

*Things to Come
and Why They Matter*
An Introductory Study in Prophecy



Volume 6:

**When and Why Will the
Believing Be Leaving?**

Prophecy Series Sermons

Our sermon series for the summer of 2014 investigated the subject of prophecy. The response by the congregation at Vistoso Community Church was so encouraging, that we are publishing each of the sermons both in booklet form and online on our web site.

The first five sermons were released in booklet form in January of 2015. These are the final five booklets that complete our Prophecy series:

- **Volume 6: When and Why Will the Believing be Leaving?**
- Volume 7: The Signs of the Times
- Volume 8: Two Destinies
- Volume 9: Above the Fray
- Volume 10: Connecting the Pieces

In His grace,



Kevin Redig, Pastor
Vistoso Community Church



Volume 6: When and Why Will the Believing Be Leaving?

An Introduction

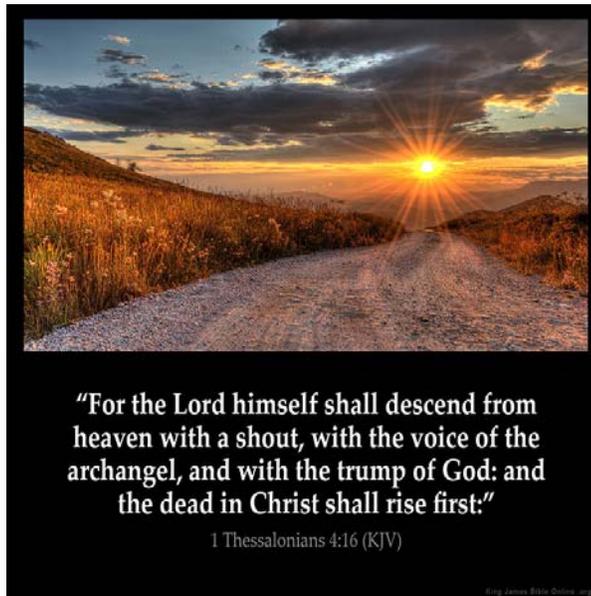
We spent our previous study investigating that great *snatching away* of the Church—the Lord bringing His Bride to Himself. This snatching, or catching up, is often referred to as the Rapture. Let me refresh your memory with the strongest Scriptural reference to this event:

For we say this to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 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 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The first issue to clarify is to what “coming of the Lord” is this passage referring? Is it the coming described in Revelation 19 in order to establish an earthly Kingdom in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant? Or is it the coming described in John 14—Jesus goes to prepare a place for us, and then returns to take us to be with Him where He is, that is in heaven. I would suggest that it is the latter, and therefore this passage is talking about Jesus gathering His Bride to Himself, and taking her to be with Him in heaven.

Furthermore, this passage tells us that we who are alive are not going to go first; but rather, all those who have died, in Christ, from the day of Pentecost right up until His return will be going first. At this point they will receive resurrection bodies united with their soul and spirit. And then we who are still alive will follow right up after them, our own bodies transformed—all together now meeting the Lord in the air. And note the closing promise, **“and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”**

So it will be no surprise that, when He returns to reign on this earth in Revelation 19, we are following along in His train. Furthermore, the reality of what is described in this passage is meant to give us comfort for at least two reasons. First, when a person dies, it is not the cessation of that person. If they have believed in Christ, their soul and spirit are immediately in His presence (II Corinthians 5:8), and, one day in the future, they will receive their glorified body as well. In fact, they are going to get their new body just ahead of those believers who are alive at the Rapture of the Church.



The second reason is that Christ is coming for His Church prior to the beginning of the time known as the Tribulation. Although the Church has been on the receiving end of persecution throughout its history, that is not the same thing as direct judgment from the hand of God. And praise the Lord, He has given His Church assurance that they are not going to have to go through that terrible time of the outpouring of God’s wrath.

Now I hope that you have taken the time to reflect upon the ramifications of the Rapture of the Church since our last time together. We are going to continue our investigation of this same topic today, but with goal of *cleaning up* a few details and refining our understanding. You might be wondering why we are spending another study on an event that happens in the “blink of an eye.” The answer is that grasping the significance of the Rapture should impact our lives—daily! It should impact how we prioritize our time, our resources, and our focus. You see the questions the Rapture thrusts upon us include: Could the Rapture occur in our lifetime?

