

## General Topics :: Why should I believe in bible prophecy if I do believe in a pre tribulation rapture

### Why should I believe in bible prophecy if I do believe in a pre tribulation rapture - posted by deltadom (), on: 2019/6/7 7:

I have struggled with this question if you believe in a pre tribulation question is that if most of the book of revelation is not written to the church then why should I believe in it if I believe in a pre tribulation rapture  
Shouldn't I cut that out my bible and any other passage to the Jews  
Doesn't this cause a problem ?

As I do believe In a post tribulational rapture and that I will go through the tribulation and see the antichrist doesnt all bible prophecy become irrelevant if you don't experience it

It is also the same about a revival I long for a revival bit I would need to experience one my self

I wish god could remove all bitterness and unforgiveness out of my heart and a revival could start with me  
As a christian i have been through 3 church splits and went to a church for ten years or more after the church split and then it split about the pre tribulation rapture and I have been going from church to church not feeling at home

I do not want to feel bitter or unforgiveness towards the churches I was previously in  
Pray as i have always wanted to take a back seat in church and feel like the dead sea sometimes with no outlet and I am finding it hard to find mid week fellowship on a Tuesday as that's the only time I can get time of as I work till 9pm

I so want to feel part of a true body of the Messiah

### Re: Why should I believe in bible prophecy if I do believe in a pre tribulation raptu - posted by docs (), on: 2019/6/7 8:43

Hearts out to you bro. I'm thinking many have been where you are at.

One thing is for sure is that this teaching is beginning to be examined again by brethren in the church and it is dawning on many that the teaching comes up exegetically short and above all did not make its appearance in the church until the 1830s. In vain does one search for its supposed origins among the early church fathers.

Many are unaware that along with a pre-trib rapture it is taught by many of its leading proponents that tribulation saints will not be part of the church or be indwelt by the Holy Spirit after expressing faith in Christ during the tribulation. Go figure . I'm reading a book now about the early origins of the Brethren movement which Darby came to dominate. He was repeatedly warned by notable and leading men of God (including Tregelles and George Mueller) that he was opening a Pandora's box of unorthodoxy but history shows he did not listen but instead unleashed a torrent of disfellowship and excommunication against those who disagreed with him. That's not fanciful revisionist thinking but just plain historic fact.

### Re: Why should I believe in bible prophecy if I do believe in a pre tribulation raptu - posted by drifter (), on: 2019/6/8 16:

"I wish god could remove all bitterness and unforgiveness out of my heart and a revival could start with me"

Dominic, forgiveness is something you must decide to do. I know it may not be easy. I have been hurt by people in the church as well. One person in particular I had to forgive literally hundreds of times, because the hurt he caused me kept coming back and plaguing my mind. Every time it did, I would consciously say "I forgive him" "I release him" etc. Now, even though he does not consider me a brother in Christ and has not talked to me in years, I still love him and expect to see him in heaven. There is no bitterness in my heart.

I have a feeling that there will be differences in doctrine on non essentials right up to the time when Jesus returns. The question is, are we going to let these things divide us? I believe in a pre tribulation rapture; do you still love me in Christ? Because I love you and anyone else who truly belongs to Jesus, regardless of their eschatological views.

**Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2019/6/8 18:23**

I have no problem with the salvation of someone who believes in the pre tribulational view but to me the view seems absurd

I believe that someone who believes in the pretribulation is 80 percent saved

I love you in Christ Nigel

I have no problem in fellowship if I could personally go up to each person that I have hurt through my actions and say for give me I would do it with the lords grace and courage

With these theories about the end times they are ok when they are layed on charts or in diagrams but when these events really happen as there is not going to be a sign we are now entering the tribulation or we are now entering the millennium

What breaks my heart is that I find it hard to fit in .

Is that the tribulational that I have personally been through with every day working in a hospital seeing the dead and the dying.

