

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Rapture****Rapture, on: 2010/8/12 1:58**

Will the rapture occur in our live time ?

Re: Rapture - posted by enid, on: 2010/8/12 6:31

Matt 24v36, 'But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only'.

Re: Rapture - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/8/12 7:37

My pre-trib friends are admitting to seeing things happen in the US and abroad that they thought they'd never be here to see.

Who knows when He's returning but I think we're in for ride of our life!! Read your Bible like never before, love others like never before, and pray like never before and who knows!!

God bless you!

Lisa

Re: Rapture, on: 2010/8/12 10:47

The Rapture will not occur at all in our lifetime or any time in the future for it is a past event. Christians who are alive and remaining are being caught up to meet the Lord in the air every day. The dead in Christ have arisen, they are with the Lord.

The people that we read about in the New Testament were real living breathing normal souls like you and I today. They were not dressed in silk fluttering in the breeze. Their hair wasn't glittering white and none of them had angel wings. They were real people, flesh and blood. They made mistakes. Some have hit their fingers with the hammer and maybe something other than what we'd expect came out of their mouths. They were real people.

I am stressing that they were real people because we don't believe they were. We think that the New Testament writings were only meant for us because we think that these are the "Last Days".

When a letter says to the Church at Corinth, was it speaking to us here in New York City? No! Oh certainly there are truths that we can garner out of it, but initially there were believers at Corinth that asked Paul some questions and he sent them a letter to explain to them some issues that had arisen in their midst. Those letters were in answer to THEIR questions NOT ours. They were REAL people with real concerns, and God loved these real people.

We will say that these are real people with our mouths, but in our heart of hearts we do not believe it. Why? Because we believe that when the writer uses words "NEAR", "LAST DAYS", they are referring to us and they are not.

For example when Peter stood up on that great day of Pentecost and spoke about what the Prophet Joel said referring to what was happening on that day, he said, "This is that, which was spoken of by the prophet Joel, that in the last days I shall pour out my spirit upon all flesh".

Because the words, "last days" were spoken we believe that what Peter was referring to was an unknown end of the future. Why would Peter answer a question to the Jews that said, "These men are drunk with new wine" with something that was to happen in some remote future?

These were REAL men, inasmuch that God saved thousands of them in that one day.

Another example of the realness of people to whom Paul was speaking to is, Romans 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

He admonishes his readers to "know the time". Matthew 25 kicks into play here with the Ten Virgins. Midnight was coming and Paul was telling them that darkness was about to grip Jerusalem, her doom was coming. It was time to awake out of sleep for the revelation of Jesus Christ was about to be unveiled that He is KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS and His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will never end.

When Jesus went into heaven on that great day of His Ascension. The Holy Ghost was not yet imparted, many of the scriptures in reference to her demise were spoken of in Matthew 24 that Jesus spoke of hadn't yet arrived, only the merciful portions of the prophets were done it was in hopes that the Jews would receive their Messiah, but in rejection desolation's were determined on them and their city. Jesus was cut off in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel but the week continued after His death and resurrection and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and all that the scriptures have spoken of were fulfilled in that first century.

Matthew 16:28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

The some standing there were real people hearing with real ears what Jesus was telling them. Think about their minds for a moment. Wouldn't you think if you were standing there that day that the kingdom of God was going to come very shortly because one of us would be around to see it come?

The resurrection occurred at the end of the days to which this prophecy was referring to. It was a spiritual resurrection so no one saw it. It has to be believed just as much as Jesus must be believed though there is no historical document to suggest that Jesus ever existed outside the bible. And I think that is so, so that this whole enterprise must be by faith not by sight.

12 Reasons for the rapture, on: 2010/8/15 6:19

Twelve Reasons for the Rapture

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Abstract: The rapture is a very important promise in the chronology of end-time events. It must be properly understood if we wish to be ready and worthy to escape the coming tribulation period.

During the rapture, true Christians will disappear from the earth in the twinkling of an eye:

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:16-18).

By way of the rapture the Lord will snatch away His disciples for whom He has gone to prepare a place in heaven. The harvest of souls for the kingdom of God will then be gathered in heaven. There are various biblical reasons why there must be, and consequently will be, a rapture of believers at the end of the church dispensation:

1. It marks the end of the church age

The rapture formally ends the dispensation of the church on earth as the members of the true church will then be removed from earth and taken to heaven. Only the backsliders, the nominal believers, the members of deluded and dead “Christian” churches, as well as all the followers of false religions will remain behind on earth. The people who do not turn to Christ then to be saved, will join the deceived masses who will enter into a covenant with the false messiah to worship and follow him. The signs of the times indicate that we are at present very close to the end of the church dispensation. The Bible describes this time as a period of great falling away from the truth, and also of intensified demonic activities. Satan is lulling certain churches into a deep spiritual sleep, while occupying the attention of others with deceptive signs and wonders performed by false prophets.

At the same time, the coming antichristian dispensation’s all-inclusive ideology of universal or cosmic unity (holism or monism) is actively propagated. Structures are also created for the world government, world religion, and world economy of the Antichrist. It is not without reason that the Lord Jesus urges us to stand firm against the deception of the last day

s, and to watch and pray always that we may be found worthy to escape the coming tribulation period (Lk. 21:36).

It is important to consider the rapture in its dispensational context – i.e. at the end of the church age and just before the beginning of the tribulation period. Within this perspective we should resist the moral collapse and spiritual falling away that are typical of the last days of the church dispensation, while also opposing the reforms aimed at promoting the global governance and ecumenical alliance of world religions that will allow the Antichrist and false prophet the opportunity to gain control over the world and to institute the new world order. We are dispensationally in a terminal situation in which most people sadly grow cold in their love towards Christ while the unrighteousness is increasing due to an emerging international culture of sin. We should actively denounce this trend, as well as the globalising reforms aimed at instituting the next dispensation.

In times like these, preaching about the expected rapture is critically important. We are like long distance runners who hear the bell ringing to announce the last round of the race. This message motivates us not to relax but to persevere to the end. Peter says: “Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God?” (2 Pet. 3:11-12). We should not lose perspective and start compromising under the pressure of a rapidly changing world, but keep on fighting the good fight of faith while resisting all forms of evil.

2. It affords the Antichrist the opportunity to be revealed

The rapture is directly related to the revelation of the Antichrist:

“And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thess. 2:6-10).

The true church of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is withholding the Antichrist, who can clearly only be revealed after the church has been taken out of the way. The Holy Spirit in the church is stronger than the spirit of error that is operating in the evil world to deceive people. When the true church is suddenly taken away the light of the world will vanish and the hour of complete spiritual darkness will take effect. Under these circumstances, the man of sin will be able to reveal himself without any opposition. The rapture has to occur before he can be revealed!

To prepare people to be ready for the rapture calls for a spiritual disposition of absolute loyalty to the true Christ and also the unqualified rejection of the false cosmic Christ of all faiths.

3. It is a strong motivation for steadfastness in a time of backsliding

The coming of the heavenly Bridegroom will occur during a time of religious compromise and worldliness. There will be a great falling away from the truth of God’s Word. A relatively small group of evangelical Christians will shine like lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15). As in the times of Noah and Lot, the earth will be filled with violence, materialism and sexual perversion. Unfortunately, the spirit of unrighteousness and immorality will also take its toll among Christians. They will relax their vigilance and make downward adjustments in their spiritual standards: “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold” (Mt. 24:12). Many Christians will keep such a low profile that they ultimately lapse into complete passivity (spiritual sleep). Jesus warned His followers against this phenomenon and emphasised the expectation of His sudden coming as a strong motivation for steadfastness:

“Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming – in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning – lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!” (Mk. 13:35-37).

Inactive Christians are obviously not strongly dedicated to the Lord and they have a tendency to grow cold in their love towards Him. The process of growing cold manifests in two ways: firstly, they develop a love for the world and worldly parties where they eat and drink to excess; secondly, anxiety and depression take root in their minds and also pull them down spiritually. Against this kind of waywardness the Lord Jesus warned His disciples and again offered the rapture as a positive motivating force to remain steadfast to the end:

“But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and

d that Day come upon you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Lk. 21:34-36).

4. It is an escape from the disaster area of divine judgements

The rapture also constitutes a dramatic rescue operation in which the true believers are removed from the scene of divine judgements. Although the rapture is a unique occurrence, there are examples in the Bible of times when God poured out His wrath but provided an escape route to the true believers as they were not the objects of His wrath. In the time of Noah, God announced His judgements upon a wicked and perverted generation: "And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark..." (Gen. 6:13-14). Shortly before the commencement of the judgements the eight believers escaped the disaster area by entering the ark. God Himself closed the door behind them before He judged the sinners (Gen. 6:16-23).

In the time of Lot the believers were also rescued. The night before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah they were ordered to evacuate the city and flee to the mountains. The angels emphasised the fact that they could do nothing as long as Lot and his family were still among the wicked. Fire and brimstone rained down from the heavens shortly after their departure. The cities with all their inhabitants were destroyed (Gen. 19:13-25). The Bible says that there is a clear correlation between these historic events and God's end-time dealing with believers and unbelievers (Lk. 17:26-30; also read Gen. 6 and 19).

People who are cynical about the promise of the rapture and do not heed the admonition to be prepared to escape the coming tribulation period reveal a very reckless attitude. What do you think would have happened to the believers (and the entire human race) if Noah argued as follows: "God is a God of love and I don't really believe that He will send a flood to judge all people; therefore, I am not going to build an ark to escape this so-called judgement." Or what would have happened to Lot and his family if he took the following stand: "I think the prophesied judgement over Sodom and Gomorrah should be interpreted symbolically. I don't have to escape for my life. Even if the disaster does occur I believe that God will protect us from His wrath here in this place."

The coming judgements during the tribulation period are irrefutable biblical facts. Jesus said there will be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world (Mt. 24:21), and that we should be ready to escape it (Lk. 21:36).

5. It is a direct intervention by God

The supernatural nature of the rapture, in which millions of Christians will be caught up in the air, will be so clearly an intervention by God that no scientific explanation can ever account for this astounding phenomenon. There might be a few absurd explanations which, as in the case of the evolution theory, will only be accepted by those whose minds have been blinded by the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4). It is only an almighty God who can resurrect and change millions of Christians in a single moment and catch them away from planet earth. He will take away His own while the others will be left behind.

The hand of the Lord will also unmistakably be seen in the judgements that will be poured out over a degenerate humanity after the rapture. The dramatic effect of the rapture as well as the severity of the apocalyptic judgements that will follow in its wake will be a clear message to a multireligious and apostate humanity that their only hope is in returning to the Triune God and His inerrant Word. The rapture will also utterly refute the spiritualisation theology in which many of the plain biblical statements are spiritualised and thereby deprived of their literal meaning. In this way liberal theologians have disposed of many of the precious promises and dire warnings in the Bible by alleging that they are merely to be regarded as symbolic or allegorical expressions.

After the rapture, millions of people will continue to harden their hearts. As a result of this attitude they will receive a spirit of delusion which will induce them to believe the lies of the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:11-12). However, there will also be many people who will have a new appreciation for the Word of God. They will seek the Lord and call upon His Name, regardless of the consequences of Christian worship in a Christ-rejecting new world order.

6. It is associated with the first resurrection

The rapture is directly related to the first resurrection when all the believers will get glorified resurrection bodies. Millions of those who are going to be caught away are already dead; consequently they must first be raised from the dead in incorruptible, glorified bodies, like unto Christ's glorious body. At the same moment the mortal bodies of the living believers

will be miraculously changed into glorified bodies while they pass from mortality to immortality without dying. Paul explains this promise to a Christian congregation as follows:

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

To the Philippians he said:

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Phil. 3:20-21).

The first resurrection is also referred to as “the resurrection of the just” (Lk. 14:14), as well as “the resurrection of life” (Jn. 5:29). These people are indeed blessed to be partakers of the first resurrection:

“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6).

The godless will have no part in the first resurrection, the rapture, and the millennial reign of Christ. That is why John says: “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished” (Rev. 20:5). They will be raised during the second resurrection which is also called “the resurrection of condemnation” (Jn. 5:29).

7. It separates true and nominal Christians

Apart from the division that the rapture will effect between the saved and unsaved people in the world, it will also separate the true believers from the nominal Christians within the church. Those who only have a form of godliness will be left behind. This fate will befall them despite the fact that they may have regarded themselves as members of the church of Christ, like the foolish virgins also did. Only after the rapture will many of them discover the absence of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Although they can still put matters straight then, the Bridegroom will not open the door to them by way of a second rapture, much as they may desire it and urgently knock on heaven’s door. They will have to remain outside in the cold, face the dark days of the tribulation, and be prepared to die as martyrs for their faith.

How many millions of “Christians” indeed find themselves in this category of self-deceived and unsaved church members who trust in a dead form of godliness! They argue that since they are baptised and confirmed in the church, they have entered into an eternal and irrevocable covenant with God. In the light of this perception they feel quite comfortable even though they don’t have a clear testimony of being saved and born again through true repentance to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself said: “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3). It is only the regenerating work of the Lord that can save your soul!

Be sure that you are not weighed in God’s balance at the time of the rapture and found wanting. Then you will be left behind when the Lord Jesus takes away His bride (Mt. 25:10-13).

8. It is a meeting with Jesus Christ

When the Lord Jesus comes back to earth He will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. Those who died in Christ will be raised from the dead while the living saints will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Together they will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

The greatest expectation with regard to the rapture is not just to get away from earth, but to arrive in heaven with the Lord! The longing bride wishes to be united with her heavenly Bridegroom. People who don’t believe in the rapture must ask themselves how else, other than by the rapture, can they be caught up from earth and divinely moved to the glorious presence of the Lord Jesus in heaven. The Christians will be caught up (1 Thess. 4:17). After His earthly ministry, Jesus was bodily caught up to heaven (Rev. 12:5). Paul was caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). In all these cases the same verb, i.e. catch up (Gr. *harpazo*) is used, which means rapture. On this occasion the heavenly Bridegroom will not appear in public as He will at His appearing at the end of the tribulation, when “every eye shall see Him” (Rev. 1:7). He will come secretly, like a thief in the night, to snatch away his bride. From the viewpoint of the world she will suddenly disappear without a trace! She will then be in heavenly places, in the divine presence of the King of kings!

9. It is a summons to appear before the judgement seat of Christ

To be well prepared for the rapture with a view to the destination of the bride at the end of the journey involves preparati

ons for certain commitments. One of them is to appear before the judgement seat of Christ. The prospect of the rapture clearly confronts us with the responsibility to give account to Christ of our lives after conversion. Paul says:

“For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10).

“So then each of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:10).

The Lord Jesus said: “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work” (Rev. 22:12).

We must never think about the rapture in isolation as only a journey to heaven. It is a means to a wonderful end. We know why we will be removed from the impending disaster area of divine judgement on earth. But we also need to be thoroughly prepared for what is awaiting us at the end of the journey in heaven. The very first appointment that we have after meeting the Lord Jesus in the air is to appear before His judgement seat.