Could it be even sooner? If so, what kinds of things should we be doing? What's the best preparation for going?

There are a number of parables in Scripture that address exactly this issue. For example, consider the parables of the fig tree, the faithful servant, the wise virgins, and the parable of the talents—all of which can be found in Matthew 24-25. These all develop a common set of themes: watchfulness, faithfulness in light of difficult circumstances, stewardship, expectancy, and preparedness. This should characterize both our individual and our corporate lives.

Can you picture what God could do with a church fellowship living in anticipation of His soon return? How many more people would we be willing to share the Gospel with, invite to Bible study, give a tract—were we convinced we had only a short time left on this earth.

Now hear me carefully at this point—I am not trying to provoke a guilt response or somehow squeeze more work out of the members of this, or any other, church. That's legalism and not Christianity. Here is how it is meant to work. First, you hear the truth. Then, there are some who will respond to what God has revealed. And for those who do, God will provide the grace to accomplish the desire for service that He has put on their hearts! You can tell this is working the way God intends when your service is from the heart, doesn't feel like a burden, and brings glory to the Lord.

So, back to our title for this lesson: ***When and Why Will the Believing Be Leaving?*** We will develop an answer to this question by working our way through three key points: How Can This Happen? When and Why Will It Happen? Why Should We Care? Plus, we will have one point of application: What does this have to do with us?

How Can This Happen?

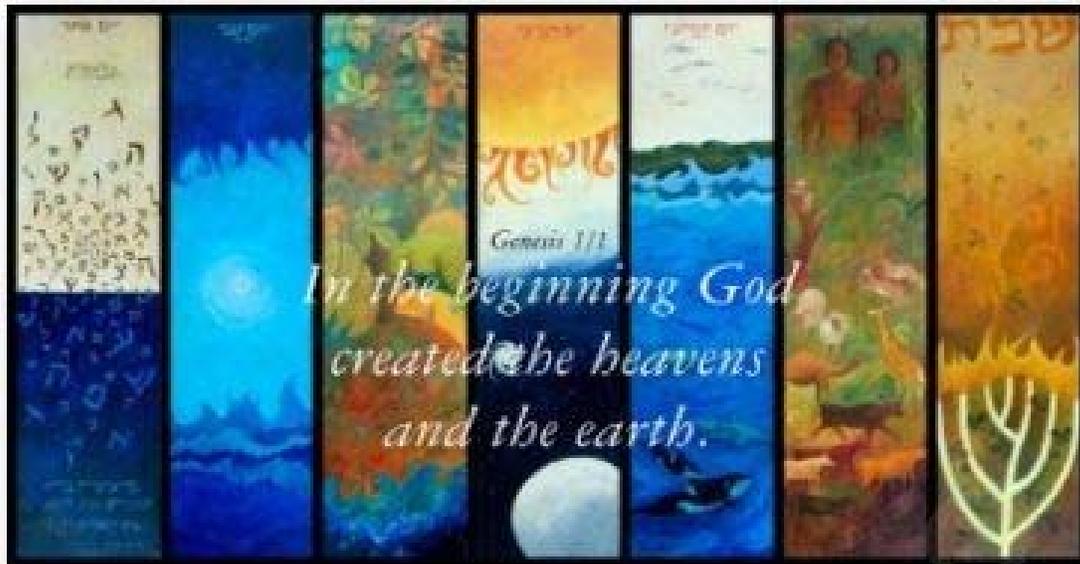
The removal of the entire Body of Christ from the earth all at one time; specifically the entire historical Church—is a fantastic, outside our normal realm of experience, clearly supernatural event!

It certainly is, and this can make things a bit difficult for us. For example, the lost around us who have bothered to understand this doctrine from God's Word have lost no time in ridiculing it (and us). Furthermore, I know that there are a number who have been carefully reading this prophecy series for whom this teaching is essentially brand new. It is so new to you that you are wondering if it could possibly be true.

My suggestion—simply give it time and continue to let the Scriptures speak to you.

I don't have any need to try and force you to take my position on this; rather, I am doing my best to lay out the truth of God's Word and it is up to you to study it diligently and come to a Spirit-led conviction.