Yet my biggest struggle is finding believers that I can truly converse with on subjects that are close to my heart as there are some subjects that are completely lost due to lack of biblical knowledge.

I feel like driftwood wanting to find a church home and also like the dead sea having so much knowledge but no outlet

As I love the first five books of moses and things like the minor prophets or books that are not normally preached on church , I love the new testament but I love history

I know when I went into the Christian bookshop and was trying so desperately to find books to encourage and strengthen believers yet was discouraged when I found books that did not pass Walter Martin's basic idea of what a cult is. It broke my heart.

When one wants to recommend Christian books to encourage peoples faith

My problem is that because I have read so much it is like hard to find a church to not get viewed as judgemental or Pharisaic because you simply love god's word

When talking about things like the pre tribulation view I do not want to go to a church and be ostracized because of a belief in a non essential.

It is so hard to go to a church and watch when people engage in movements such as the NAR movement or word of faith movement or the ecumenical movement it is like cancer in the church it gives you very few options left open

It is hard when you just want to go to church and discuss scripture actually after the service and not have sermon amnesia and then go to Sunday next week or meet with believers for one time till the next week

I want to discuss sermons and the bible over lunch and the whole day

I feel like driftwood

I like listening to the bible and bible commentaries and am very tech savvy , it has been so hard as my dad formally being a pastor and having a lot of responsibility and for the last 10 years just taking a back seat

It seems we have more of a church that is not a body but more rather a business.

There seems to be know gatekeepers or people checking on sermons in church .

Where are the people who stand up in a sermon and say that is wrong on biblical grounds.

People follow like sheep even if pastors like Shepard's lead them to arsenic water they will drink it even if it kills them.

Where is the congregation who know are as biblically literature as the pastor.

I have had so many churches say they are berean until they are confronted with a truth they do not like and there views change

All I would like is somewhere in a church where I can actually discuss biblical things beyond the pulpit whilst the congregation has sermon amnesia

I have felt in the past few years gone from church to church and wish I know where god wanted me and I so want to forgive the path of destruction I have left in my wake

I know I am a sinner and I need Jesus but I wish time machines were a possibility

It sometimes annoys me with the biblical resources we have sermons that do not have the power of prayer and information

We can have access to multiple commentaries or biblical information and even Wikipedia or Google earth to find specific locations mentioned in scripture

With the scientific knowledge at our fingertips

I think one of the posts that saddened me was the death of the prayer meeting and I used to run a prayer meeting but with my work so overwhelming me with having to work till 9pm and then you have the average person who is unsaved having to work from Monday to Sunday just to make ends meet

In an endless cycle of getting back from work , eating , spending time in bible , sleeping then in a perpetual cycle of doom and having only one day of for a midweek meeting and having to fight for the weekend of at work

**Re: Pretribulation rapture - posted by RogerB (), on: 2019/6/8 18:46**

You are not alone in your struggle. Please don't give up. The church is under attack. The wolves have crept in unaware with new methods and slick messages. Stay strong and you will encounter other true believers in your life. Stay at the feet of Jesus especially during this time just like the disciples. Ask and pray for truth alone.

Religious error is professionally pushed today and heresy is rampant. Come out of the heresy churches where you have been stifled and labeled. Years ago the congregation would hear a matter. Not so today. The songs, the prayers, the sermon have all been planned for you. You are just to come sing sit and pay.

Just what you need say those who write and sell the weekly sermons. Be careful in your day to day life and be sure to love all. The still small voice will lead you to your answers if you stay at the feet of Jesus. See Amos 5:4-6. Seek Jesus, Avoid Bethel, if Bethel is the problem.

**Re: - posted by drifter (), on: 2019/6/8 20:25**

Dominic, I have literally not one christian I can talk to in the city I live in. It's not for lack of trying, believe me. I've been to many churches and Bible studies. I share your concern when I see so much word of faith/prosperity and NAR teaching in churches, and the church members have no discernment.