Since only Christians will be caught away during the rapture, only Christians will appear before the judgement seat where their works will be tested:

“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire” (1 Cor. 3:11-15).

We are not saved by works but by faith. However, faith without works is dead. In the lives of Christians, a true faith will produce works that befit repentance. For these works of dedication which are done by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, rewards of grace will be given at the judgement seat of Christ. On that day it will be evident that some Christians were much more productive in the work of the Lord, having used their talents to their full potential. Others will be found to have been less productive, and yet others will stand there empty-handed – saved as through fire. The following five crowns will be awarded to Christians in the service of the Lord:

- The imperishable crown for a holy, dedicated life (1 Cor. 9:24-25).
- The crown of rejoicing for people who lead others to Christ (1 Thess. 2:19).
- The crown of glory for faithful pastors (1 Pet. 5:2-4).
- The crown of life for Christian martyrs (Rev. 2:10).
- The crown of righteousness for those who love His coming (2 Tim. 4:8).

10. It is a journey to the marriage of the Lamb

After her appearance before the judgement seat of Christ the bride will be united to her heavenly Bridegroom, never to be separated from Him again. The burning desire for the rapture is, therefore, also the expression of a desire to be at the marriage feast of the Lamb in His ivory palace, and to be led to the King in a spotless garment woven with gold (Ps. 45), “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:2).

“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:25-27).

11. It is a journey to our eternal home

The Lord Jesus promised that He would return to take His bride away to her heavenly abode. Before He ascended to heaven He said:

“In My Father’s house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (Jn. 14:2-3).

This mansion in heaven is so beautiful that it cannot even be imagined by mortal man. The Bible says: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). John says that the mansions and streets of the new Jerusalem are built with pure gold, like transparent glass. Each of its gates is a large, magnificent pearl. The foundations of the wall of the city are adorned with all sorts of precious stones, and its light is like a crystal clear stone (Rev. 21:9-21).

This description conveys the idea of heaven being a quite superlative environment of dazzling beauty, magnificence, radiance and glory beyond anything we can imagine at present. To be raptured to such a place is indeed a most desirable thought and something to earnestly look forward to! "As the Scripture says, In Thy presence is fullness of joy; and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11).

12. It leads to the acceptance of our judicial and royal position

After the rapture, the glorified Christians will judge the world with Christ in righteousness (1 Cor. 6:2), after which they will reign with Him as kings on earth. In Revelation 4 and 5, the glorified church is represented by the 24 elders:

"And they sang a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).

EPILOGUE: Do you appreciate how tremendously important the rapture is to every Christian, how highly dramatic the events are that are associated with it, and how exceedingly worthwhile it is to be ready for it? Christianity and the church stand and to be spiritually deprived and impoverished if this promise, and all the obligations that it involves, is not earnestly proclaimed. Without the Bible's prophetic perspective on the end-time we will grope in darkness and never correctly determine our priorities.

While we are discerning the approaching footsteps of the Lord Jesus in the signs of the times we must be very sure that we really do belong to Him; otherwise He will pass us by when He comes for His bride. The unsaved, nominal Christians who have never had a personal encounter with the Lord will, one day, plead for mercy in vain before the great white throne of the final judgement. The Lord will declare to them: "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practise lawlessness!" (Mt. 7:23).

There is no need whatsoever to be heading for a tragic end of disillusionment and rejection. If we have genuinely experienced 'repentance toward God' for our sins and 'faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ' (Acts 20:21), and our hearts have been changed and are burning within us with love for the Lord, we will be worthy to meet the heavenly Bridegroom when He comes in the midnight hour. He said to His disciples: "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master... Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants... Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Lk. 12:35-40).

Re: Rapture - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2010/8/15 16:15

Here at this site most of us are convinced of the eminent return of our LORD and Savior in HIS glory and power to reign in righteousness and establish peace. If you are alive and prepared and ready when the Bridegroom comes, blessed are you!! Watch and pray and prepare your hearts for JESUS is coming again soon!!

Re: , on: 2010/8/15 23:17

edited for errors brought to light by posts from Ccchhrrriiss and comments by King Jimmy after this initial post.

When the word rapture is heard, these persons, in the use of that word, show that they are in agreement or have been influenced from a dispensational viewpoint in some way, shape, or form.

Through a man named Darby, advocated and made popular here in the states by a man named Scofield, the concept of a "rapture" was made popular. The whole concept of an ushering away of the church before tribulation was re-introduced by Darby, after about 500 years of dying out when first introduced. Darby used the theological invention to fill in losses unexplained and scripturally inadequate in his dispensationalistic ideology. (It cannot be called doctrine).

Prior to the mid 1800's this idea of a pre-tribulation resurrection, they named 'rapture', was advocated by fewer and fewer proponents, until it lay virtually silent. The concept was taught after apostate Romanism took control of Roman subjects' beliefs and religion by force. In approximately 1500 years of Church history, this idea never had staying power.

Were the apostles mistaken in not teaching this? Why did Jesus not plainly state such? Were they hiding something in the words they used to clarify things???

Why was it that only after persecution and almost total elimination of the primitive church, being driven underground, that this concept was formulated?

Consider this fact: If there were a pre-trib rapture, there would be three judgements, and not two as the Bible reveals.

What once originated from apostate Rome is now a popular concept. So it's asked, how many times on record has it been the majority that has been correct in understanding and practicing God's truth?

If there were a pre-trib rapture, God would be operating differently than He has ever done before, and God does not change. God's people have both suffered in remaining faithful and overcome in the midst of whatever opposition, whether by death or God exploiting His glorious dominion over current affairs.

'Rapturists' go so far as to say that they are saying resurrection when they say rapture, but the two words do not even mean the same thing. Though you might experience rapture in resurrection, to date, it is not known that anyone experiences ascension or resurrection in a state of rapture.

They also say that I Thess. 4.16-18 is talking about this event, rapture; yet, when Jesus' revelation to John clarifies this event mentioned in first Thessalonians it is hardly talking about something that happens before the tribulation:

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets... ..And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth﻿﻿.

Rev. 10.5-7, 11.14-18

Consider these words of Jesus (High Priestly prayer) before His willing sacrifice of Himself towards the reconciliation of all things unto Himself. In praying for those who are his disciples, he petitions, and later relates those who believe through their influence in the earth into all the things He prayed for them:

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

Jn. 17.14-21

The whole concept of a pre-trib rapture flies in the face of God's dealing with the world through His people, and would invalidate Jesus prayer. Was Jesus praying wrong?

There are many other reasons that could be given to show that the idea is not scripturally sound, the most obvious of which is the need to add or take meaning from scriptures that speak of the first resurrection in order to make the idea more palatable.

If the Olivet discourse found in Mt. 24, Mk. 13, and Lk. 21 are looked at in conjunction with one another, all of which compliment each other, Jesus provides a most comprehensive explanation about the details of events.

Mk. 13, gives the clearest scenario of the order of events, and if Mt. 24 is studied towards clarity, it confirms Mk. 13 to a T. Luke's account helps tie up loose ends (that SEEM TO be implied in the other two accounts.

Some say that these have already been fulfilled, and indeed they have, in a sense. The same could be said of Revelation and other futuristic writings in both the Old and New Testament; however, many fail to account that prophecy is spiritual reaching into the physical and just because that which is temporary (the physical) confirms the eternal reality does not prove that it will not repeat itself in a greater way in the future. The physical merely confirms the validity of the prophecy. It is never the standard of measurement to what prophecy entails. If we base physical events (that are always changing) as the source of conclusion towards the validity of prophecy from God we will be the ones, more often than not mistaken or more confused than when we first recognize them.

Growing up I heard all kinds of speculative rumors, that Kissinger was the antichrist, then Regan, and so many others. The UPC code was the mark of the beast...and on and on. 'Experts' said that certain nations would do certain things and then these nations fell out of power.

All this idiocy continues even today.

This has nothing to do with what Jesus said to be doing in the face of events that indicate His soon return. We are not to be getting all politically involved, jumping to conclusions about changing world affairs, getting all uptight about natural disasters, wars, etc.

He simply states these things have to happen. Regarding them, we are to note them, then turn our attention elsewhere:

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh... And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Lk. 21.28, 34-36

We are not to be trying to figure these things out, and those who have done such in the past, take their eyes off of Jesus to do it coming up with all kinds of faulty conclusions in the process.

Jesus said, "no man knows the day or hour," but, many have trouble taking Him at His word and instead run off on all kinds of ridiculous tangents. This is no less rebellious than shaking your fist in the face of God.

The purpose of prophecy is to lift up praise to God as in bow down and worship. It is for the express purpose of drawing us nearer to Jesus Christ and not things that happen in this world. In the communion with Jesus Christ that comes through worship of Him, His Spirit will guide you into all truth.

Have all these speculative books and theologies whether pre-trib or after ever taught one how to walk in deeper relationship with the one who made us?

It is not for us to know the times and the seasons.

Why can't people just accept this?

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Rev. 19.5-10

Quit looking towards the signs and the events and focus on the author (and finisher of our faith), Heb. 12.1-2.

The mandate to every follower of Jesus is to occupy until He comes. In this, God is glorified; not in escapism that is contrived through picking and choosing certain verses to believe and avoiding those relative to the events of the end time resurrection.

Shalom,
g

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2010/8/16 2:44

Hi Phanetheus...

--> You wrote: "Through a man named Darby, advocated and made popular here in the states by a man named Scofield, the concept of a "rapture" was made popular. The whole concept of an ushering away of the church before tribulation was invented by Darby to fill in loose ends unexplained and scripturally inadequate in his dispensationalistic theology. (It cannot be called doctrine).

Prior to the mid 1800's this idea of a pre-tribulation resurrection, they named 'rapture', never existed. The concept was never before taught, believed, nor advocated. In well over 1700 years of Church history, this newly invented idea was unheard of."

Re: , on: 2010/8/16 8:48

Hi chris,

i came back to life through a fatal accident in 1985. Injuries remained to be healed, not the least of which was retrograde amnesia. Some time shortly after making SI this ones cyber-home, i started some threads regarding end times and things to occur relative to the second coming. The text in one post stated that i had not heard the concept rapture before just recently, and to the best of memory, at that point, it did not exist. (Through those threads, one of which was called "a can of worms", memories started flooding back into consciousness, and more questions were created in this mind than answers, especially when my aunt gave me all the materials written and recorded by Tim LaHey(sp?). La Hey's materials were not all gone through as further questions and contradictions regarding his materials and my own Biblical learnings (still quite incomplete) grew to a point where nearly every idea was surrounded with contradictions and questions.

It was determined at that point to take Jesus direct revelations regarding this from the Olivet discourse and the book of Revelation in relation to each other, and to study into the OT prophets regarding the well over 300 references to end time events from Jesus Revelation to John.

Honestly, historic personal research went back only to how this concept was repopularised (repopularization now known through what you have written). Ephrem though name known of in studying church apostasy, has been ignored regarding this, considering church apostasy's advent beginning in 315 A.D. through Constantine, the true primitive first church being eventually driven underground, not taking part in Romanism. (Personal concern was with how this concept grew into popularity currently, the initiators propagating it at root level of this recent turn in ideology, and the theology that made it popular.)

Apparently, my information is both incomplete and inaccurate.

The only thing that can be stated with surety is how it was popularized and that it is extra-biblical (if not false).

The best indication SEEMS, through intense Bible study (ignoring extra-biblical resources) that the resurrection will occur sometime during tribulation between mid-point and end.

There is this and that Jesus said not to concern yourself about matters of times and seasons. Rather, "watch and pray." Today that is what is being done here.

Though the former post has historic inaccuracies, (thanks for clarification Chris,) nobody should ignore Jesus declarations regarding these matters. When we do, we are operating independently from Him and trusting our own understanding.

The way these things are seen now is that anybody who is not in the business of drawing into closer relationship with God in Jesus Christ is off-base. As Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy, the clearest picture any can have about it is to draw nearer to Him, and in this relationship, He will tell us what needs to be known when necessary:

Looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith and praying towards OUR redemption.

Thank you for clarification.

Seriously think and function in terms of this rebuke and admonishment. You can ignore what i wrote, but to your own hurt, please do not ignore what Jesus says.

Love, Hope, and Faith,
gregg

...I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.
Acts 20:31-32

Re: ccchhrrriiisss - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/8/16 10:37

Ccchhrrriiisss wrote

This is inaccurate...

When we enter a forum and announce something as a fact that is certainly open for discussion and further study, it can unwittingly cause all kinds of conflict.

I must ask where you said this to snufalapagus who announced the preterist view as a fact in his FIRST SENTENCE: "The Rapture will not occur at all in our lifetime or any time in the future for it is a past event." (sorry snuffies!!)

If you're going to say something to one, you might as well jump on the bandwagon and say something to them all for espousing their view as fact. Just sayin...

But I am up for a discussion for another rapture debate because the pre-trib view of the rapture of the church (to me) smacks of an anti-Semitism view as well as I don't understand how pre-trib people keep all the comings of Jesus straight but that's just me. (huge grin) I've got some others too!

God bless you, Chris
Lisa

Re: , on: 2010/8/16 13:08

Rapture or no rapture... there is no doubt that end time prophecies are being fulfilled at an escalating pace.

Perhaps in our lifetime, unless you die this afternoon.

Krispy

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2010/8/16 13:50

Hi Lysa...

---> You wrote: "I must ask where you said this to snufalapagus who announced the preterist view as a fact in his FIRST SENTENCE: "The Rapture will not occur at all in our lifetime or any time in the future for it is a past event." (sorry snuffies!!)

If you're going to say something to one, you might as well jump on the bandwagon and say something to them all for espousing their view as fact. Just sayin..." "But I am up for a discussion for another rapture debate because the pre-trib view of the rapture of the church (to me) smacks of an anti-Semitism view as well as I don't understand how pre-trib people keep all the comings of Jesus straight but that's just me. (huge grin) I've got some others too!"

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/16 14:04

Charles Ryrie, the leading voice of dispensational theology today, from Dallas Theological Seminary teaches that there is no explicit reference to the idea of a pre-tribulational rapture taught anywhere in Scripture. A lot of the commonly used proof-texts, he teaches, cannot be exegeted to reveal the idea of a pre-tribulation rapture. Yet in spite of this, Ryrie teaches that the pre-tribulational rapture is true. Why? Because he believes in the idea that there are two peoples of God that the Lord is dealing with in redemptive history. One being Israel, the other being the Church. Because of this, the dispensational theology absolutely demands a pre-tribulational rapture. With the result that texts that actually just teach the second coming of Christ are used to teach a pre-tribulational rapture. Apart from this two people of God theory, Ryrie concedes that there is no explicit passage in the Bible that teaches a pre-tribulational rapture. Rather, it's simply "inferred" because of the two people of God theory that dispensationalism teaches.