In the meantime, let me just remind you of the following: Human history is *book-ended* by the fantastically supernatural! It began with a supernatural creation, where God spoke the entire material universe into being and then shaped our world over the course of six literal days.



It is going to conclude—the other bookend—with the rapture of the Church, the tribulation, the second coming of Christ, and a new heaven and a new earth. What does lost man say about this? They reject the supernatural and struggle to find some sort of materialistic explanation. They respond: We don't need a God myth to explain the origin of the universe—we now have the Big-Bang and other *scientific* explanations. And as for the end of our world, it won't happen until the Sun expands or our multiverse collapses, or . . . Frankly, most modern speculations about our origin and end take far more faith than does holding fast to God's revelation!

In the middle of human history, it tends to unfold most often through natural laws and processes. What does skeptical man say now? "Things just seem to continue on as they always have—I don't see any evidence of God at work!"



And then there are occasional direct interventions by God, such as the Exodus and the first Coming of Christ which includes His death on the cross and His resurrection. What does lost man say about this? “The Israelites really escaped the Egyptians through six inches of marshy water where their chariots couldn’t follow; and of course the disciples carried off the body. There is no such thing as a supernatural resurrection.”

Are you starting to see the pattern? Whether God acts, doesn’t act, or intervenes in a remarkable way—the skeptic has a way of dismissing it. Listen to what Jesus had to say in the seventh chapter of Luke:

To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other: “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not cry.” For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, “He has a demon.”

The Son of Man came eating and drinking and you say, “He is a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.”

Luke 7:31-36

Listen, here is an important principle for you: the natural condition of man is unbelief. When mired in unbelief, an individual can always find an excuse to reject the truth. Our job is to simply serve the truth and let the Holy Spirit work on the heart. If a person rejects the convicting work of the Spirit—leave it to the Spirit to break down resistance.

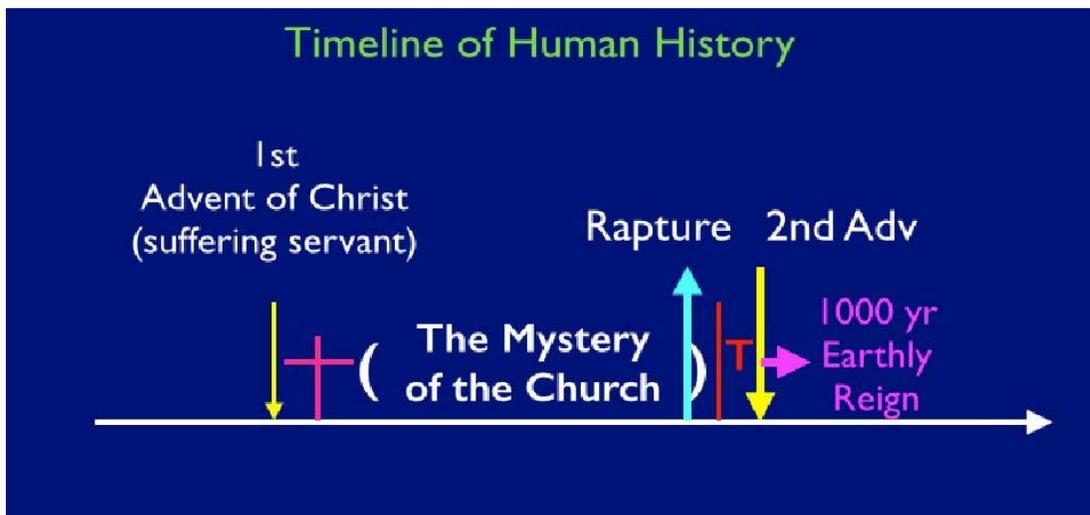
So to summarize this first point, I am simply suggesting that the fact that lost mankind pooh-poohs the Rapture is certainly not reason enough to reject it. We need to focus not on what the skeptic has to say, but on what the Scriptures coherently teach. Remember, that our salvation is in and of itself a fantastic, supernatural event that could never have come from the mind of man—and it would be a terrible mistake to discount it on those grounds alone!

When and Why Will It Happen?