I'll ask church members questions like "So what has God been speaking to you lately?" or say thing like "Isn't God's presence wonderful" and they look at me like I just walked out of the nearest insane asylum. (Not that I walk up to them and just start to say these things; generally these are people I know.) Or they've been sucked into some craziness like Bethel or some T.V. preacher.

But in spite of all that, I give thanks for what I do have.

I have the sweet presence of Jesus with me.

I have a good church, even though it is 3,000 miles away and I can only watch online.

I have true believers on this forum I can talk to and pray with (I'm very thankful for you all; your support and prayers have helped me through some very difficult times.)

**Re: Why should I believe in bible prophecy if I do believe in a pre tribulation raptu - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 20**

Hi Dom,

Thank you for your sincerity. I do think that many post-trib believers have a tendency to take an us versus them stance when it comes to those who believe in a "rapture."

Some seem to think that those who embrace the idea are simply led astray by either wanting it to be true or falling prey to false teachers.

This issue has been discussed at length since I joined SermonIndex as a college student back in 2003. Many of those discussions morph into divisive debates where people endlessly try to "prove" the preeminence of their position on the issue.

Unfortunately, people sometimes view the other side of a doctrinal dispute as they "enemy" or even "wolves in sheep's clothing." The term "blind" is often used to describe those who might not see things the way that someone else might see them.

Let me share something that might help: Most believers aren't trying to be deceived. Most are truly and sincerely seeking wholeheartedly after our Lord. So, how is it that people who truly have been born of the Spirit and wholeheartedly seek the Lord might arrive to a different view on a matter?

This goes beyond debates over eschatology. Think back to all of the debates in the SermonIndex forums over the past fifteen years. People have debated the precise timing or manner of the Lord's return, tithing, music, Bible versions, manifestations of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, head coverings, haircuts, the gifts of the Spirit, voting, Calvinism, etc. On and on the debates go!

Often, one person or group of people are so adamant that they are right on one of those issues that they are willing to spiritually and publicly eviscerate those with whom they disagree. I've seen "allies" on one issue later viciously go head-to-head in debate on a different issue.

I think that it is important to remember that, in reality, most of us are at different stages of learning and maturity when it comes to our walk with Christ. Think about it: You are not at the same stage that you were just a few years ago. You mature over time. You learn more through prayerful study.

This is not new. Paul and Barnabas squabbled. Paul and Peter squabbled. There was even deception at various stages of the early (first century) church! Think about the Council in Jerusalem in Acts chapter 15. This was just 15 chapters into the Book of Acts and there was already some disagreement over certain matters.

One thing that is important is to not see other believers as "the enemy." That is the reaction that lacks humility. It is still wrong if people deduce that they are not believers because of a disagreement over something that is non-essential.

I'm going to say this too: The issue of whether the Lord returns after the Tribulation (with believers forced to endure the wrath and judgments of God) or whether they are "raptured" is not really an "essential" doctrine of the Church.

Now, I do think that it is obviously important -- as is all doctrine. However, I think back to believers in the first few centuries of the Church. Who even had a "Bible?" Who had access to physical copies of all of the epistles of Paul? Who had a Bible dictionary, or Bible atlas, or Strong's Concordance?

My point is that we live in a time of which we have access to amazing resources that early believers never had. Yet, those believers were not "unbelievers" because they did not have the resources and, yes, uniform beliefs in EVERY aspect of doctrine.

That is one of the problems with denominationalism. It tends to separate the body of Christ by unnecessary creeds of "w

e believe." We are willing to disassociate and separate ourselves from believers who do not align to all of the various doctrines that we feel (at a given point of time) to be vital -- when many of them are anything but essential.

Some churches have a habit of becoming indoctrination centers -- with indoctrination that strays far from the essentials of the faith. They require (as a prerequisite of fellowship, ministry or leadership) certain things that might not be universally agreed upon by the Body of Christ. Worse: Some of them are willing to declare that someone is not actually in the Body of Christ if they do not agree on some of those issues.

