

when you speak of the rapture of the church what we mean when we speak of it because when they think of rapture they think of joy, of happiness, and all that sort of thing. The rapture we get from hearing rock music! That's what rapture means to the average person. In fact that's probably the only meaning it has to in the English language except in this particular theological connection. Actually it is simply the transliteration of a Latin word which means to be caught up. Our word rapture as commonly used means that people were caught up in enthusiasm and emotion. But the original meaning of the word is from the Latin which means to be caught up, caught away. 150 years ago Matthew Arnold wrote that great series of commentaries that have been repeated and repeated, quoted and republished probably more often than any other commentary ever since. In discussing 1 Thess. he refers to "this rapture of the church" where he's discussing this matter.

There have been many fine Christian churches where you could go for years and years and never hear a sermon about the rapture. I looked this morning into the Schaff Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge for the word rapture. There was nothing under that heading. I looked in a couple of Bible Encyclopedias and found nothing under the title of rapture. Now there are some ministers I'm told who talk about it all the time, but I think they are comparatively few. For every one who perhaps puts more emphasis on this than he should, there are 20 or 30 who never mention it at all. But it is not something that some people have concocted by taking a verse here and a verse there and putting them together.