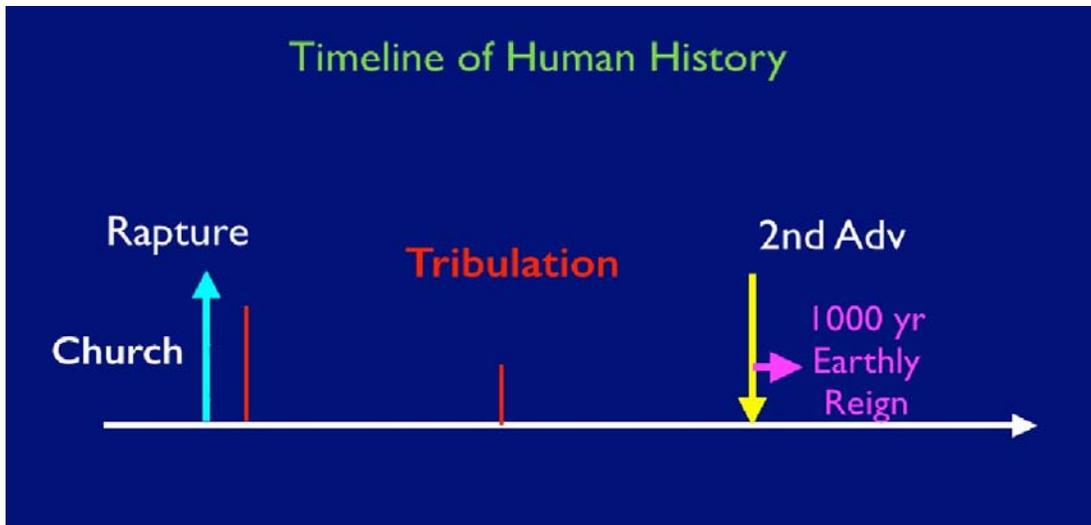
The two big questions are when and why. By *when*, I am referring to the fact that there are a number of different views regarding the exact timing of the Rapture. I have presented it as the event that closes the church-age, but if you study this further you will come across alternative explanations and so I want to prepare you for that eventuality. And as for the *why*, understanding why God might have chosen to snatch away both the living and dead members of His body might help us come to grips with the reality of this event. Now these two issues, the *when* and the *why*, are usually tackled separately. I plan to consider them together, and I think that will really help our understanding. In fact, as we continue to let the Scriptures speak to us and see how God's plan fits together, in time I believe it will be very natural for us to see that something like the Rapture is actually an inevitable part of the plan of God rather than such a far out, hard to believe, event.

Some General Discussion

Begin by recalling the time-line we developed thus far:



Now, let me expand the Tribulational part of the diagram.



As mentioned, I have positioned the Rapture to close out the church-age—this is often referred to as the pre-tribulation position. Although there are those who don't believe in any such event as the Rapture, for those who do, the remaining issue is one of timing. There are those who believe the Rapture occurs at the mid point of the Rapture (3.5 years in), at the point judgment really heats up (about two thirds of the way through the Tribulation), and following the Tribulation (commonly called the post-tribulation view).

So why do I think the Rapture occurs prior to the Tribulation. I have three reasons.

First, It is Scriptural. Scripture seems to indicate that that the Rapture occurs before the tribulation. Consider the following:

... how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. 1 Thessalonians 1:10

Paul is excited about what is going on in Thessalonica, and has been telling everyone. Notice how part of what they believed was that Jesus was coming, and he was going to deliver them from “the wrath” to come. In the Greek there is a definite article in front of wrath, and as a reference to the Tribulation, the word wrath could actually be capitalized. Consider a second passage from the book of 1Thessalonians:

*For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain
salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Thessalonians 5:9

Now there are some who suggest that this is simply a reference to avoiding hell, but the flow, from Paul’s first letter to the church in Thessalonica to his second letter, does not seem to support this position. Paul wrote his second letter immediately on the heels of his first one. The cause was apparently a counterfeit letter that had been circulated within the church (II Thessalonians 2:1-2). This letter claimed that Christ had already come, and the persecution that believers in Thessalonica were experiencing was really a part of the Tribulation. The reason they were so upset is that they had understood that the church was not going to go through the wrath of God, and thinking it possible that they were in the midst of the Tribulation made them terribly confused.