In this particular issue, I remember mentioning how David Wilkerson said that he was "Pan-Tribulation" -- meaning that it would all "pan out" in the end if we simply keep our eyes upon Jesus. People on both sides of the issue were sincerely worried about (or for) me. There were private messages back then -- and there were pre-trib and post-trib people who were concerned that I would go to Hell because of deception.

The pre-trib people thought that I was in danger of deception if I "missed the rapture" and assumed that I was still right with God. The post-trib people thought that I was in danger of heresy or taking the mark of the beast by assuming that it couldn't be such a mark because the rapture hadn't taken place yet.

What made matters worse was when I insisted that I would be fine because my eyes were on the Lord. I told them that I didn't need to take a final position and that my salvation didn't depend upon whether or not I believed in a rapture or post-trib coming of the Lord. I was called "wishy-washy" and "unwilling to believe." One person insisted that I was some sort of universalist.

In the preface to the Banner of Truth's printing of William Gurnall's *A Christian in Complete Armour*, Leonard Ravenhill wrote about how Gurnall, in his day, was rejected by opposing groups because he didn't side with either. This is what often happens today too.

Even today, after years and years of earnest study, I have yet to draw a conclusion on the exact manner and timing of the Lord's return to the point that I am willing to declare it as indisputable. I am neither settled that there will be a rapture or that there will not be. This is despite the fact that I have studied this matter honestly, earnestly, carefully and, of course, prayerfully. This is despite being well-educated and well-read -- with access to enormous resources.

I prefer that churches don't teach a definitive position on issues that aren't beyond dispute too. Why can't church teachers introduce something and mention that there are different views on that matter? The important thing, of course, is to keep our eyes on the Lord -- and to love Him with everything in us. We must continue to study his Word. However, we cannot allow different views on inessential matters define how we approach our brothers and sisters in Christ.

It has come to the point that I stepped back from debating these issues over and over again (which became the norm here for years). I still read (and continue to read) the discussions on such issues. I am entirely open for correction or changing my mind. I even told this to one believer who then said that I needed to "change my heart first."

I think that some of the most important things that is missing in some of these discussions are humility and love. Without love, we are as effective as resounding brass and tinkling cymbals (1 Corinthians 13). We are "nothing" without that charity.

Worse: Without love, we are not exhibiting to one another -- and unbelievers who venture into these forums who are searching for something -- that we are born of God (1 John 4:7-8).

**Re: A little history and context - posted by docs (), on: 2019/6/9 15:48**

"The great object of the enemy in denying the rapture of the saints before the appearing of the Lord, and in the consequent rejection of a distinct Jewish remnant, with Jewish hopes and Jewish piety, is to deny and destroy the proper faith of the church of God, and to set the church itself aside. Far be it from me to say, that all who have fallen into this system have any such purpose, or are even aware of the effect; but the effect is nothing the less produced, and the loss theirs, though the intention be not. They are deceived by the enemy, though far from intending to deceive with him."

(J. N. Darby - from "The Rapture of the Saints and the Character of the Jewish Remnant")

So according to Darby to deny a pre-tribulation rapture is:

- 1) To deny and destroy the proper faith of the church of God
- 2) To set the church itself aside.
- 3) To be deceived by the enemy, though far from intending to deceive with him."

"Those who believe in the rapture of the Church before the appearing of Christ hold that the Church has a special and peculiar character and connection with Christ....The Church's joining Christ has nothing to do with Christ's appearing or coming to earth. Her place is elsewhere. She sits in Him already in heavenly places. She has to be brought there as to bodily presence....The thing she has to expect for herself is not...Christ's appearing, but her being taken up where He is....It is this conviction, that the Church is properly heavenly, in its calling and relationship with Christ, forming no part of the course of events on the earth, which makes the rapture so simple and clear; and on the other hand, it shows how the denial of its rapture brings down the Church to an earthly position, and destroys its whole spiritual character and position." (J. N. Darby - "The Rapture of the Saints")}

Again, according to Darby, to deny a pre-tribulation rapture is:

- 1) To bring the Church down to an inferior earthly position and to destroy its whole spiritual character and position.