So for those of you who believe in a pre-tribulational rapture, the crux of the matter is: Do you believe in two peoples of God? Or do you believe in one?

If you believe in two, then you will agree with Ryrie. But if you only believe there are one people of God, then there is simply no theological reason or Scriptural reason as to why you should believe in a pre-tribulational rapture. It's simply not there.

I for one, believe in only one people of God.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2010/8/16 14:16

Hi KingJimmy...

I suppose that I was "blessed" enough to have come to Christ without any sort of opinion on the matter and with various teachers who taught various different positions on the matter. As a result, I never placed much final authority in the words of most Bible teachers regarding such matters as being anything other than men with opinions.

I disagree with Ryrie's "either/or" argument here as you presented. It is possible to lean toward a gathering of the Bride of Christ before the period of God's wrath based upon things other than what Ryrie has discussed (like his discussion about whether there is one or two "peoples" of God). I lean toward such a gathering simply because I "see" it in Scripture.. and not by dissecting or deliberating upon any further sort of doctrinal positions.

I think that I have known people on each side of the dichotomy that you mentioned whose views did not necessarily line up accordingly.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/16 15:12

No doubt, his dichotomy can be a false one. But, I think as a general rule of thumb he is right in his assessment. From a historical look at theology, he is definitely correct. Historically, pre-tribulational theology traces its origins to the two peoples of God theory in the dispensational framework. Of course, people are often theological hybrids, and can have a mish-mash of theologies.

I like to personally refer to the pre-tribulational rapture idea as theological leftovers. Many people today believe it apart from the dispensational system. But they do so without any definite theological reason as to why and understanding it in God's overall purposes and plans. It's usually trumped as an avoidance of future suffering card at best.

Re: Rapture - posted by narrowpath, on: 2010/8/16 17:17

Maybe we should ask ourselves how we can win souls to join us in our pre or post trib rapture - hastening His return.

Re: ccchhrrriiiss - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/8/16 17:59

You must have the threads as "threaded," I keep mine "flat" or I don't know who posted what when! And snuffie, I was not picking on you but trying to make a point with Chris.

Ccchhrrriiiss wrote:

This is the point behind what I am saying. Should we really debate (again and again and...)

I really didn't want to debate with you so let me give you some food for thought.

Phanetheus was not being argumentative.

Phanetheus had some very good points that no one has attempted to discuss.

ccchhrrriiiss, I respect you as a brother in Christ even though you lean heavily towards the pretribulational rapture of the church theory; but none of us are "THE" guardians for the end-time theory that we espouse to.

I feel that we who disagree with the pre-tribulational rapture theory are.... (I think borderline harassed would be a good word), because we are not allowed to voice our opinion on sermonindex freely without someone telling us we are inaccurate.

Cccchhrrriiisss wrote:

It is not for us to know the times and the seasons.

Why can't people just accept this?

Why can't people who believe the pre-trib theory accept this as well....AS THOROUGHLY as you want us to accept this?

I've said my piece; I didn't want to offend you and am sorry if I stepped beyond my boundaries.

God bless you,
Lisa

Re: , on: 2010/8/16 18:15

Cccchhrrriiisss wrote:

It is not for us to know the times and the seasons.

Why can't people just accept this?

Why can't people who believe the pre-trib theory accept this as well....AS THOROUGHLY as you want us to accept this?

I've said my piece; I didn't want to offend you and am sorry if I stepped beyond my boundaries.

God bless you,
Lisa

Ahhh, Lysa???

that was this sheeple, me, that wrote that, though the point you made is well taken... even here.

Shalom,
g

Re: , on: 2010/8/16 18:22

Regarding end-time events,
I'VE GOT IT ALL FIGURED OUT.

i've figured out that whatever anybody says, myself included, is speculation.

The first post from me was towards the purpose of showing that all things are not as we think if we are to look at all the relative scriptures within context of one another... even though the complete history wasn't studied and so i made a few wrong statements about that issue.

God Bless,

g

edited: incomplete sentence.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2010/8/16 19:21

Hi Lysa...

You wrote: ---> "You must have the threads as "threaded," I keep mine "flat" or I don't know who posted what when! And snuffie, I was not picking on you but trying to make a point with Chris."

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2010/8/16 20:02

Hi KingJimmy...

While I wouldn't consider the notion of a pre-wrath gathering of the Bride of Christ as "theological leftovers," I do agree that there are many people -- on every side of doctrinal disagreements -- who often just don't know WHY they believe what they believe.

During college, I was involved with several different campus ministries. I was sometimes asked to speak at the meetings, and I always tried to make the most of such opportunities. During one such meeting, I handed out some worksheets with some topics listed. Some of these topics included abortion, homosexuality, the coming of the Lord, salvation, water baptism, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and many other such matters -- including some that are somewhat "controversial."

Following these topics, there were two boxes. I asked the students to write down as much as they could regarding WHAT they believed about those issues (like whether speaking in tongues the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, can people lose their salvation, etc...). The second box was to include all of the Scriptures that they could about those issues. I even let the students interact, search their Bibles and discuss as they worked. Ultimately, we learned that most of the students could write down what they believed, but few of them could list any Scriptures to substantiate those beliefs.

My point was not to be controversial. Nor did I want to discuss and debate the issues themselves. Rather, I hoped to provoke a pause within the students. I explained that we often know WHAT we believe, but too often (I think), we base these beliefs on what we are taught by others and what we read from books RATHER THAN on what we know the Scriptures say about such things. Now, this lack of knowledge regarding Scriptures on such topics was true of new believers AND of longtime believers who had been raised in Christian homes.

I explained that it is helpful to not only know WHAT we believe on such issues...but WHY. Of course, the WHY needs to be substantiated by Scriptural "witnesses." I tell individuals that we need to test our views by what the Scriptures tell us...and not the other way around. I also mentioned that it is helpful to use more than a single passage to substantiate such beliefs, because cults are often formed by one passage of Scripture taken to establish an entire doctrine (such as "baptism of the dead" from a single Corinthian passage).

When it comes to issues that are oft debated, I hope that believers will KNOW what they believe and why they believe it. I don't think that it is enough to read various books on the issues (or visit websites). We should base what we believe on Scripture. If we are going to use extra-Scriptural anecdotes (such as "the idea of a 'rapture' was created in the 1800s"), we need to only make such declarations AFTER we have sought out the truth of such claims.

Of course, I am more than confident that you already know this, brother Jimmy. Most of us take the "study to show myself approved" to heart. Unfortunately, there are many who limit their "study" to what pastors and books (second and third hand witnesses) convey that the Scripture means on certain subjects. By the little lesson that I taught to my Christian student fellowship, I hoped that those believers would reconsider surface level "research" and be more contemplative before proclaiming as facts what it is that they believe.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/16 23:02

Quote:

I do agree that there are many people -- on every side of doctrinal disagreements -- who often just don't know WHY they believe what they believe.

Agreed.

Quote:

During one such meeting, I handed out some worksheets with some topics listed

Very interesting idea. I love it. I'll have to borrow that one day :-)

Quote:

If we are going to use extra-Scriptural anecdotes (such as "the idea of a 'rapture' was created in the 1800s"), we need to only make such declarations AFTER we have sought out the truth of such claims.

I agree. I think the use of Church history ought to only be used as a sort of "check and balance" in which to consider one's careful exegesis of the Scriptures. It is possible that the Church could have been almost completely in the dark concerning a teaching of Scripture. But when we study Church history, and compare our study notes of the Scriptures with what we find in it, should our doctrine be without witness, I think it should at least raise a yellow flag that tells us to proceed with caution, and to check ourselves again.

And with that said, I think we should also be sensitive to the history of how doctrine has developed to the extent that we can. Theology is never born in a vacuum. That is why I somewhat insist that the idea of a pre-tribulation rapture has sorta become "theological leftovers," because while many people believe it and teach it, it's often become disconnected from its historical origin: dispensationalism.

While people are capable of making the same conclusions without having the same foundations, I think whenever one is aware of such findings and known influences, one should at least try to be aware of these things, so when studying the Scriptures, they take extra care to not import that view and impose it on what they read. The same goes for any doctrine, not just the pre-tribulation rapture. No doubt, when one starts using formal theological terminology to describe what they are reading in Scripture, (i.e. rapture, trinity, original sin, free will, etc.) such a person should be extra careful, and realize they are standing in some sort of tradition that is ultimately extra-Biblical.

Though those words may accurately reflection the teaching of Scripture, one clearly has engaged the Scripture apart from "just reading the Bible." Clearly, anybody who has ever used the word "rapture" in their teaching has had some sort of outside influence. They might be right in their theory, but clearly, have borrowed from some sort of theological system.. even if just in part.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/17 0:01

snufalpagus, are you a full or partial preterist? From what I understand, full preterists do not believe Christ is going to physically return at the end of this age, while partial preterists do. And from what I've heard, full preterism is heresy because it rejects the physical second coming of Christ.

So so far I've seen Preterism and Premillennialism brought up on this thread if I'm not mistaken. Has anyone considered Amillennialism or Postmillennialism? After doing some biblical research on the various views, I've come to be Amillennial as it seems to line up best with the Scriptures to me. Basically this view says that there is no literal thousand year reign of Christ on this earth since Rev.20 is to be understood symbolically as most of the whole book. It says that we have been in the millennium since the church age began, and that when Christ comes back He will raise the dead, separate the sheep from the goats, judge the nations and bring in the eternal state. On a side note, from what I understand this has been the most prevalent view throughout church history.

If anyone is interested in studying this view in depth, here is a link to some thorough teaching on it:

http://www.monergism.com/directory/link_category/MP3-Audio--Multimedia/Doctrine-and-Theology/Eschatology/Riddleberger-on-Amillennialism-101/

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 7:16

While I understand the appeal of the amill. position, having been a fan of the view myself once upon a time, I believe it ultimately glosses over the details of Revelation 20. It simply cannot explain how Satan is bound presently, and being kept from deceiving the nations, when in fact he is still actively deceiving the nations and blinding the eyes of many. Far from being bound, we are told in Scripture he roams about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. The principalities and powers of this world are still active as well. Far from being bound in this world, Satan is considered "the god" of this world. Additionally, such an interpretation also doesn't explain the rise of the Antichrist as yet future when the text regards it as a past event by the time Satan is bound.

Also, the amill. and post-mill. points of view ultimately create the same problem dispensationalism does: two peoples of God. The key difference being the new people of God have replaced the old. But such creates two peoples just the same, in the form of replacement theology. And I personally can't accept any doctrine that creates two peoples of God. There always has and always will be one people of God.

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/8/17 8:26

Wasn't Augustine the progenitor of the "amillennial" eschatology?

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 9:00

Yes, Augustine was ultimately the one who propagated the doctrine, which is why so many in the Reformed circles hold to his position, because of their reliance on Augustine for many things. Though, if memory serves correct, many of the "Latin fathers" were already starting to hold to such a view themselves. If I'm not mistaken, Augustine viewed Christianity's triumph over Rome as the essential proof of his argument. His argument though, was mostly reactionary towards "the chilasts" (pre-millennial) theologians of the day, whom he believed created a faith that made Christians live around constantly awaiting the end of the world, and contributing no practical good towards society. Indeed, some sects seemed to only ruin the lives of devoted Christians he said. Of course, Augustine wasn't always fair in his caricatures.

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/8/17 9:13

I have read in places that prior to Augustine the pre-dominant eschatology was pre-millennial. Is this true and if so where can I find a concise document about it?

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 9:40

Yes, it is my understanding a pre-millennial view was the dominant view of Christians for the first couple centuries until about the time of Augustine. You can read it in the works of the church fathers themselves, or even a standard survey of early church history will reveal such. Justo Gonzalez has an excellent survey on the topic in his books on church history. I'm sure a simple Google search will reveal as much.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 10:33

Pre-millennial theology started to become unattractive with the Montanist movement, who made great use of apocalyptic fervor and charismatic gifts. With the abuse of the Montanist in their theology and practice, the church became increasingly cessationist and more amillennialist, in order to combat the extremes demonstrated in the movement. Thus, Augustine's doctrine was much welcomed as a way of combatting the errors of that group, and filling a much needed void.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 10:47

It should also be noted that from a historical perspective, the exercise of charismatic gifts and the doctrine of pre-millennial theology go hand in hand. Where other eschatologies prevail, there are strong cessationist winds. We should not be surprised that the rise of pre-millennialism also accompanied the birth of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/8/17 10:49

Erego the true and real danger of heresy and rampant false doctrine...

It is not the heresy itself we should fear, it is our reaction to it. If studying church history has taught me anything, it is almost precisely this one principle.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 11:23

Indeed. The same can be seen chiefly with the rise of the monarchical bishops and apostolic succession as a way of combatting heresy. As heretics began to increase, the church became increasingly hierarchical and centralized. The argument became: our bishops, who have served in unbroken continuation from the apostles, have believed these truths, therefore, since you cannot show a list of unbroken bishops linking back to the apostles, your doctrine must be false. And where there is such a line that supports a heretical view, if it cannot be demonstrated that Peter's chair has believed such, then it is contrary to apostolic teaching.

Re: , on: 2010/8/17 11:25

by Areadymind on 2010/8/17 4:26:30

Wasn't Augustine the progenitor of the "amillennial" eschatology?

That and unconditional (not completely) eternal security, yet his theology regarding these two things breaks with God's purpose in putting man on earth.

Oracio,

When Jesus prayed in example to those hearing him, "Thy kingdom come... on earth..." was that an error?

satan had first been given dominion over the earth.

In recreating what had become chaos through the devil's reign and being cast down, God made it clear that He would ultimately rule the earth.

God creating man, who is a little lower than the angels, then giving him dominion over all the earth was a slap in the face to the devil.

Jesus' incarnation set the stage so that the new covenant could go into effect (Luke 22.16) when he returns so that God

will rule the earth, with satan and those who walk in his ways out of the picture, ultimately the former things completely non-existent, as the scripture states, "the former things will be remembered no more" after the re-renaissance of both the heavens and the earth.

Both (false) doctrines ignore a lot of prophecy.

...and as brother Jimmy says, "there is only one people of God (see Eph.2). It is we who adhere in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, remaining in Him that are His children, and are a kingdom of kings and priests of God, to rule and reign with Him.

God's kingdom on earth is a matter of His way or the highway (to hell).

One decision, out of over 5000+ made daily (by every human on earth) is no indicator of salvation. Remaining in Jesus is:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Jn. 15.1-6

Shalom,
g

edited: clarity

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/8/17 11:42

If you want to read a rather shocking, and probably somewhat biased understanding of the fruit of Amillennial eschatology read the book, "The Forge of Christendom" by Tom Holland. It is a secular view of the history of these things, but in all honesty I think it has value because it is a gauntlet a non-believer has thrown down, and it is of value to agree with our adversary and take our gift to the altar. While Tom Holland will be probably biased in what he may or may not want you to conclude from his book...you will see what the fruit of this eschatology was.

We shall know them by their fruits...