As we’ll see shortly, Paul calms them down and assures them the Tribulation has not yet started and won’t—until the church has been “taken out of the way,” which occurs at the Rapture.

Let me give you something further to think about with respect to those who hold the view which has the Rapture occurring during the Tribulation—basically, they all agree that the church is going to avoid the worst of the “wrath” of the Tribulation, and it won’t be that bad until part way through. Almost like a little wrath will be good for the church.

My response is twofold: 1) The idea of *purgatory* for the church is no more Biblical than purgatory for the individual; and 2) To think the wrath is not going to be that bad is to ignore the start of the Tribulation in Revelation Chapter 6. It starts with Jesus as the Lamb of God, the only one qualified to open the scroll, peeling back the first seal. This seal is the release of the Antichrist upon the earth.



In succession, war, famine and death are released—the so-called four horsemen of the Apocalypse. How could this possibly constitute a wrath that is not “that bad?”

It is true that the Tribulation gets worse as it goes on, but it is most certainly a time of terrible judgment right from the beginning. If it is God’s intent that His Bride does not come under His wrath, then

that Bride must be removed prior to the start of the Tribulation!

Second, It Makes Sense. The second reason I think the rapture comes before the tribulation is that it makes complete sense out of the otherwise contradictory language regarding the future coming of Christ.

For example the Scriptures say that Christ both comes in the air and comes to the earth. He both comes for His saints and with His saints; both to bring reward and to judge; without signs, and with many signs. His return is referred to as the Blessed Hope and a time of destruction. These are mutually contradictory things—how could they both be true of the same event?

The answer is that one is descriptive of the John 14 coming of Christ to take His Church to be with Him forever; and the other is descriptive of His coming to earth to establish a literal kingdom in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant. For His coming for His church will be in the air, for His saints, to distribute crowns for faithful service, at any moment—and of course no wonder it is referred to as the Blessed Hope. In contrast, His coming to this earth will be with His saints following in His train, will lead to the death of all those arrayed against Him, and will be preceded by many signs which will go unheeded. What lies between these two events? The Tribulation!

Third, The Place of the Church. One final reason, I believe the Rapture comes before the Tribulation and that is the place of the church in the book of Revelation. The Greek word most commonly used for the church in the New Testament is ekklesia. It literally means an assembly of “called-out ones.” It is very common to find this exact word in the book of Revelation—19 times in the first three chapters alone.

However, if you search the text during the chapters descriptive of the Tribulation, Chapters 6-18, you will find it completely absent. That's easy to explain if the church has been removed. Furthermore Chapters 4 and 5, which describe a scene in heaven, include a description of a group called "the 24 elders." An excellent case can be made for this group to be associated with the church, which once again makes perfect sense if the Bride of Christ has been brought to heaven prior to the Tribulation.

I have laid out just a few general reasons for assigning the Rapture prior to the Tribulation and to close the church-age. What I would like to do now is to get into what I consider to be the real *meat* of this lesson—two things that really firm up the timing of the Rapture and, through addressing the issue of why, make something like the Rapture almost a necessity in the Plan of God.

The Removal of That Which Restrains

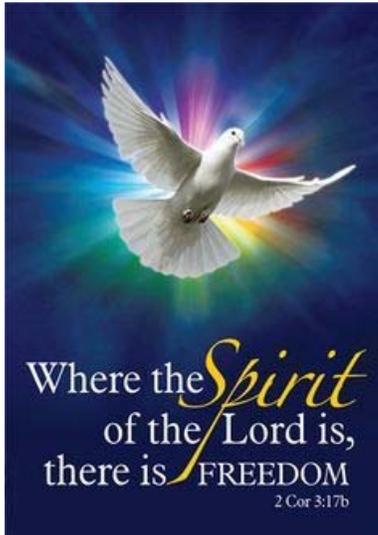
The Next Step in God's Plan for the Ages includes the Removal of *That Which Restrains!* Please open your Bible to II Thessalonians 2:5-12.

Some Introduction. Before we get into our main discussion of this passage, if you will note Verses 1-3, you can see the situation that prompted Paul's writing of this letter. The Thessalonians are shook up because they received a letter, apparently claiming to be from Paul, that indicated the persecution they were experiencing was because they were already in the Tribulation. And of course, the idea of somehow missing the Rapture of the Church had them in somewhat of a panic.