I can't say for sure but maybe many do not know that the early controversy was fraught with statements such as Darby made and it was these type of such statements that brought division between the brethren. Plus Darby's highly caustic denunciations and attacks upon the character of those he saw as his enemies. To disagree with Darby was a dangerous thing to do in his day but it's revealing to see how he characterized those who disagreed with his pre-trib theory. Perhaps this type of characterization of others has followed the movement at least to some degree and is part of the reason it has met such stern opposition from many quarters. How a movement starts and the spirit and temper of its founders sometimes follows into the coming years.

"It is obvious that, apart from the knowledge of dispensational truth, the believer will not be intelligently adjusted to the present purpose and will of God in the world. Such knowledge alone will save him from assuming the hopeless legality of the dispensation that is past or from undertaking the impossible world-transforming program belonging to the dispensation which is to come." (Lewis Chafer - from "Major Bible Themes")

And so according to Lewis Chafer a leading pre-trib proponent and advocate of dispensationalism one cannot be intelligently adjusted to the purpose and will of God in the present world without a knowledge and acceptance of dispensational truth. Well...these are mighty high statements to surround one's self with. I offer these comments because I do not think it is a lack of humility and nursing a divisive spirit to take a look at the origins of movements and what the fruit has been since the origins.

**Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2019/6/9 23:44**

Hi docs,

Please don't take this the wrong way, but I don't really care what Darby taught. I am not well versed in Darby's writings -- and I really don't care to read them either. I know many people who believe in a "rapture" and most of them are not familiar with the name "Darby."

When I became a believer, I was a teenager. However, I went from not really believing in God to coming to faith in Him. The writings, teachings and whims of various preachers didn't really mean much to me. The only thing that I understood was that there was a great deal of doctrinal division among Christians.

The one thing that I was aware of after my conversion was that I wasn't aware of much (in terms of the faith). I simply knew that I believed in Christ and had given my everything to the Lord.

After I met the Lord and gave my life back to Him, I set myself to begin reading the Bible. Whereas it was previously difficult for me to understand, I suddenly thirsted to read every word of it.

I found the Lord at the beginning of the summer. Immediately thereafter, I took some steps that I felt that I needed to do (without anyone really telling me or encouraging me to do them).

I got rid of the TV in my room. I threw away my video games. I tore up my comic book collection (which was worth quite a bit of money). I tossed out all of my music. I had a collection of movie posters all over my wall (and a few movie stands

too). I got rid of them all.

I don't know what motivated or inspired me to do this at such a crucial point after coming to Christ. However, I didn't want anything to come between me and the Lord. I wanted to spend my time in prayer, worship and reading His Word. I didn't even spend time watching Christian TV or listening to Christian music/radio.

I began with the Gospel of Luke (upon the advice of someone) and then read the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation. I then went to Genesis and finished in Malachi. I read the entire Bible in a matter of days. I then started with Matthew and read it all over again. I did this over and over again during that summer.

Why am I saying this?

One of the interesting things is that I was aware of some doctrines taught by different churches and denominations. However, I wasn't sure what exactly I believed.

By the seventh time that I completed reading the entire Bible from cover-to-cover (not counting the time that I would focus on studying particular passages), I began to formulate some opinions on many issues. Granted: Some of these were mere thoughts and opinions while others were pretty solid based upon what is entirely clear from God's Word.

At the same time, I understood that some things -- including long-held beliefs -- just aren't quite so clear too.

I should offer one clarification. I think that it is a good thing to discuss these things. The humility necessary for believers doesn't prevent discussions. Obviously, debates are a part of this (because, like I said, Paul had squabbles with Peter and Barnabas). However, the guiding principle is the love of God and love for others.