However, I want to apologize to the original poster if I have yet again created a rabbit trail to the original intent of this thread.

We must face it...there are just some words in the Christians thesaurus that cause all sorts of synonymimic responses...

:)

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 12:30

No doubt, amillennialism naturally leads to a dominion theology that creates a theocratic state prior to the return of Christ. Thus, Christianity can become the official state religion, as it did in Rome, Great Britain, Spain, Germany, etc., and rules everything in the absence of Christ via popes, cardinals, and archbishops. Thus, you had the crusades, and when the reformation took place, land grabs and power struggles. All happened under an amillennial theology, a theology which by the way, pretty much declared the Great Commission over. Thus, even in light of the reformation, Luther and Calvin had no missionary desires, and that is why they used brute force to help spread their ideas.

Instead of sending out missionaries and evangelists out, all the state had to do was baptize other nations at sword point. Amillennial theology made it possible for the Church and State to become one, and sees the return of Christ as nothing much more than a return to rule the nations that the theocratic state had subdued.

This is in stark contrast to pre-millennial theology, which believes that instead of the Church taking over the nations and making the world friendly enough for Jesus to come back and rule over, that great hostility will continue to mount against the gospel and against the church as it makes its way into the uttermost parts of the earth. Instead of Christ coming back to rule a subdued world, pre-millennial theology says Christ is coming back full of anger and wrath, to overthrow the kingdoms of this world which has mounted a universal rebellion over His rule and reign, as they take a stand against the Lord and His anointed.

Anyway... just some observations :-)

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 12:55

Now, to get back on topic a bit, though now I only have time to comment in brief: Part of the reason that I have a problem with pre-tribulational pre-millennialism, is that the fruit of this doctrine, when logically followed, ultimately strangles the church in understanding its purposes, and in doing that, keeps it from functioning as it should.

For while this system does well in usually realizing that the entire world must hear the gospel before Christ can return, those who adhere to it fail to realize that not only must the gospel be fully preached, but according to Ephesians 4:11ff, the Church must come to full blown corporate maturity. Instead of preaching the Church must come to full blown maturity, it is taught that the Church will do just the opposite: become lukewarm, stagnant, and largely apostate. Thus, pre-tribulational pre-millennialism, especially of the dispensationalist school, can often lead to anything but strong and vibrant churches. And why should it create such? The Church is pretty much going the way of the world until Jesus raptures us out of here before the great tribulation. So, lacking any impetus to press onto corporate maturity, a self-fulfilling prophecy often happens: spiritual immaturity rules the day.

And this is where I believe things get interesting. Why must the Church press onto spiritual maturity? Because it is only a spiritually mature Church that will displace the principalities and powers during the tribulation period (See Revelation 12), and only such a Church can provoke unbelieving Israel unto jealousy at the end of the age (See Romans 11). And why must these things happen? Because without these things happening, there will be no return of Christ, and likewise, no resurrection from the dead. For as the Lord said to the Jews, "You shall not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.'" All of history, creation, and our Lord ultimately wait to hear that cry, and the Lord shall not return until such a cry is made.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 14:09

p.s. For those of you who might be interested, I am in the progress of putting together a long over-due essay on the topic of the second coming of Christ and the last days. I hope to publish it this weekend on my website. It will probably be too long to post here on SI, unless I break it up into multiple posts.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/17 15:02

KingJimmy wrote:

Quote:
-----No doubt, amillennialism naturally leads to a dominion theology that creates a theocratic state prior to the return of Christ. Thus, Christianity can become the official state religion, as it did in Rome, Great Britain, Spain, Germany, etc., and rules everything in the absence of Christ via popes, cardinals, and archbishops. Thus, you had the crusades, and when the reformation took place, land grabs and power struggles. All happened under an amillennial theology, a theology which by the way, pretty much declared the Great Commission over. Thus, even in light of the reformation, Luther and Calvin had no missionary desires, and that is why they used brute force to help spread their ideas.

Jimmy, it appears you have confused Postmillennialism with Amillennialism. Postmillennialism teaches that there has to be a world wide revival and Christianization before Christ comes back. Amillennialism says there is no such guarantee from Scripture, and it is unlikely. The Church is the suffering church militant, and yet triumphant through the word of their testimony and the blood of the Lamb.

As to the issue of the binding of Satan in Rev.20, Amillennialism points out the words of Jesus in Matt.12:29 where He speaks of the strong man(satan) being bound through His first coming and setting up the present spiritual kingdom of God(the church age)(see also Luke 10:18-19; Matt.18:18; Rev.12:7-12). Satan is bound in the sense that he can no longer deceive all the nations as he did before Christ's first coming. In the old covenant salvation was restricted to the Jewish nation. Now salvation has gone out to the ends of the earth. Everytime the gospel is proclaimed and sinner's are snatched from the kingdom of darkness and brought into the kingdom of God, satan is bound.

As to the issue of two peoples of God, reformed amillennialism does not teach that at all. It teaches what it calls "Expansion Theology", meaning that salvation was expanded to include the Gentiles after Christ death and resurrection. The Church was grafted into Christ and became part of the true Israel of God(this is clear throughout Scripture). God has always had only one people of God, those who are of faith, the spiritual seed of Abraham.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/17 15:17

hi,after years of study i have come up with the most wierd escatology...what you would call heresy.i dont tell many what i believe and will not here but the Lord spoke to me one day and told me to take no thought of tomorrow and just live for Him today...wise virgin.jimp

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/17 16:14

jimp, it looks like you believe in panillennialism: it will all pan out in the end :)

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 18:38

Quote:

Jimmy, it appears you have confused Postmillennialism with Amillennialism.

Thank you for pointing out the things you did. I admit, I'm a little bit rusty on my post/amill theology, and sometimes blur them together a little bit. I just ordered a book on the topic, so I hope to refresh my mind about them soon. As it stands, I don't see them being that far apart theologically speaking. There is a bit of an overlap in my opinion.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 19:32

An interesting resource comparing/contrasting the 4 major eschatological views:

http://www.fivesolas.com/esc_chrt.htm

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/17 19:52

Quote:

As it stands, I don't see them being that far apart theologically speaking. There is a bit of an overlap in my opinion.

Yes, they are similar, especially regarding Israel. The key difference is in the events right before Christ's second coming. Postmills believe in something very close to dominion kingdom theology in my opinion, which to me is very unscriptural.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 19:57

Historically speaking though, amill's have been very "dominion" minded in their conquests. Rome, Luther, and Calvin all have had no problem with raising the sword to spread the faith.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/17 21:05

Quote:

Historically speaking though, amill's have been very "dominion" minded in their conquests. Rome, Luther, and Calvin all have had no problem with raising the sword to spread the faith.

I don't believe their beliefs on a theocracy had much to do with their amil eschatology. I believe it had more to do with their mixing of old and new covenants, similar to Roman Catholicism. We have to keep in mind that the reformers brought much baggage from catholicism into the reformation. That's where they got the idea of hierarchical church government, the focus on "sacred" buildings, etc. Btw John Calvin was postmil.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 21:14

A theocratic state seems to be the logical outworking of amillennial theology if we are already living in the millennium. Church and state will naturally blend together. The same can be said of post-millennial theology. Indeed, even in pre-millennial theology, church and state blend together as the world becomes a theocracy.

I don't think one can separate any millennial theology from the idea of a theocratic state.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/17 21:33

Jimmy, I think there is a misunderstanding of amillennial theology here. Amillennialism at its core stresses the spiritual kingdom of God between Christ's first and second coming, which has nothing to do with a mixture of church and state or an endorsement of that at all. Jesus clearly said His kingdom is not of this world. We are in the spiritual millennium, Christ is ruling and reigning in the hearts of His people, and we have victory over the power and dominion of satan through the gospel, not in a physical but spiritual sense. Postmillennialism teaches a sort of theocratic kingdom at the end of this age, not amil.

Re: Rapture - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/17 22:35

Quote:

Will the rapture occur in our live time ?

I believe the physical rapture/resurrection of Christians will occur at the end of this present evil age, when Christ returns to judge the nations and usher in the eternal, literal kingdom of heaven. During this end of time there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous, with the righteous being first raised/raptured. I believe this can take place in our life time or much later. No one knows the day or hour except God Himself. We must be prepared at all times.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/17 22:42

I'll have to study these things in greater detail.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/17 23:24

hi,make sure you place dan:2 44&45 in your study...just be a wise virgin...be ready now.jimp

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/8/18 8:20

I don't intend on taking away from the topic of this thread but I have often heard many pretrib individuals use the phrase "I have read the in of the book I know who wins" but it seems as if they don't focus on the extreme persecution the church will undertake even if it is raptured out before the great tribulation. This leaves many unprepared and comfortable in their little cocoons of safety but when the Lord shakes what can be shaken they will be included in this and will be more apt to forsake the truth because they will accuse God of forsaking them.

Post trib has its points and disadvantages as well, the disadvantage is that people that think certain events must happen spend a life of comfort because certain events haven't happened yet so tribulation is nothing to worry about leaving them unprepared.

I have a tendency to lean more towards the post trib of things because I am preparing for what could possibly happen as oppose to banking on being taken up in the rapture and avoiding all discomfort. I expect discomfort in my walk because I desire to walk against the grain of this world.

But EITHER way the real danger isn't in which trib you believe but in being unprepared for the Lord's return whether we go through the great tribulation or not. Laziness and comfort are enemies of the children of God.

Reasons for the Rapture, on: 2010/8/18 8:54

The rapture is a very important promise in the chronology of end-time events. It must be properly understood if we wish to be ready and worthy to escape the coming tribulation period.

During the rapture, true Christians will disappear from the earth in the twinkling of an eye:

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thes. 4:16-18).

By way of the rapture the Lord will snatch away His disciples for whom He has gone to prepare a place in heaven. The harvest of souls for the kingdom of God will then gathered in heaven. There are various biblical reasons why there must be, and consequently will be, a rapture of believers at the end of the church dispensation:

1. It marks the end of the church age

The rapture formally ends the dispensation of the church on earth as the members of the true church will then be removed from earth and taken to heaven. Only the backsliders, the nominal believers, the members of deluded and dead “Christian” churches, as well as all the followers of false religions will remain behind on earth. The people who do not turn to Christ then to be saved, will join the deceived masses who will enter into a covenant with the false messiah to worship and follow him. The signs of the times indicate that we are at present very close to the end of the church dispensation. The Bible describes this time as a period of great falling away from the truth, and also of intensified demonic activities. Satan is lulling certain churches into a deep spiritual sleep, while occupying the attention of others with deceptive signs and wonders performed by false prophets.

At the same time, the coming antichristian dispensation’s all-inclusive ideology of universal or cosmic unity (holism or monism) is actively propagated. Structures are also created for the world government, world religion, and world economy of the Antichrist. It is not without reason that the Lord Jesus urges us to stand firm against the deception of the last days, and to watch and pray always that we may be found worthy to escape the coming tribulation period (Lk. 21:36).

It is important to consider the rapture in its dispensational context – i.e. at the end of the church age and just before the beginning of the tribulation period. Within this perspective we should resist the moral collapse and spiritual falling away that are typical of the last days of the church dispensation, while also opposing the reforms aimed at promoting the global governance and ecumenical alliance of world religions that will allow the Antichrist and false prophet the opportunity to gain control over the world and to institute the new world order. We are dispensationally in a terminal situation in which most people sadly grow cold in their love towards Christ while the unrighteousness is increasing due to an emerging intern

ational culture of sin. We should actively denounce this trend, as well as the globalising reforms aimed at instituting the next dispensation.

In times like these, preaching about the expected rapture is critically important. We are like long distance runners who hear the bell ringing to announce the last round of the race. This message motivates us not to relax but to persevere to the end. Peter says: "Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God?" (2 Pet. 3:11-12). We should not lose perspective and start compromising under the pressure of a rapidly changing world, but keep on fighting the good fight of faith while resisting all forms of evil.

2. It affords the Antichrist the opportunity to be revealed

The rapture is directly related to the revelation of the Antichrist:

"And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess. 2:6-10).

The true church of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is withholding the Antichrist, who can clearly only be revealed after the church has been taken out of the way. The Holy Spirit in the church is stronger than the spirit of error that is operating in the evil world to deceive people. When the true church is suddenly taken away the light of the world will vanish and the hour of complete spiritual darkness will take effect. Under these circumstances, the man of sin will be able to reveal himself without any opposition. The rapture has to occur before he can be revealed!

To prepare people to be ready for the rapture calls for a spiritual disposition of absolute loyalty to the true Christ and also the unqualified rejection of the false cosmic Christ of all faiths.

3. It is a strong motivation for steadfastness in a time of backsliding

The coming of the heavenly Bridegroom will occur during a time of religious compromise and worldliness. There will be a great falling away from the truth of God's Word. A relatively small group of evangelical Christians will shine like lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15). As in the times of Noah and Lot, the earth will be filled with violence, materialism and sexual perversion. Unfortunately, the spirit of unrighteousness and immorality will also take its toll among Christians. They will relax their vigilance and make downward adjustments in their spiritual standards: "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold" (Mt. 24:12). Many Christians will keep such a low profile that they ultimately lapse into complete passivity (spiritual sleep). Jesus warned His followers against this phenomenon and emphasised the expectation of His sudden coming as a strong motivation for steadfastness:

"Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming – in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning – lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (Mk. 13:35-37).

Inactive Christians are obviously not strongly dedicated to the Lord and they have a tendency to grow cold in their love towards Him. The process of growing cold manifests in two ways: firstly, they develop a love for the world and worldly parties where they eat and drink to excess; secondly, anxiety and depression take root in their minds and also pull them down spiritually. Against this kind of waywardness the Lord Jesus warned His disciples and again offered the rapture as a positive motivating force to remain steadfast to the end:

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come upon you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Lk. 21:34-36).

4. It is an escape from the disaster area of divine judgements

The rapture also constitutes a dramatic rescue operation in which the true believers are removed from the scene of divine judgements. Although the rapture is a unique occurrence, there are examples in the Bible of times when God poured out His wrath but provided an escape route to the true believers as they were not the objects of His wrath. In the time of N

oah, God announced His judgements upon a wicked and perverted generation: "And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark..." (Gen. 6:13-14). Shortly before the commencement of the judgements the eight believers escaped the disaster area by entering the ark. God Himself closed the door behind them before He judged the sinners (Gen. 6: 16-23).

In the time of Lot the believers were also rescued. The night before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah they were ordered to evacuate the city and flee to the mountains. The angels emphasised the fact that they could do nothing as long as Lot and his family were still among the wicked. Fire and brimstone rained down from the heavens shortly after their departure. The cities with all their inhabitants were destroyed (Gen. 19:13-25). The Bible says that there is a clear correlation between these historic events and God's end-time dealing with believers and unbelievers (Lk. 17:26-30; also read Gen. 6 and 19).