Now as we get into the passage, note the multiple references to the "man of Lawlessness" in Verses 6-11. This is none other than the beast of Revelation Chapter 13 or the Antichrist.

Also notice in the passage that something is currently holding back, or restraining, this Antichrist from coming on the scene. There have been many suggestions through the centuries regarding the identity of this "restrainer" including the Roman Empire, Israel, an angel, and so on. First of all, whatever or whomever it is must be powerful enough to hold back the plan of Satan.

Second, in the text this restrainer is first of all referred to as a "what" (Verse 6) and a "he" (Verse 7). The first example is neuter in form in Greek and the second is masculine. Interestingly enough, the word translated Spirit is neuter in form, and when the Spirit is referred to as a member of the Trinity the reference becomes masculine.



You can see where I am going—I think the identity of the Restrainer, the one who is currently holding back the plan of Satan and the unveiling of the Antichrist, is none other than the Holy Spirit! When the Holy Spirit “steps aside,” things move forward in the prophetic timetable.

An Important Corollary. But there is a very important corollary to the Holy Spirit as restrainer. What else is the Holy Spirit doing during this age? Well, He is revealing Scripture, convicting hearts, and regenerating those who believe. True! And I think He will continue to do so during the Tribulation. But what else? He is also indwelling every believer so that their bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit, He is sealing every

believer, involved with filling and enabling, and He is baptizing every new believer into the Body Christ, building up the Church as he provides spiritual gifts and enables each believer.

Now from our earlier study of the church—what is its special function? Or asked another way, “What is the spiritual warrant of the church?” We learned it is God-ordained and enabled. It has Christ as its head, a gifted body, the gates of hell will not prevail against it, it puts the glory of God on display, and is His means of evangelism and discipleship.

With this ministry of the Holy Spirit in mind, what I am suggesting to you, and what I want you to consider, is that the Spirit of God as He functions through the Church is what is holding back the plans of Satan. When He steps aside and the Church is removed, the Antichrist will be unleashed, which is really the first seal of Revelation 6.

As a case study—consider England just prior to the time of Wesley and Whitfield. Social conditions were absolutely horrendous. Alcoholism was rampant and things were so bad that 80% of the children died by age five. What happened, a huge revival swept the land led by the preaching of John Wesley, George Whitfield, and others—and more importantly, the Church took hold and changed society. This change preserved society and restrained evil. Even today, although I believe the church in North America is down, even now it is not yet out!

The evil and sin have many faces in our day: same-sex marriage, drug legalization, euthanasia, sexual perversion, humanistic education, and the list goes on. Can you imagine what would happen to society if the Church was removed from North America? Can you see that almost overnight the plummet into gross sin would occur with no foreseeable way out.

Consider these observations by Bible teachers of different generations that cover the last 100 years:

When the Church is “gathered together” and taken to be with Christ in the air; the salt and light will be withdrawn. . . Like cages in a zoo suddenly opened, so will it be when the Restrainer is taken out of the way and lawlessness runs wild and rampant in the streets.” (C. Swindoll)

It is perhaps even more like the doors of a notorious prison suddenly being opened. Even a church that has become largely ineffective, like that in America, has an incalculable effect on the restraint of evil.

What is keeping the Antichrist from putting in his appearance on the world stage? You are! You and every other member of the body of Christ on earth. . . True, it is the Holy Spirit who is the real restrainer. . . Put all believers together then, with the Holy Spirit indwelling each of us, and you have a formidable restraining force.” (D. Barnhouse)



Now some say that the idea of removing the Church from the Tribulation is cowardly—as if the Church should somehow go through this time of suffering. This betrays a lack of understanding of church

history, for throughout its history Christians of all ages have undergone persecution, as they are right now in many parts of the world.

Furthermore, the Word of God makes it clear that this should have been our expectation all along. In John chapter 16, Jesus tells his followers that in “this world they will have tribulation.” In chapter 15 He says, “They persecuted me so they will persecute you.”