If bitterness, fighting or even blood-raising anger is a result of such discussions, then something is likely missing.

More importantly, I think that the push to declare something that is, at best, only a conclusion arrived from much study, it is beneficial to avoid declaring such a thing as a "dispensational truth." This is true of anyone who is pre-trib and anyone who is post-trib (or any other view).

Moreover, I think that it helps to provide honesty with the context of our views. Many people read secondhand or third-hand sources that influence their views on many such matters. This is a very different thing from studying a source.

One can easily claim that "Darby invented the rapture" (or, otherwise, was the first person to push belief in it) and then say that early church leaders didn't write about it. However, many of the people that I've met who assert this claim are simply repeating a claim that they've heard, read or found elsewhere.

Once, I was engaged in a discussion where someone was making this claim. I introduced a few passages that seem (and, yes, I stress the word "seem") to point out that at least some believers wrote about the Lord taking His Bride prior to the wrath of God being poured out upon the Earth. That person said that, even if accurate, represent only a few people among the early Church.

So, I asked that person how many first-hand sources or translations from the first few centuries of Christianity that they've read. It turned out that their "study" of early church writings was primarily based upon books that mentioned a handful of significant statements attributing doctrinal belief to a few early church writers. It is not really "research" into early church writings. It is relying upon someone else's research that, perhaps, was also based upon someone else's research.

One of the important things in writing papers in college is the need for a bibliography or list of works cited. This helps the reader know the depth of the research that a person has undergone. In grad school, a person could not successfully defend their thesis or dissertation if they attributed their findings to what others had written on the subject (rather than going to firsthand sources).

Imagine that someone wants to write a biography of Thomas Jefferson. However, that sources that the writer uses for the biography is what others have written and published about him. Instead of going to source material (e.g., Jefferson's own letters, accounts, diaries, etc. and what contemporaries said about him), they rely upon books written in later years after he was already dead. This would be a bad biography. In fact, it is one of the great problems that contribute to history revisionism. Such a writer is placing faith of accuracy in what others have (supposedly) researched.

Years ago, there was a "King James Only" brother who argued vehemently in favor of the KJV as the only acceptable version of the Word of God. During long discussions, I discovered that he would copy and paste long claims from books and websites. I asked for him to cite his sources. Yet, I went to the very sources that he cited. It turned out that the books, magazines and websites that he was citing were a type of circular citation. They all cited one another or the same sources which, sadly, the merits of such circular research could not be proven.

At the same time, many of these sources were used to make claims about other versions of the Bible (particularly the NIV, NKJV and NASB). Again, all of his sources were citing the same primary sources (just a couple actually) or else they cited one another despite the actual claim coming from a single previous original source. During that discussion, one claim was made about a person who was on the NIV's committee. Many of those people are still alive. So, I actually contacted that person (and other individuals) by phone and email. They actually provided clarity and helped dispel the rumors, myths and claims made.

Interestingly, someone made a claim about David Wilkerson's views on eschatology. They stated that he had shifted toward post-trib ideology later. A quick Google search seemed to provide a few cites that said as much. I was puzzled. So, around that same time in 2006, I contacted via email one of his former co-pastors, Neil Rhodes (at Times Square Church). Pastor Rhodes responded and clarified that brother David Wilkerson still ascribed to a pre-trib "blessed hope."

Of course, this is also beside the point. It wasn't the issue about which preachers believed or did not believe in a rapture. The point was the somewhat shallow level of study and research by which people were willing to solidify their stands on different issues.

As I said back then, my view was that churches should not teach a definitive stand on non-essential and quarrelsome issues. When it came to eschatology, I thought that it was better to teach the importance of being PREPARED.

We should be prepared for anything that might happen that rapidly progressing journey toward the end. This includes the possibility of a pre-trib "catching away" of the Bride before the wrath of God. It also includes the possibility that the church will remain on this earth when the wrath of God is poured out upon it. What kind of preparation? Seeking and trusting in the Lord by prayer, fasting, worship and study of the Word of God.