People who are cynical about the promise of the rapture and do not heed the admonition to be prepared to escape the coming tribulation period reveal a very reckless attitude. What do you think would have happened to the believers (and the entire human race) if Noah argued as follows: "God is a God of love and I don't really believe that He will send a flood to judge all people; therefore, I am not going to build an ark to escape this so-called judgement." Or what would have happened to Lot and his family if he took the following stand: "I think the prophesied judgement over Sodom and Gomorrah should be interpreted symbolically. I don't have to escape for my life. Even if the disaster does occur I believe that God will protect us from His wrath here in this place."

The coming judgements during the tribulation period are irrefutable biblical facts. Jesus said there will be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world (Mt. 24:21), and that we should be ready to escape it (Lk. 21:36).

5. It is a direct intervention by God

The supernatural nature of the rapture, in which millions of Christians will be caught up in the air, will be so clearly an intervention by God that no scientific explanation can ever account for this astounding phenomenon. There might be a few absurd explanations which, as in the case of the evolution theory, will only be accepted by those whose minds have been blinded by the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4). It is only an almighty God who can resurrect and change millions of Christians in a single moment and catch them away from planet earth. He will take away His own while the others will be left behind.

The hand of the Lord will also unmistakably be seen in the judgements that will be poured out over a degenerate humanity after the rapture. The dramatic effect of the rapture as well as the severity of the apocalyptic judgements that will follow in its wake will be a clear message to a multireligious and apostate humanity that their only hope is in returning to the Triune God and His inerrant Word. The rapture will also utterly refute the spiritualisation theology in which many of the plain biblical statements are spiritualised and thereby deprived of their literal meaning. In this way liberal theologians have disposed of many of the precious promises and dire warnings in the Bible by alleging that they are merely to be regarded as symbolic or allegorical expressions.

After the rapture, millions of people will continue to harden their hearts. As a result of this attitude they will receive a spirit of delusion which will induce them to believe the lies of the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:11-12). However, there will also be many people who will have a new appreciation for the Word of God. They will seek the Lord and call upon His Name, regardless of the consequences of Christian worship in a Christ-rejecting new world order.

6. It is associated with the first resurrection

The rapture is directly related to the first resurrection when all the believers will get glorified resurrection bodies. Millions of those who are going to be caught away are already dead; consequently they must first be raised from the dead in incorruptible, glorified bodies, like unto Christ's glorious body. At the same moment the mortal bodies of the living believers will be miraculously changed into glorified bodies while they pass from mortality to immortality without dying. Paul explains this promise to a Christian congregation as follows:

"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

To the Philippians he said:

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” (Phil. 3:20-21).

The first resurrection is also referred to as “the resurrection of the just” (Lk. 14:14), as well as “the resurrection of life” (Jn. 5:29). These people are indeed blessed to be partakers of the first resurrection:

“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6).

The godless will have no part in the first resurrection, the rapture, and the millennial reign of Christ. That is why John says: “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished” (Rev. 20:5). They will be raised during the second resurrection which is also called “the resurrection of condemnation” (Jn. 5:29).

7. It separates true and nominal Christians

Apart from the division that the rapture will effect between the saved and unsaved people in the world, it will also separate the true believers from the nominal Christians within the church. Those who only have a form of godliness will be left behind. This fate will befall them despite the fact that they may have regarded themselves as members of the church of Christ, like the foolish virgins also did. Only after the rapture will many of them discover the absence of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Although they can still put matters straight then, the Bridegroom will not open the door to them by way of a second rapture, much as they may desire it and urgently knock on heaven’s door. They will have to remain outside in the cold, face the dark days of the tribulation, and be prepared to die as martyrs for their faith.

How many millions of “Christians” indeed find themselves in this category of self-deceived and unsaved church members who trust in a dead form of godliness! They argue that since they are baptised and confirmed in the church, they have entered into an eternal and irrevocable covenant with God. In the light of this perception they feel quite comfortable even though they don’t have a clear testimony of being saved and born again through true repentance to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself said: “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3). It is only the regenerating work of the Lord that can save your soul!

Be sure that you are not weighed in God’s balance at the time of the rapture and found wanting. Then you will be left behind when the Lord Jesus takes away His bride (Mt. 25:10-13).

8. It is a meeting with Jesus Christ

When the Lord Jesus comes back to earth He will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. Those who died in Christ will be raised from the dead while the living saints will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Together they will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

The greatest expectation with regard to the rapture is not just to get away from earth, but to arrive in heaven with the Lord! The longing bride wishes to be united with her heavenly Bridegroom. People who don’t believe in the rapture must ask themselves how else, other than by the rapture, can they be caught up from earth and divinely moved to the glorious presence of the Lord Jesus in heaven. The Christians will be caught up (1 Thess. 4:17). After His earthly ministry, Jesus was bodily caught up to heaven (Rev. 12:5). Paul was caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). In all these cases the same verb, i.e. catch up (Gr. *harpazo*) is used, which means rapture. On this occasion the heavenly Bridegroom will not appear in public as He will at His appearing at the end of the tribulation, when “every eye shall see Him” (Rev. 1:7). He will come secretly, like a thief in the night, to snatch away his bride. From the viewpoint of the world she will suddenly disappear without a trace! She will then be in heavenly places, in the divine presence of the King of kings!

9. It is a summons to appear before the judgement seat of Christ

To be well prepared for the rapture with a view to the destination of the bride at the end of the journey involves preparations for certain commitments. One of them is to appear before the judgement seat of Christ. The prospect of the rapture clearly confronts us with the responsibility to give account to Christ of our lives after conversion. Paul says:

“For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10).

“So then each of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:10).

The Lord Jesus said: "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work" (Rev. 22:12).

We must never think about the rapture in isolation as only a journey to heaven. It is a means to a wonderful end. We know why we will be removed from the impending disaster area of divine judgement on earth. But we also need to be thoroughly prepared for what is awaiting us at the end of the journey in heaven. The very first appointment that we have after meeting the Lord Jesus in the air is to appear before His judgement seat.

Since only Christians will be caught away during the rapture, only Christians will appear before the judgement seat where their works will be tested:

"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire" (1 Cor. 3:11-15).

We are not saved by works but by faith. However, faith without works is dead. In the lives of Christians, a true faith will produce works that befit repentance. For these works of dedication which are done by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, rewards of grace will be given at the judgement seat of Christ. On that day it will be evident that some Christians were much more productive in the work of the Lord, having used their talents to their full potential. Others will be found to have been less productive, and yet others will stand there empty-handed— saved as through fire. The following five crowns will be awarded to Christians in the service of the Lord:

- The imperishable crown for a holy, dedicated life (1 Cor. 9:24-25).
- The crown of rejoicing for people who lead others to Christ (1 Thess. 2:19).
- The crown of glory for faithful pastors (1 Pet. 5:2-4).
- The crown of life for Christian martyrs (Rev. 2:10).
- The crown of righteousness for those who love His coming (2 Tim. 4:8).

10. It is a journey to the marriage of the Lamb

After her appearance before the judgement seat of Christ the bride will be united to her heavenly Bridegroom, never to be separated from Him again. The burning desire for the rapture is, therefore, also the expression of a desire to be at the marriage feast of the Lamb in His ivory palace, and to be led to the King in a spotless garment woven with gold (Ps. 45), "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2).

"Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27).

11. It is a journey to our eternal home

The Lord Jesus promised that He would return to take His bride away to her heavenly abode. Before He ascended to heaven He said:

"In My Father's house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (Jn. 14:2-3).

This mansion in heaven is so beautiful that it cannot even be imagined by mortal man. The Bible says: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). John says that the mansions and streets of the new Jerusalem are built with pure gold, like transparent glass. Each of its gates is a large, magnificent pearl. The foundations of the wall of the city are adorned with all sorts of precious stones, and its light is like a crystal clear stone (Rev. 21:9-21).

This description conveys the idea of heaven being a quite superlative environment of dazzling beauty, magnificence, and

iance and glory beyond anything we can imagine at present. To be raptured to such a place is indeed a most desirable thought and something to earnestly look forward to! "As the Scripture says, In Thy presence is fullness of joy; and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11).

12. It leads to the acceptance of our judicial and royal position

After the rapture, the glorified Christians will judge the world with Christ in righteousness (1 Cor. 6:2), after which they will reign with Him as kings on earth. In Revelation 4 and 5, the glorified church is represented by the 24 elders:

"And they sang a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).

EPILOGUE: Do you appreciate how tremendously important the rapture is to every Christian, how highly dramatic the events are that are associated with it, and how exceedingly worthwhile it is to be ready for it? Christianity and the church stand and to be spiritually deprived and impoverished if this promise, and all the obligations that it involves, is not earnestly proclaimed. Without the Bible's prophetic perspective on the end-time we will grope in darkness and never correctly determine our priorities.

While we are discerning the approaching footsteps of the Lord Jesus in the signs of the times we must be very sure that we really do belong to Him; otherwise He will pass us by when He comes for His bride. The unsaved, nominal Christians who have never had a personal encounter with the Lord will, one day, plead for mercy in vain before the great white throne of the final judgement. The Lord will declare to them: "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practise lawlessness!" (Mt. 7:23).

There is no need whatsoever to be heading for a tragic end of disillusionment and rejection. If we have genuinely experienced 'repentance toward God' for our sins and 'faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ' (Acts 20:21), and our hearts have been changed and are burning within us with love for the Lord, we will be worthy to meet the heavenly Bridegroom when He comes in the midnight hour. He said to His disciples: "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master... Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants... Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Lk. 12:35-40).

Johan Malan, University of the North, South Africa

Re: Reasons for the Rapture - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/18 9:18

hi, why stand ye here gazing up? what can you do to bring it to pass or to change anything about how it happens or when or with whom... you have no input as Jesus said only My Father... lean not on your wordy theology or your staunch behavior but on the Blood of the Lamb and His mercies that endure forever and you are ready. jimp

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/18 12:48

I'm sorry, but the entire "pan-tribulational" theology, while having an air of wisdom to it simply is not a Biblical perspective. Yes, the exhortation that no matter what your theology is, that we should be wise virgins is true. But to merely stop there is spiritually immature, as one is failing to embrace the cross and wrestle with the Scriptures. Such a theology is blatantly ignoring the word of the Lord. For if a pan-tribulational theology were true, and that is all we practically needed to know about the last days, we would not have the massive amount of Scripture that we do that tells of the things we can expect in the last days.

What one believes and likewise does not believe about the future shapes how one lives in the present. That is why the early church and the Biblical writers were so eschatologically minded. No, we'll never know the day or the hour. But what we believe about the last days will shape our understanding of God's ultimate purposes, and cause us to live our lives in light of those purposes. The end times also teach us something about God's character, which gives us great faith for how we ought to live now. That's why Paul did "not want us ignorant," and for us to be "caught unaware." This is especially true if we happen to be the final generation that sees the coming of the Lord.

But even should we not be that generation, we cannot ignore the greater purposes of God in redemptive history. And re

demptive history spans both past, present, and future. What God has done, is doing, and will do, are very important things. We cannot be the people He would have us to become if we have no idea what He is doing.

Dare I say pan-tribulational theology is a very subtle heresy? I think such would be a Biblical perspective.

Re: The truth about the Day of the Lord - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/8/18 13:22

Brethren,
Let the Word of God speak:

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.
(2 Thessalonians 2:1-4)

Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.
(Revelation 20:4-6)

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.
(1 Thessalonians 4:13-17)

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.
(1 Corinthians 15:51-53)

So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean! Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?
(Romans 11:11-15)

Amen.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/18 13:41

Quote:

I'm sorry, but the entire "pan-tribulational" theology, while having an air of wisdom to it simply is not a Biblical perspective. Yes, the exhortation that no matter what your theology is, that we should be wise virgins is true. But to merely stop there is spiritually immature, as one is failing to embrace the cross and wrestle with the Scriptures.

Amen. I had been convicted of paying little to no attention to this topic for many years, realizing that Scripture has much to say on this issue. Rev.1:3 declares, "Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near."

That conviction is what has recently, over the past few months, caused me to dig deeper into this issue and consider the different views and Scriptural arguments among Christians.

That said, I do believe there has to be a healthy balance when studying this topic as when studying any other topic. I believe some Christians focus too much on prophecy and get overly obsessed with it to the neglect of other important issues.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/18 13:46

Quote:

I do believe there has to be a healthy balance when studying this as when studying any other topic. I believe some Christians focus too much on prophecy and get overly obsessed with it to the neglect of other important issues.

I'm in hearty agreement. I don't think it is necessary that we understand all the minute details of the last days, at least, not presently. Some of the "practical" aspects of the things yet to come will be mostly relevant only to those who live through those events. And no doubt, no matter how closely we study, we may still be in the dark regarding some of these things. But, we should have a stronger knowledge of these things than we often do. For years I neglected texts regarding the last days in the Scriptures, thinking of them as just speculative and wild. But what I really saw that I was doing was shying away from the hard work of studying to show myself approved unto God.

We must wrestle with these things.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/18 13:57

hi, its fun to be called a heretic again... i am 71 years old and in my lifetime millions have died and none have been raptured ... since acts billions have died and none raptured... as a young man i studied end time events with a passion and realized that if i am ready to die and meet Him today i dont need to bother myself with this study for it is TOTALLY in the hands of God and i cant do anything about it except get it wrong...and cause further division by opining on it as i am now.. . the pharisees and scribes thought they knew how the redeemer would come by all their study and none got it right.think about billions dying and none sofar raptured.... where should our emphases be.jimp

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2010/8/18 14:29

Hi KingJimmy...

I strongly disagree. A "subtle heresy?" What is wrong with a person admitting that he doesn't know with ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY how the end will come about, that we should remain prepared for any scenario by seeking God and that we shouldn't worry about the specifics will play out?

This is NOT "blatantly ignoring the Word of the Lord." Rather, it is considering all of the possibilities, studying them diligently, and admitting that there is an air of uncertainty regarding the specifics of the matter.

How does what one believes (or not believe) about future events shape how one lives? Jesus instructed us to not worry about our future needs (Matthew 6:25-34).

When asked about future events (such as the restoration of Israel), Jesus told the disciples, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7). I think that trying to "figure things out" can sometimes be a pursuit that ends up as a distraction.

Immediately after saying this to the disciples, He pointed out what was more important focally, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

For centuries following the death and resurrection of Christ, physical copies of the Word of God were in short supply. Most people didn't have a copy of a single scroll -- let alone the 66 books that we have bound together as canon. In addition, people didn't have extra-Biblical resources either. There were no Vine's, Strong's, or other resource books. There just weren't any companion books (or scrolls) about Bible eschatology. There were no pamphlets, periodicals and websites that mapped out presentations regarding one (or more) views on the coming of the Lord. I guess that it just wasn't that complicated. It seems that people during the early centuries of the Church simply came to believe in (and live for) the Lord.

I know that this sounds like an over-simplification. However, I read a quote once that was oddly accurate: "A drowning man doesn't worry about the size or color of a life jacket. He isn't too worried about it when he holds on to it either." It sounds like the old IQ question about "what is most important" to a sailor.