So persecution, or lack thereof, is not the issue. Instead, consider the difference associated with the terrible predictions regarding the tribulation. It is a time revolving around Satan's last ditch effort to wrest God's creation away from Him. Much of mankind is blindly following Satan, and God is steadily ramping up the judgment. He is giving those unbelievers on the earth one last chance to repent, and is steadily increasing the pressure, through judgment, to encourage them to do so.

If ever there was a time when it looks like Satan is gaining the upper hand and may prevail, it is during the Tribulation. The wrath of God is the result—and God did not appoint the Church to suffer wrath! So He is going to remove it first!

There is a specially anointed 144,000 and specially enabled pair of witnesses—but no Church. The souls of those beheaded by the anger of Satan against God's people are going to fill the space under the altar. Four billion or more of the earth's population are going to die. God has decided ahead of time to remove His Bride while the closing moments of rebellion play out.

Elimination of the Potential for Conflict Between the Church and Israel

The eleventh chapter of Romans makes it clear that God has chosen to set aside Israel, inserted the Church, and has every intent of once again working with Israel at some future time.

*God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew
. . . Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their
failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! . .
For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this
mystery. . . that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the
fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved. . .*

This passage provides only brief excerpts from Romans 11:2-26—consider reading the entire chapter closely to assure yourself that God has a future plan for Israel.

Now the salvation of Israel is not going to come easily as the book of Zechariah makes clear.

And it shall come to pass in all the land, says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die. . . I will bring the one-third through the fire. . . They will call on My name and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The Lord is my God. Zechariah 13:8-9

And specifically whom are they calling upon?

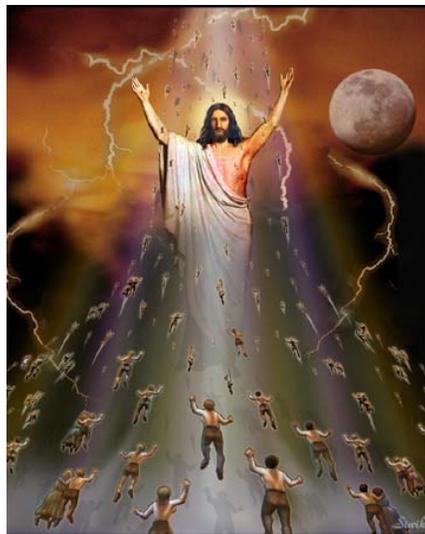
*. . . they will look on Me whom they pierced."
Zechariah 12:10*

A very clear reference to Jesus as the Messiah that they finally recognize. Now I want you to think about the potential conflicts between the Church and Israel at the point unbelieving Israel is attempting to re-establish temple sacrifice. And at the same time, there will be a great swell of evangelism prompted by the 144,000 Jewish witnesses. (Note: they are not Christians, but believers!) How does the Church mesh with these activities? How would the church react to the offering of temple sacrifice. In short, how would these two different agencies through whom God has worked during different times in history—function side by side at the same time?

If you are thinking—"This would be confusing!"—you are right! In reality, it won't be a problem. God is going to end the age of the Church by simply removing it from this earth before returning to finish His plans for Israel.

There is more that could be said about the "When and Why," but the above points make something like the Rapture an inevitable part of the plan that God is unfolding for the ages.

As we have seen, the Church was not designed by God to be the recipient of His wrath, but to put on display His glory. Certainly, she will suffer persecution while representing Him to a lost world—but not as an object of His wrath. So He will remove His Bride prior to the final outpouring of His wrath, in one final effort to get the attention of mankind that they might turn to Him and be saved.



Furthermore, His purposes for His chosen people are yet unfulfilled. They may currently be hardened in rejection, but the pressures that builds during the Tribulation will cause many to turn to God and cry out for salvation. Then it will be that they are ready for the coming of their King—One in the line of David who will rule over Jerusalem. This is their legacy, not that of the Church, and the rapture of the Church makes sure there is no conflict, competition, or jealousy. It is ours, as the Church and Bride of Christ, to be with Him when He returns, and what a glorious legacy it is!

A Question of Application: What Does This Have to Do With Us?

If the concept of the Rapture is true, then there is kind of uncertainty associated with the Lord's coming for His Church that should generate a certain expectancy within the soul of each Christian.

An expectancy which recognizes that it would be much better to be found by the Lord to be faithfully engaged in the Master's business when He returns than to be squandering the days on this earth that He has given us. Let me show you this expectancy from the pages of Scripture—take careful note of the descriptive words applied to the Lord's return.

