He wants for me and that's what will bring Him the greatest honor.

***Philippians 3:7—14***

*But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection (Greek = out resurrection) from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. NKJV*



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