Believers today have resources (and freedoms) that were unimagined by early believers! While I believe that we should always pursue doctrinal truth, are we supposed to spend our lives in the hunt for inerrant eschatology? I don't even know it that would be possible as we are still confined to this side of the "glass darkly!"

When we moved to California about two years ago, I met a man who had spent his life in the pursuit of "perfect eschatology." We discussed prophecy in detail during a few visits. While I listened and considered the things that he said, I realized that I only agreed with a few of his particular points. Yet he considered himself a "watchmen" and explained that he spent the greater part of his life (he was probably near 60 years old) studying Bible prophecy.

This man was so sure of the Lord's imminent return as a teenager, that he made little preparation for life (in terms of a job, education, a family, etc...). He was now a ~60 yr old man working odd jobs just to survive, and explained that he was "rejected by most Christians" because most people "just don't want to hear the truth." He was "post-trib" and even believed that we were currently somewhere in the middle of the great tribulation two years ago (I guess that it wasn't that "great"). He told me a few things that he said were undoubtedly going to happen within the next year. I told him where I disagreed or had considered other views, but it seemed as if it went in one ear and out the other.

A few months ago, I ran into this man outside of a church meeting that my wife and I visited in a different town. This man wasn't attending that meeting, it turned out that he just lived nearby and was out for a walk. I walked up to him and greeted him. I immediately could tell that he was troubled and even seemed somewhat embarrassed. He explained that he was so sure that Jesus would have been back already or that some of the things that he mentioned would have happened by now. He said, "I just don't know where I went wrong" in regard to his understanding of "times and seasons."

I felt very sad for this man. His entire life had been spent in the pursuit of perfect eschatology. I just can't help but wonder if his life would have been better spent seeking God in the here and now.

Now, this man knew the Bible quite well. He commented on how well I knew the Bible two years ago during our discussions and even voiced that he was surprised that I didn't hold the same position that he did. He had a confused look on his face when I told him that I was just not sure about all of the specificities regarding the timing and manner of the Lord's return. I had told him that I didn't care if I was "raptured" or needed to "endure" throughout the "great tribulation" -- I was going to seek the Lord regardless. After all, "all things work for the good of those who are in Christ."

This, I think, is the essence of "pan-tribulation" position -- as was once shared by David Wilkerson. It is not a position of claiming ignorance or the pursuit of ignorance. Of course, it isn't really a "position" at all. It is merely the realization that all of our pursuit of perfect eschatology is just that -- a pursuit. It is the idea that we might not be able to obtain absolute

perfection in our understanding or roadmap of Bible prophecy WHILE arriving to the conclusion that we must be ready for WHATEVER comes our way. As those events actually begin to fall into place, our position(s) might be turned upside down (or rightside up). This does NOT mean that we should stop attempting to understand such things. Rather, it is acknowledging that we just don't know with absolute certainty -- even if we have prayerfully studied and contemplated the issue.

Jimmy, you said, "We cannot be the people He would have us to become if we have no idea what He is doing." But is that really what God has called us to? Do we really have to know every last dot and tittle of the Lord's plan? OR can we just rest in the knowledge that God is in control and that His plan is set? When I was a child, I didn't fret over my dad driving us to my grandmother's house. I didn't worry about the route he was taking, what exact time we were going to get there or how fast our car was going. Most of the time, I could read, sing or sleep simply because I was confident that my dad was a good driver.

When it comes to the coming of the Lord, I am confident that it will happen. I know of many possible ways in which it can happen. I lean toward one of those in particular, but I am pliable enough to know that I don't know with absolute certainty about it -- even after my own studious efforts. I am just confident that God is in control of the situation, and that none of my worrying will change His plan...and that the best "preparation" is not in trying to know exactly how it will come about -- but in spending intimate time with God.

Re: Post Tribulation Pre-Wrath Rapture..[hope I'm there!], on: 2010/8/18 16:14

"AFTER THE TRIBULATION OF THOSE DAYS, THE SUN SHALL BE DARKENED, THE MOON TURNED TO BLOOD, AND ALL THE TRIBES OF THE EARTH MOURNING, SHALL SEE THE SIGN OF THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN."....Matthew 24.

AFTER. JESUS RETURNS ONCE. THEN WE SHALL INDEED BE RAPTURED. THE PAROUSIA, THE GATHERING TOGETHER.

And in one sense, No, I am surely bound to escape the details that God is going to do regardless of what you are I believe, and yes, the important thing is that we will belong to Jesus forever, and attain New Jerusalem. OVER AND OVER HE SAYS; "HE THAT ENDURES TO THE END, THE SAME SHALL BE SAVED."

It is also abundantly clear that for people to cry out for the rocks to hide them from the face of Jesus, in absolute terror, He will have to have returned. Kind of a post Tribulation-Pre-Wrath rapture, I think.

There will be, and currently is, a Great falling away in our midst. To fall away, you have to first be attached to the substance you fall from. Food for thought..

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/18 17:05

BrotherTom, if you don't mind me asking, are you premillennial regarding Rev.20? In other words, do you take the millennium to be a literal 1000 year reign of Christ on earth before the eternal state? I ask out of curiosity since I respect your opinions as a seasoned brother. If you are not premillennial, post trib or pre-wrath would probably not be a typical name you want to use, since those are thought of as premil.

Re: , on: 2010/8/18 22:10

Quote:
-----I must ask where you said this to snufalapus who announced the preterist view as a fact in his FIRST SENTENCE: "The Rapture will not occur at all in our lifetime or any time in the future for it is a past event." (sorry snuffies!!)

No apologies necessary :-)

I've been called a Preterist but I am not one. I read the bible like all of you do and I see things differently than what most see. I too rely heavily on what the Holy Spirit speaketh through the scriptures. Without His help, I would not read the bible.

e at all, for the carnal mind is at enmity with God.

It is a fact though. In a thousand years from now, Christians in that time period will say the exact same things this generation is saying, "The Lord is coming".

And He is coming and is always coming in power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost.

Revelation 14:6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

The "Everlasting Gospel".

If there is to be an end of the Earth and all that there is, to what purpose would the Everlasting Gospel be to them that are perfect? The Good News is that Jesus died in the place of a sinner. If there are no sinners in heaven, how is the Everlasting Gospel going to affect them seeing they are perfect?

The Everlasting Gospel must be for sinners that exist on the Earth.

pan trib - posted by knitefall, on: 2010/8/18 22:27

Hey! Where do I sign up to be a pantribber? It'll all pan out! HA! love it!

Thank God we have a Covenant keeping God. I sure cannot keep anything.

I've heard people repeat over and over, "I love God with all my heart." To which I'll ask, You mean the one where wickedness dwells and all manner of evil? Now, don't ask a new born again person that... In the human realm, our minds need renewed (the way we think). God has to give a new heart to us. And that's by Faith... anyhow. So, don't see God as an angry judge that you have to please! Change how you see God's Love towards you = 's No Condemnation. The soulish you says, "I need to please God by doing and showing Him I love Him." That is very false doctrine and will cause you much grief. Because the more you DO, the more you fail. The more you fail, the more you try to do. It's an endless cycle of law instead of Grace and New Covenant.

Now, how are you going to loose your soul while a God like we serve is in control?

Jesus said, "Here come all these people. Who is there to teach them the Way?" Many are Saved but still don't know the 'Living by the Spirit' kind of - Way.

Re: , on: 2010/8/18 22:29

Quote:
-----There will be, and currently is, a Great falling away in our midst. To fall away, you have to first be attached to the substance you fall from. Food for thought..

Actually that is a false statement. I've heard that all my life and that is simply not true.

Yes, there is a departure from traditional Christianity which I think is a great thing. And people are falling away from denominational-ism, again, I think is a good thing.

It is far better that we remain in sin than to "try" to live this Christian walk through main stream Christianity. Christ died for sinners. Don't misconstrue what I wrote. People who have been trying to live this Christian life under the direction of these denominations have fallen away. People who leave these outfits, are searching for the truth, they are not falling away.

Just because people have stopped going to church is no indication that they have stopped wanting God. Churchanity is not real. It's a joke! People dress up only to dress down when they get home. There is more gossip over one sinner that repents and their life story is being whispered, God forbid if his past was homosexual. Hypocrisy rules within. People say

they love, but when one leaves Church, no one runs after him, no inquiries, there is no love.

If anyone is falling away it's those that are GOING to church.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/18 22:30

Quote:

What is wrong with a person admitting that he doesn't know with ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY how the end will come about, that we should remain prepared for any scenario by seeking God and that we shouldn't worry about the specifics will play out?

I have no problem with a person admitting that is where they are. There is no foul in humbly admitting the subject makes little sense, and you really don't have a conviction one way or the other. Honestly, that's where I've been most of my Christian life. And I have no problem with a person being in such a place if that's where they are in their walk with the Lord.

What I do have a problem with, which I either miscommunicated or you misunderstood, is the rather negligent, lackadaisical, and apathetic attitude that we can often have towards eschatology. Indeed, because of the diversity of opinions on the subject, people just look at it as a skeptical area of Bible study that has no relevance for modern day living. When in fact, eschatology is woven throughout the entirety of Scripture, and has a great deal to do with everyday life. No, not every minute detail is pressing and has practical application. But I believe the general eschatological framework one adopts (or likewise, doesn't adopt), will impact how one lives in the present.

For example, if you believe Jesus is going to come tomorrow or shortly thereafter, you will live your life accordingly. Likewise, if you believe Jesus could come tomorrow, but might not, you will live your life accordingly. Thus, the one friend of yours, what he believed (and didn't believe) about the future has made a radical impact on his life.

"Take no thought for tomorrow," isn't an injunction against eschatological living. Rather, it's a statement against a worldly lifestyle that is grounded in worry and securing one's lot in this life. For most certainly Jesus intended the church to be an eschatological community that lived with an awareness that the time we are living in is short, and that we should live accordingly. The apostles followed in the same footsteps. The church ought to always be thinking about the fact that we live on the edge of history, awaiting the return of Christ, and indeed, longing for and hastening His return.

But what I believe to be the most important thing about studying Bible prophecy is the understanding that we gain of God's ultimate purposes in His outworking of the plan of redemption in history. For whatever we believe to be God's end for history will inform us of what we are to be doing for Him now.

For example, I believe Ephesians 4:11ff teaches that God's intent for the church is to bring it to a corporate maturity and unity before the return of Christ, and that He will use the "five-fold" ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in order to accomplish this end. This is an eschatological perspective. As a result of embracing such a perspective, if I am one of those five-fold ministers, understanding what God wishes to do in the future instructs me in what I ought to do and labor towards as a minister within the church in the present. Not only that, but it also informs me of what I need to avoid.

Thus, what we believe about the future will impact how we live in the present. Which is why I believe a negligent attitude towards the topic of eschatology is borderline heresy. Again, for those who on purpose ignore the greater part of Scripture that deals with such topics, simply because they don't wish to study that area for whatever myriad of reasons, such is grave error. It's one thing to read and not understand. It's another altogether to create a "canon within a canon," which is the end result of being negligent towards the study of eschatology.

Again, the minute details aren't very important on a practical level. Indeed, they won't be very practical except for the people who see those specific events come to pass. That is why we don't need to be "Bible prophecy experts," who have all sorts of nice maps and charts, being so skilled that we can identify with precision the names of the two witnesses from Revelation. Such is worth looking into if one has the luxury of such study. But practically speaking, it borderlines a wrangling over words.

But trying to discern the general eschatological framework upon which all of history hangs upon is of great importance and significance. It touches on all areas of theology, and where we stand in relationship to the kingdom of God, and how we live our lives out of our understanding of that kingdom. Thus, we should attempt as best we can to understand this general framework, as it will impact our sense of destiny and purpose.

I hope this post comes across more clear and less inflammatory than my previous post was understood.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/18 22:58

hi, it was len ravenhill who really upset my pre trib stance on the rapture and got me thinking with this story... their was a famous missionary to china who started many churches there and trained many converts to pastor those churches. he left when mao started the violent chinese rebellion...many years later he was in taiwan and met up with a group of those pastors who called him a false prophet and when he asked why they said that a day was coming when the churches would be burned and families of those churches murdered ...daughters raped in the streets but we would not see it because we would be raptured...billions have died and yet noone raptured ...why argue over seven years of tribulation when we face eternal torment if we die without Christ.jimp

Re: , on: 2010/8/19 0:22

What if the great falling away is a direct result of those proclaiming a pre-trib stance being wrong, and untold numbers consider proponents --(who were sure they were right)-- liars and cannot be trusted regarding anything else if they can't even get the Bible right?

What if the falling away happens after signs obviously point to us living in the time of tribulation, and those unprepared to face it turn their backs on the Faith?

Who will be held more accountable? Those who fall away or those stumbling-blocks that offend God in offending other men?

He who is faithful in little is faithful in much.

Is it looking to Jesus when looking for a way out?

It's awful quaint and smug to justify our failure in making disciples, excusing ourselves of those who part company in saying , "oh, they never believed anyway..." or "they were never a part of us..." or "they never were saved."

By our words we are justified and condemned, and we shall account for every idle word ... so what about a false word???

("...All liars ...shall have their part in the lake of fire.")

Re: , on: 2010/8/19 0:35

speculative chatter....

Is this an idle word or is it building up people towards relying on God towards unshakeable faithfulness (in thought and word and deed)?

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/19 1:30

Quote:

It is a fact though. In a thousand years from now, Christians in that time period will say the exact same things this generation is saying, "The Lord is coming".
And He is coming and is always coming in power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost.

Quote:

I'm confused. Are you saying that Christ will not come back to this earth in bodily form? If so, what do you make of Acts 1:11 where we are told that Ch

rist is coming back the same way he ascended into heaven?

Quote:

If there is to be an end of the Earth and all that there is, to what purpose would the Everlasting Gospel be to them that are perfect? The Good News is that Jesus died in the place of a sinner. If there are no sinners in heaven, how is the Everlasting Gospel going to affect them seeing they are perfect?

The Everlasting Gospel must be for sinners that exist on the Earth

Quote:

Are you saying that there will always be sinners on this earth throughout eternity and there will never be an end to this earth as we know it? That would be a rejection of the biblical teaching of the final judgment of mankind by God Almighty. And it would seem to be a rejection of biblical orthodox Christianity. The same goes for a rejection of the bodily second coming of Christ and the bodily resurrection of true believers. The Word makes it very clear that there is coming a final ultimate day of reckoning when the Lord will physically raise the dead, separate the sheep from the goats at the end of this age, and will cast the goats into everlasting punishment in hell. 2Pet.3:10 tells us that this earth will be destroyed by fire.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2010/8/19 4:11

Hi KingJimmy...

I think that we agree much much more than we disagree -- on this subject and many others. I think that we both lament over the "ease in Zion" and flat-out laziness in the hearts, minds and actions of many believers.