*Awaiting eagerly the revelation of
Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:7*

. . . eagerly await for a savior. . . Philipians 3:20

The Lord is near. . . Philipians 4:5

. . . we are waiting up for the Son. . . 1Thessalonians 1:10

. . . looking for the blessed hope. . . Titus 2:13

To those who eagerly wait for Him. . . Hebrews 9:28

And there are many, many more from the epistles of James, Peter, and Jude—in short it is a pervasive Scriptural theme. This is what we mean when we say that the Rapture is imminent—it could come at any time, and when rightly understood, should spark a readiness in the heart of every Christian. As I come to grips with this principle from the Scriptures, here is what weighs on my heart as a pastor: there is a *failed way* and a *successful way* of dealing with God's sovereign plan for history.

The Failed Way. Here is a description of failure as recorded by the prophet Jeremiah.

My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.” Jeremiah 2:13

Or if you prefer the New Testament equivalent, it is the Church who has “*forsaken their first love*” (Revelation 2:4).

In many ways, this failure to stay centered within God’s Sovereign plan is the history of mankind. God intervenes and does a mighty work—man responds for a while and then slowly drifts away.

The Successful Way. What does success look like? Let me relay a story I recently read that wonderfully illustrates the spiritual principle. Famed English explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton was on an expedition to the Antarctic. He left some of his men on Elephant Island as part of the expedition while he continued onward. When it was time to pick up his men, the ice had begun to reform early, and three successive times he was stymied in an attempt to retrieve them. Finally, he was able to wind his way to the island through a succession of narrow channels.

When his ship popped out of the mists, to his surprise, he found his men waiting, supplies packed and ready to board. In astonishment, he asked them how they could possibly have known he would arrive at the time he did? (Remember, this is long before cell phones, and even radio contact.) One of the men replied, “We didn’t know when you would arrive, but every day the man you left in charge would announce, ‘Get your things ready boys, the boss may come today!’” Every day the men packed up their gear and staged it for loading—so that they were ready to go without a moment’s delay.

Do you see the spiritual dimension to this story? For certain, these men weren’t distracted or caught up in worldly things. Packing and unpacking every day meant they learned how to *get by* on the essentials. What a great spiritual parallel for us. How often do we try to make ourselves as comfortable as possible in this world, forgetting that the *Boss* may come at any time and we need to be ready to go without a moment’s hesitation.

Perhaps that illustration is a bit too flip for you. Let me give you the first century equivalent. It is based upon an Aramaic word: Maranatha!

Mar (Lord) ana (our) tha (come)

Maranatha—Our Lord Come! This idea of an imminent coming is not new. This was the one word prayer of the early church. It was their hourly hope, their eager expectation as they faced significant persecution. The fact He hasn't come, thank God, has allowed you and me to enter the Kingdom of His dear Son through faith in His finished work. Let our heart beat with theirs each morning—our bags packed and ready to go! In the meantime, thank the Lord for the gifts He has given and praise God that we would use them for His glory as we appropriate His grace for another day.

If you are reading this and don't feel ready for the Lord's return, then take to heart the following Scripture:

The Spirit and the Bride say come. . .And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Revelation 22:17

We "drink" by trusting that Jesus is the Son of God who came to bear our sins upon Himself while on the cross. That, because he received upon Himself the judgment we deserved, He is able to satisfy the Father and secure for those who trust Him a pardon that brings them back into a relationship of sons with their heavenly Father.



Vistoso Community Church

OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Vistoso Community Church is to bring glory to God by completing the work He has given us to do.

John 17:4

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to be used by God to help the lost receive eternal life, and those with eternal life to grow in grace and knowledge.

OUR CORE VALUES

- Christ is the only Lord and Savior. Acts 2:36
- The Bible is the inspired word of God.
II Timothy 3:16-17
- We honor God through traditional worship.
Psalm 19:14
- Our loving fellowship strengthens us.
Hebrews 10:24-25
- Seeking the lost is our commission. Matthew 28:19-20
- The principles of divine establishment are God given.
Nehemiah. 4:14



VISTOSO COMMUNITY CHURCH

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