

imminent adj.
About to occur. At any moment.
Momentary, *impending*.

impending v.
About to take place. Threaten to happen. Close in space, time, order; very near.

American Heritage Dictionary

Imminence means there are no signs, events or prophecies that take place before Christ returns for His church. The return of Jesus into time and history can occur at any moment. His coming will be a total surprise to the unprepared, but it will not be a surprise to those who are looking for Him, even though we “do not know the day or the hour.” Jesus says, “Behold, I am coming quickly ...” “Behold, I am coming quickly ...” “Yes, I am coming quickly ...” (Rev. 22:7,12,20). When He says “quickly” He can also mean “soon”, without delay. It has been almost two thousand years since He made this promise, but the promise still stands. He is coming, and when He comes, it will be in the “twinkling of an eye.”

The doctrine of **imminence** has two aspects. One, Christ’s imminent return offers us comfort during times of grief and loss. Two, the promise of our imminent bodily resurrection gives us a fixed hope for the future.

In 1 Thess. 4:13-18 Paul assured the Thessalonians that their loved ones who died will come back with Jesus when He does return. Also, Paul said that when Jesus comes back “we who are living will be ‘snatched away’ and forever be with the Lord.” When Paul uses “WE” he uses it emphatically to include himself. He expected Jesus to return before he died. Paul assured the Thessalonians that all of their dead believing relatives would be raised ahead of the living believers, but then “we will ALL be taken to meet the Lord.”

In 1 Cor. 15:51-58 Paul described the “mechanics” of our resurrection. He said our bodies will be changed to a new and glorious physical state. “The perishable must put on the imperishable.” Our resurrection gives us bodies fit for Heaven. And the change from mortal to immortal takes place in the “twinkling of an eye.”

Both of these passages describe the **imminent** and glorious event we call the RAPTURE, which is Jesus coming for His Bride, the Church. In 1 Thess. 4:13ff we see the reality of the return of Christ for all “in Christ,” whether dead or living. In 1 Cor. 15:51ff we see the reality of our bodily resurrection, the change to immortality, when He comes.