You wrote: ---> "For example, if you believe Jesus is going to come tomorrow or shortly thereafter, you will live your life accordingly. Likewise, if you believe Jesus could come tomorrow, but might not, you will live your life accordingly. Thus, the one friend of yours, what he believed (and didn't believe) about the future has made a radical impact on his life." "For example, I believe Ephesians 4:11ff teaches that God's intent for the church is to bring it to a corporate maturity and unity before the return of Christ, and that He will use the "five-fold" ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in order to accomplish this end. This is an eschatological perspective. As a result of embracing such a perspective, if I am one of those five-fold ministers, understanding what God wishes to do in the future instructs me in what I ought to do and labor towards as a minister within the church in the present. Not only that, but it also informs me of what I need to avoid."

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/19 20:28

I just thought I'd share briefly an adult Sunday school lesson I once taught that ties into this topic:

Listen: Redemption, Resurrection, and Reward - http://www.iamadisciple.com/sermons/redemption_resurrection_and_reward.mp3

It's about 45 minutes long. It's not specifically about the timing of the rapture, but, I think I show convincingly how what you believe about the future impacts how you live right now, and the importance of studying eschatology.

P.s. This word goes heavy and deep and quick.

Re: , on: 2010/8/19 21:34

Brother Jimmy,

the link provided says it's not on the server, page not found.

For those who have an ear to hear,

This does work:

Copy and paste this link

<http://www.iamadisciple.com/sermons/index.php>

into your address bar.

Then hit "enter".

Click on the fifth sermon on that page.

i'm far from against eschatology.

It's just that to give something that has not happened (YET) definites is like trying to walk up the stairs while watching the ceiling.

Over the course of end time BIBLE studies (avoiding the books about it), this being well over 20 years, the view has changed drastically from what it once was.

We are to always be looking for and towards Christ's return to rule earth. This is as much the gospel, and moreso in it's fulfillment, just as everything else He has done. What He did leads up to this.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

Mara Natha,
g

p.s. ...it's the emphasis on one event and designating a specific time to it amongst a whole gammut of things to come is just whack.

This is one reason so much of the other things remain understood, unmentioned, and even unknown to some.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/19 22:19

Quote:

I think that we agree much much more than we disagree

I think so too :-)

Quote:

I think that there is something extremely wrong when people base their living, actions and attitudes as "believers" upon the changing winds or views on the timing of how the end might come about.

Well, technically it's only wrong if they are wrong in their understanding. But, I do understand where you are coming from

m. I think there is definitely room for balance. We should live lives that are influenced by our eschatology. However, we ought to be careful in adopting any view, and should only do so after prayerful study. And should we lock on to any one view, we should make sure the lives we live in light of that view are consistent with the general thrust of Scripture. Thus, sitting around on roof tops and not redeeming our time as we await the coming of the Lord simply is not acceptable. As it is, "waiting" on the Lord is something that is active and not passive, much like a waiter at a restaurant remains busy while "waiting" on you as you eat.

Quote:

But what is the purpose of this? It is not necessarily to cause all of their hearers to somehow accept every last specific view of one (or more) of those "five folders" with whom they fellowship.

Agreed. I don't believe we'll ever have uniformity of doctrine. But that doesn't mean we cannot be united in our common purpose. Indeed, in John 17 Christ prayed as much. The unity we have and will have will be based on the common glory we have resting upon us through the Holy Spirit, and recognizing that glory in one another, and living accordingly. As I mentioned elsewhere recently: It's kinda hard to hate your brother when you see Jesus Christ in them.

Quote:

I don't know anyone who would ignore studying the issue with a goal of simply of remaining in ignorance.

Personally, most of the people I know who hold to a "pan-tribulational" theology are people who are willfully ignorant concerning these things, and deliberately ignore the writings of the prophets, and things like the book of Revelation. If they even read those writings, they just do so to say they've read them. So they pretty much just skim over large sections of Scripture, without really seeking to study them or understand. They treat these portions as "fly over country." I've even known ordained ministers that I went to Bible college with to do these things. I personally find such an attitude sad, and deeply troubling.

I know not everybody is this way, but I feel there are many people who are. No doubt, there are people who simply lack certainty in their hearts and minds about it all, even after careful study. But it's been my experience thus far, with the exception of certain pockets here and there, many people are simply negligent in this area of doctrine, and almost criminally so.

Many blessings.

Anyway, many blessings. :-)

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/19 22:37

hi, have you ever stood in the mountains and looked down at the clouds and then stood up and realized that your feet are on the ground and your head is in the air? end times study should usually begin in daniel... in chapter 3 we skip for end times study yet there is a beast that everyone must bow down to and a question of deliverance from tribulation and sure death (rapture)and there is obedience to God in face of pending danger and there is a sentencing to those 3 who would not bow down and increasing to 7 times hotter the fire and there is deliverance through the flames,fire and fumes because a FOURTH was in the fire joined to those who where obedient.Jesus...just one of my thoughts jimp

Re: Literal Millenium?, on: 2010/8/20 11:47

"Brothertom, if you don't mind me asking, are you premillennial regarding Rev.20? In other words, do you take the millenium to be a literal 1000 year reign of Christ on earth before the eternal state?"...ORACIO

Yes I do Oracio. There are way too many references to a literal millinium; including the imprisonment before of Satan, and his release after a 1000 years....and several promises concerning it.

It will be a restored Earth, but not completely sinless. We're in for a big surprise....and it will be good for those who have endured.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/20 13:47

Thanks for the reply Brothertom.

Re: , on: 2010/8/20 15:21

Quote:

-----I don't know anyone who would ignore studying the issue with a goal of simply of remaining in ignorance.

I would discourage anyone who would want to study end time prophecy. It's an absolute waste of valuable time and energy on something that may or may never come to pass. In the case of this subject, "Ignorance Is Bliss".

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/20 16:03

Quote:

I would discourage anyone who would want to study end time prophecy. It's an absolute waste of valuable time and energy on something that may or may never come to pass. In the case of this subject, "Ignorance Is Bliss".

This statement is seriously problematic to me. It seems to be the attitude that says, "if its too hard to understand it, its not worth studying it." Much of the Bible is hard to understand sometimes and requires deeper study and prayerful reflection. Are we to dismiss other portions and teachings of Scripture simply because they are difficult to understand at first?

You say some of these things may or may never come to pass. Yet there are certain events which the Bible clearly declares will take place, and which every true Christian is in agreement with. These include, The second coming of Jesus Christ in bodily form, the physical resurrection of both the saved and unsaved, the final judgment of all of mankind, and the eternal state of glory.

I am still waiting to hear if you believe these truths yourself.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/20 16:52

Quote:

I would discourage anyone who would want to study end time prophecy. It's an absolute waste of valuable time and energy on something that may or may never come to pass. In the case of this subject, "Ignorance Is Bliss".

We are told to fix our hope on the second coming of Christ in bodily form at the end of the age to judge the world in righteousness, and to usher in the fullness of the kingdom of God. Far from having a skeptical attitude towards the second coming, the apostle Peter told us in the last days scoffers would come who'd mock the idea, but he affirmed that it was a

sure thing. So sure in fact, he encouraged us to "hasten" the day of the Lord. Far from an "ignorance is bliss" attitude, the apostle Paul told us that he wrote to us about the last days to keep us from being ignorant.

So, what you just said has absolutely no Scriptural basis to it whatsoever. It is a departure from the clear teaching of the Lord, as well as the tradition the apostles passed on towards us. It has nothing to do with Biblical Christianity.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2010/8/20 21:58

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

God has made the throne of David to be forever and Jesus Christ will sit on David's Throne on this earth and will rule and reign with the Body of Christ for 1000 years, then all else God has promised will come to Pass.

This David's Throne that Christ will sit upon. 2 Samuel 7:29 Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord GOD, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

reign where? Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Seems end times are important to God; Amen

The Body of Christ His Church will be with Him of the first resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For thus we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Then the Great White Throne Judgement; 2nd resurrection:

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

The end as we know it. But Christ in you and you in Christ forever and the Holy Spirit teaching us throughout all eternity, and God our Father all making their Abode with us.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/21 1:49

hi, the end times are very important to God because He is in charge of how when where and with whom all these events and more happen. if one is saved and in Christ, that one is included in God's end time plan even if they are wrong about what and how it all is going to happen...phillip, what can you do to change God's plans or hurry God up ... nothing. maranatha...there are chapters skipped because they do not fit most people's stance on this like we Calvinists skip over verses that refute some of our beliefs...it will all happen but it will not happen like you or I think because His ways are beyond us. paul I looked through a glass darkly but we have all the answers or just answer all the questions and half of what we have to say will sound goofy to us in 30 years as we study more. jimp

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2010/8/21 4:05

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

1Jo 2:27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

John 16:12-15 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

John 17:23-26 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Philippians 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Where is our conversation? It is already in heaven, just as we are seated already in heavenly places with Christ.

How can the Body of Christ not be with Him when He comes in the clouds for the dead in Christ first and even those who are alive in Christ and we shall be with the Lord forever.

He will make it so when the rapture and our resurrected body like His will be living in heaven with Him, not on this earth as those that are left behind in the tribulation and also even to those that are saved in the tribulation on this earth. The Body of Christ the Church is His Body, His Church and He will come and get us and bring us to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and bring us to the New Jerusalem that we might reign and rule with Him from Davids Throne. so shall we ever be with the Lord, therefore comfort one another with these words.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by TimmyJoe, on: 2010/8/21 17:48

Just a question for someone who is post-trib. (I'm not trying to prove anything or debate, just wondering.)

What is being spoken of in these scriptures if it is not a pre-trib rapture?

Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man." Luke 21:36

Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth. Rev. 3:10

and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. 1Thes. 1:10

Again I'm not trying to prove anything, because I'm not 100% sure where I stand yet (pre or post-trib) definitely one of the two. But thanks for any help on this matter.

But whenever He comes may we all be ready!!!

edit:

I lean more towards pre-trib, and yes I believe the rapture will happen in our lifetime!

Thanks,
TimmyJoe

Re: , on: 2010/8/21 21:49

TimmyJoe,

If perhaps you can fit your verses into this post you might look at things differently. Regarding this, it's asked that you consider the context and/or principle behind Rev. 3.10.

As far as "wrath" goes in I Thess. 1.10, there are 5 different greek words that are translated as wrath, the type of which in this verse signifies the type of which that will be poured out on day of the Lord, and not the other 4. The tribulation is not the day of the Lord...

...even as the tribulation according to Bible says is only the time when Jerusalem is over-run by Gentiles in the time of the abomination of desolation, and not the full 7 'years'...

...Anti-Christ is a spirit and not a person; however, The Beast is a personification of an angel released from the abyss.

IF ANYONE WISHES TO DISPUTE THIS, SHOW BIBLE BOOK, CHAPTER AND VERSE (as human reasoning about this seems faulty). I am neither pre-, mid-, nor post- tribulation regarding the resurrection (and ascension?) of God's own people. My view is that Jesus will bring an end to time before everything is destroyed, at a point somewhere within the last portion of tribulation. That puts me somewhere between the mid- and post- rapturists, and it is agreed that when He returns it isn't just a gathering, but His 2nd coming prophesied.

Here is what is currently thought, main events successively occurring in this order:

1. the gathering
2. Jesus brings all the saints to the Mount of Olives with Him and to the battle of Kings (Meggedo) and by His word, blood shall flow to the horses bridle from all who have set themselves against Him.
3. Marriage supper

(the above says nothing about other events surrounding these things, such as judgement, the war after the 1000 year reign, etc...but only addresses the things relative to the resurrection/ascension of the saints.)

Amillennialists say that Rev. 20.2-7 is a figurative thousand years, and the millenium is non-existent.

Postmillennialists say that we are living in the millenium, yet most should have trouble considering this valid thinking about the turn of events in the last half of the 20th century, especially from 1970 to 1999.

Premillennialists generally agree the tribulation will be a literal 7 years, and many see it as being shortened because Jesus said if it weren't, nobody would survive.

The pre-, mid- and post- tribulation rapturists will most usually be found in the premillennialist camp.

Pre-, mid-, or post-tribulation 'rapture'...
...which one?

The foundation of the view from here:

Jesus has declared the end from the beginning (of creation).

Unlike most folks, here the whole Bible is considered prophecy. Failure to reconcile it will be in the last days as it was in the beginning is a failure to reconcile Genesis to Revelation. Westerners tend to think of prophecy as merely predictions,

yet prophecy is simply speaking out what God tells one to declare. The Bible --all the texts corroborating one another-- is a book of prophecy.

With all the theologies and whatnots of doctrinologists it's not hard to become ensnared, attached to a certain viewpoint, yet will it stand the test of ALL the scriptures confirming the view?????

As far as outright declaration as to what will come, jimp said go to Daniel as a starting point. Revelation and Daniel form a congruent whole, yet everything found in the Bible stands secondary to what Jesus declares.

What dominated this man ov God?

HE spoke to us through the Psalmist, "Lo, I AM come; in the roll of the book it is written about Me: I DELIGHT TO DO YOUR WILL OH GOD!" This meets head-on with the first recorded words of Jesus as a boy, when he said, "Didn't you know I must be about my Father's business." In the book of John, we read this one theme repeatedly: "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me." His life's expression on earth is/was dedicated from first beginnings until the very end to doing God's will.

No matter what book of the Bible one looks to, it's about Jesus. Never forget this one fact! It is not just the book of Revelation, but the whole Bible is the very testimony and revelation of Jesus Christ.

This seems to be the failure of so many followers in never advancing beyond their current state of growth, pete and repeat everything over and over again in so many different ways, and on the whole virtually ignoring the Son of God's take on all these issues or where He is manifest in these things. The only man who ever came to earth whose full and complete intentions were wrapped up in the will of His and our Father is often forgotten.

Paul said follow my example, yet there is very little actually accounting his activities; But of Jesus, we have four written records devoted specifically to this. You can follow Paul's example which is piecemeal at best, and not always on the up and up, or you can follow Jesus perfect example in the spirit of the letter. In Him we come to know 'the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God' .

Do Paul's or John's or Peter's writings take precedent over Jesus' actual words (and deeds)? If any person would establish a solid sure understanding of God's revelation they must go to Jesus, as His testimony is the spirit of prophecy --(Rev. 19.10)-- having declared the end from the beginning.

It is wished you will observe to keep this your first consideration towards whenever you look at scripture (and everything else).

Genesis or anything else will not be detailed out here, except to consider the intended sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham marking the turning point of ancient history, even as Jesus crucifixion is the reality of that shadow in this Common Era A. D.

This thread is regarding the when of the second resurrection, many call the rapture, and so here are the specific scriptures to consider relative to this:

And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

igh.
Lk. 21.20-28

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.
Mk. 13.24-27

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
Mt. 24.29-31

Just from what Jesus said, it is really strange there is still adherence to the concept of a pre-trib 'rapture'.

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets . . . And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.
Rev. 10.5-7, 11.14-18

Here we see that the shofar ("trump" of God, by the seventh angel) signals the end of time, agreeing with the synoptic gospels. The blast of the Ram's horn was used most often in a call to war, as well as things ordained by God, a call to Him in distinction from things absent from Him.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.
14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.
15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.
16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
I Thess. 4.13-18

Why the verses of this one and only passage should contradict the other passages is not reasonable...however for those with dispute consider the following:

Note in verse 14 the phrase, "bring with him" at the end of the verse, in greek reads, "axei sun avto."

axei=to: bring, lead, or take

sun=united with

avto=itself, herself, themselves, himself, he, she, it

Because of this verse in relation to the remainder of the passage lacks clarity whether Jesus will:

- a. will bring the dead and alive with Him when returning to earth;
- b. will gather the dead and alive with Him as he reigns on earth;
- c. will bring the dead and alive together to be with Him upon returning from heaven, collecting us all together in a "rapture" . . .

Three ambiguous scenarios that can only find their ultimate conclusion using the Bible to interpret itself. These things Paul states have to be taken in relation to the other passages if there will be no contradiction.

If rapture is actually the resurrection, then this one passage is either misunderstood or the rest of the relative scriptures are being ignored.

Luke 17.20 - 18.8 was not mentioned as it does not detail specifics regarding as to when, except speaking of "as in the days of Noe" and "as in the days of Lot." It is not in regard to the exact timing but rather towards being ready. This section of scripture is seen as related to:

~ Mk. 13:18, 33 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter... Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

~ Mt. 24:20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

~...some of Luke 21 already quoted above,
and

~ Lk. 21.33-36 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

After the Paschal meal, Jesus indicates God's will is not to extract us from any problems in the world:

...In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world . . . (and in the "High Priestly prayer" he prays regarding this very thing) . . . I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

Jn. 16.33b, 17.15

One thing J. Dwight Pentecost and Hal Lindsey fail to account for in the propagation of the dispensational view is something that is unthinkable here: Will Messianic Jews because they identify with the Jewish people, be forced to stay behind and suffer???

The faith of Jesus offered in the New Testament does not offer an escape from suffering for any who follow Him, but rather to share in this, and "obtain a better inheritance" as a result.

The concept of a pre-tribulation rapture reeks of individualistic narcissistic escapism, without saying it outright, proclaiming, "I'm outta' here, so the world can go to hell as far as I'm concerned."

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/21 22:33

Quote:

Just a question for someone who is post-trib. (I'm not trying to prove anything or debate, just wondering.)

A fair question to ask. I'll attempt to answer the best I can.

Quote:

Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man." Luke 21:36

Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth. Rev. 3:10

and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. 1Thes. 1:10

It might sound like these verses support the idea of a pre-tribulational rapture to some. But when you take into account the fact that Scripture talks about believers living during the tribulation period, then we know these verses cannot say such. In fact, when we read the book of Revelation, we see Christians in the midst of everything that is going on.

Consider the following sampling:

And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also. - (Rev 6:11 NASB)

It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. - (Rev 13:7 NASB)

Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. - (Rev 14:12 NASB)

And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly. - (Rev 17:6 NASB)

Many people are quick to point out that John never uses the word "church" or "churches" during the tribulation period as spoken of in the book of Revelation. And that is true. But to say because he never uses that word after Revelation 3 with the exception of Revelation 22, and that therefore proves that the church isn't present during the tribulation period would be misleading. For John only uses the word "church" or "churches" when writing to a specific locality (i.e. the church in Ephesus.) He NEVER uses the word to describe the Church universal (i.e. "the Church.")

Instead, from Revelation 4-22, he John uses other terms to describe the church going through the tribulation period. Indeed, over 18 times does he use the phrases brethren, saints, and witnesses to describe believers alive at this time. This by the way, excludes other symbolic imagery which refers to Christians alive during this time.

Well, you might think this is all fine and good, and explain these references to speak of saints who are simply converts that come into existence after the rapture of the church. But if you use that logic, then you have basically created a second class of saints within the church of whom the promises of Christ do not apply towards. Such might be ok if you are dispensational in your theology. But I'm not a dispensationalist, and don't believe in a funny slicing and dicing of God's word.

Such a belief, in my opinion, creates a funny world, and is an odd way of doing theology. Indeed, to me such logic does great injury to the doctrine of grace. A logic that says it is ok if some Christians suffer through the tribulation period, but not others, all because some were good boys and girls, whereas others were too late in getting their act together. Under such a logic, some Christians are destined to wrath, but others are excluded. I'm sorry, but that simply doesn't make any sense to me.

Therefore, since we have references to the church existing during the tribulation period, we must understand Christ's references to being "kept" from that hour as being able to persevere by means of His grace working in our lives through faith. Indeed, Revelation 14:22 implies as much, as the topic of perseverance and endurance are taken up in the book of Revelation. Indeed, though the anti-Christ makes war against the saints, the saints prevail and overcome him by the word of their testimony, the blood of the Lamb, and not loving their lives unto death. Though he slay them and wear them out left and right, and becomes drunk from their blood, they discover victory in the midst of tribulation and chaos.

And regarding the supernatural wrath that is to be poured out on this world, I believe we will be "kept" and protected from it during that time, but that doesn't mean we will be snatched out of the world in order to be kept from it. For we must realize that the tribulation time isn't the only time in history in which God pours out His wrath on the world. Indeed, even now God is pouring out His wrath on all the world.

For Romans 1:18 teaches that the wrath of God "is" revealed from heaven against all manner of unrighteousness. We must realize that Biblical speaking, this world is always under judgment and suffering from the wrath of God. There is never a moment when it is not. The wages of sin is always death. And people are dying every day, not because death is simply a natural part of life, but because this world we are living in is always under judgment. Even judgments that are of Biblical proportions, such as the global economic collapse the world is still suffering under. Or the flooding in Pakistan. The tsunami in Sri-Lanka. Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. The list goes on and on.

The judgments we read about in the book of Revelation are simply different in degree, not type, from what we are experiencing in the here and now. They only differ in intensity. But fundamentally they are still of the same type of judgments going on actively around the world as we speak. And all of these are designed by the Lord to teach the nations righteousness, and serve as final wake-up calls leading up to the final and last judgment, for which no repentance can be made.

At any rate, I hope these answers will satisfy your inquiry. I'll be happy to clarify and expand on this as the Lord permits.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/22 0:44

Quote:

Amillennialists say that Rev. 20.2-7 is a figurative thousand years, and the millenium is non-existent.

Not so brother. Amillennialism says we are in the millenium now, similar to Postmillennialism. The difference from Postmill is that Postmill says there has to be a golden age where the world is largely Christianized before Christ comes back.

The following is one of the main reasons I came to side with Amillennialism: It did not make sense to me that so much of Revelation is taken to be symbolic by Premillennialists, including other numbers besides the 1000 years of Rev.20, like the 24 elders, 24 thrones, 7 spirits, etc. And yet when it comes to the 1000 years they say it has to be taken literally, and they go and make a huge doctrine out of it. To me it seemed like not respecting the apocalyptic symbols and nature of the entire book.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/22 0:58

Perhaps the numbers used in Revelation, while symbolic in meaning, are quite literal in the actual quantities they represent? Perhaps there are literally 24 elders in heaven, whatever those "elders" might be. Perhaps there are to be 7 seals/bowls/trumpets. Perhaps 1,000 years is symbolic of something. But at the same time, perhaps there will actually be 1,000 years of a geo-political rule of Christ from Jerusalem? While numbers can have symbolic meaning to them, most of the times I see such numbers in the Bible, each of those numbers is actually attached to something tangibly numeric. Jesus fasting for 40 days was no doubt symbolic. But he actually fasted 40 days.

Get my drift?

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/22 1:26

Jimmy, I'm not sure if you are aware of the Amillennial response to your statement. So just in case, here it is: In Ps.50:10 we are told that God owns the cattle on a thousand hills. Are we to take that literally? Of course not. It simply means that God owns all the cattle in all the hills. In 1 Chron.16:15 we are told that God made a covenant for a thousand generations, namely the Abrahamic covenant. Is that literal? No, verse 16 says its an everlasting covenant, so the thousand is figurative of all generations. The same meaning can be applied to the millennial reign. Amillennialism argues for comparing Scripture with Scripture, and interpreting obscure passages in light of the clearer ones. So because a literal thousand year reign of Christ on earth, clearly seems to conflict with much of the rest of Scripture, especially much of the NT, we argue for seeing the thousand years as symbolic of the period between Christ's first and second coming.

Re: TimmyJoe - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/8/22 7:32

TimmyJoe wrote:

What is being spoken of in these scriptures if it is not a pre-trib rapture?

Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth. Rev. 3:10

I could be wrong but in that particular verse, pre-trib argues the meaning of the word "FROM" and post-trib argue the meaning of the word "KEEP." I noticed that a couple of years ago! I was like, "How can we agree? We're not even arguing over the same thing!"

It's a useless debate.

God bless you all,
Lisa

Re: TimmyJoe 1 more! - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/8/22 7:41

TimmyJoe wrote:

Again I'm not trying to prove anything, because I'm not 100% sure where I stand yet (pre or post-trib) deffinitely one of the two. But thanks for any help on this matter.

I am in agreement with what Phanetheus wrote here: "i am neither pre-, mid-, nor post- tribulation regarding the resurrection (and ascension?) of God's own people."

(edit and re-edit!!!: but "Lysa" does if fact "lean" heavily towards post-trib! I'm sorry Phane, i did not mean to insinuate that you were post-trib; it was the way I typed the sentence that made it seem from you. I apologize.)

(edit) And Jimmy's statement: "Personally, most of the people I know who hold to a "pan-tribulational" theology are people who are willfully ignorant concerning these things, and deliberately ignore the writings of the prophets, and things like the book of Revelation."

(edit: I'm (Lysa) listening to his sunday school teaching now)

timmyjoe, I really like the following sermon series: (/edit)

On page 15 of Zac Poonen's audio sermon's is his (Revelation) series:

<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/viewcat.php?cid=157&min=280&orderby=titleA&show=20>
(Please, remove the 'return' after /mydownloads/)

2. Another good sermon series to listen to is David Pawson's Revelations sermons too!!

<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/viewcat.php?cid=528>

That is if you really want to know more about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, listen to these!!

God bless you,
Lisa

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/8/22 7:53

hi, now that after all the sharing we now have come to a common agreement and that is that we all disagree.lol no wonder paul said iknow nothing except Jesus and HIM crucified.that is all you really have to know.jimp

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/8/22 13:50

Quote:

Jimmy, I'm not sure if you are aware of the Amillenial response to your statement. So just in case, here it is:

Yes, I'm familiar with the response. It's pretty much the same argument that people give for the "long day" theory in Genesis regarding creation. "Sometimes a day is not a day," sorta deal. However, in such passages as Psalm 50:10, et. al, numerical usage is "clearly" (a loaded term, I know) hyperbolic and poetic in function. However, numbers used in apocalyptic literature, while often being highly symbolic, seem to be very literal in their application. However even with that said, we must be careful not to broad brush and generalize this. But at the same, we should avoid the dangers of the over-spiritualization of numbers.

More often than not, I believe the amil. position spiritualizes away a lot of texts, especially old testament prophecy. So much so that the texts lose almost all meaning. Even if the 1,000 years depicted in Revelation 20 is symbolic of a long duration of time, the geo-political-spiritual reign of Christ from Jerusalem is an event that is demanded of prophecy in both testaments. Yet it is an event that seems altogether foreign from the amil. position. It shows a misunderstanding of the true nature of the kingdom of God, and ultimately I believe, the Messianic task and mission.

But I will have to hold off on any further comments regarding that for an essay I am presently working on :-)

Re: ORACIO and re: my p.9 post, on: 2010/8/22 14:39

by Oracio on 2010/8/21 20:44:35

Quote:

Amillennialists say that Rev. 20.2-7 is a figurative thousand years, and the millenium is non-existent.

Not so brother. Amillennialism says we are in the millenium now, similar to Postmillennialism. The difference from Postmil is that Postmil says there has to be a golden age where the world is largely Christianized before Christ comes back.

Oracio,

are you sure that you are not a revised post millennialist? I wondered how my teachers and so many previously read books could be wrong, yet on your word, Wikipedia was checked as a quick refresher, and here is the beginning of the article:

"Amillennialism (Latin: a- "no" + millennialism) is a view in Christian end-times theology named for its rejection of the theory that Jesus Christ will have a thousand-year long, physical reign on the earth. This is in opposition to premillennial and some postmillennial views of chapter 20 of the Book of Revelation.

In contrast, the amillennial view holds that the thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20 is a symbolic number, not a literal description; that the millennium has already begun and is identical with the current church age, (or more rarely, that it ended with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 — see Preterism). Amillennialism holds that while Christ's reign during the millennium is spiritual in nature, at the end of the church age, Christ will return in final judgment and establish a permanent physical reign.

Are you really sure you are an amillennialist????

Also, what has been recalled from past learnings, in addition to the previous post about amillennialism is that:

- disembodied martyred saint rule with Christ from the 1st century until the one and only return of Jesus Messiah, according to Rev. 6.9 and 20.2.

-when Jesus does return, He will judge all mankind, revamp the heavens and earth (I Pet. 3.10-12), and then establish His glorious reign forevermore(Rev. 21-22)

FROM THE PREVIOUS POST:

Lysa is right in stating me to be post-trib (per her edit), yet i don't think the end times covered will go a full seven years, as in Daniel's last chapter it speak of the person who endures til the 1335th day as blessed, so any time after that Jesus shall return.

As well, it is desired to make clear that the tribulation referred to is the time of Jacob's troubles, and speaks only of the nations surrounding Jerusalem for war and the abomination of desolation. The book of Daniel, Revelation, and Jesus' prophecies are not only about this "tribulation", but things preceding it and afterwards.

Shalom,
g

edited: 1 word error and clarity

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2010/8/22 19:10

Quote:

In contrast, the amillennial view holds that the thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20 is a symbolic number, not a literal description; that the millennium has already begun and is identical with the current church age

Exactly my point. The millennium has already begun and is identical with the current church age. Many Amillennialists do not like to use the word Amillennial because of its negative connotations. Some use the term "Realized Millennium".

I guess I misunderstood you when you wrote that we believe the millennium is non-existent. For Amillennialists it is non-existent in the sense of a literal physical reign of Christ on earth. In that sense you are right. But we strongly believe in the spiritual reality of the millennial reign of Christ. Christ clearly said, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." (Matt. 12:28). Christ inaugurated the kingdom of God in His first coming. Anyhow, I will let you guys share your views. God bless.

Re: - posted by TimmyJoe, on: 2010/8/23 17:48

Thanks for all the replies to my question. I will definitely pray and study more about these things.

Lisa, thanks for the sermons I'll definitely try to listen (or read) them when I have time.

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Matt. 24:42

One thing we know is that Jesus is coming! May we all be ready!!!

Thanks,
TimmyJoe