Even then, this simple view was rebuked harshly in public and private messages. People told me that I was in danger of heresy. I was astonished that someone would think that sincere believers -- lovers of Christ -- would be in danger if they continued to seek God (and His Word) wholeheartedly.

Like I said, this issue can and should be discussed. However, it should never become so divisive that we look down at someone with a different view. I do not believe that it is an essential doctrine of the church (in the sense that your salvation will depend upon where you stand on such a matter). Consequently, I prefer churches to be a bit more graceful and less absolute when it comes to issues like it.

Given the length of this post, I suppose that I may have made my point even less clear than it might have been in my previous post. If so, I apologize.

In essence, I suppose that I am saying that it would be wrong of anyone -- pre-trib, mid-trib, post-trib, pan-trib, etc. -- to adopt an "our way or the broad way" approach. The lack of humility isn't evidenced by a discussion of such a matter but by gravitating toward an attitude that such a person has arrived to an indisputable truth on the matter by which every true believer must comply if they love God.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2019/6/10 7:42**

Folks get very jumpy and defensive when long held views are challenged. It's like having to give up a security blanket or teddy bear.

It certainly applies to eschatology, but also many other areas.

It would seem that the best attitude would be "I think I have this right, but there is certainly a possibility that I might be wrong."

For some reason people don't like to do this; like Chris said they either feel it's being wishy-washy or weak in faith. Nothing

ng could be further from the truth. It's just being honest.

**Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2019/6/10 15:52**

Mu curiosity with Darby is partly because many of the ideas that have grown up around and follow the pre-trib teaching t oday began with his ideas and writings. If It's a bit of an enigma to me how one can teach as he did such things as tribul ation saints will not be part of the church nor indwelt by the Holy Spirit even though they are saved by faith in Christ and His atoning work. That just doesn't work for me and was never taught in church history before he began to espouse it. I have therefore searched some of his writings to see if I can pinpoint how he came to these conclusions. There's no doub t he was the earliest and leading advocates of these ideas and if one knows nothing of Darby and his theological beliefs then one knows little or nothing about the origins of the pre-trib belief when they themselves may be following.

That's all. Thank your for your thoughtful comments.

**Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2019/6/10 17:13**

Hi docs,

Like I said, I am not well-versed in Darby's writings or teachings. And, of course, I really don't care what Darby taught. Hi s views had no influence on my views on eschatology. I know many people who embrace the idea of a rapture who just don't know who Darby is.

I do have a couple of comments though on what you've just posted. Please don't mistake this for any sort of smug attem pt to "call you out" or as any sort of public rebuff/rebuke. I simply want to share a few things that came to mind when rea ding your post.

You said, "There's no doubt he was the earliest and leading propagator of these ideas..."

Actually, I believe that there is doubt. That is part of the reasons why there is a never-ending debate on this issue. Some times, the words "no doubt" often are used as a precursor to a discussion to end it before it begins (or to offer a conclusi on). It can become a "shutdown" statement used to digress and pull the discussion in a certain direction rather than by c onversational analysis.

In this case, you're saying that there is no doubt that one man -- Darby -- originated this concept (of a "rapture" or gather ing of the Bride before the Lord's wrath is poured out upon the world).

Normally, I would ask what led you to this conclusion. What research did you perform? Is this a conclusion drawn from o thers who have staked this claim? Are you actually well-read into what Darby, the writings of his contemporaries or what was written or taught alongside other believers over the last 2000 years (for comparison's sake)?

This oft-repeated belief -- pointing the finger at John Darby -- has been repeated many times by teachers, books and we bsites that espouse the view that the Bride of Christ will not be gathered prior to the wrath of God being poured out upon the Earth. In the times that I have inspected the claims (including books), they seem to be somewhat short on proof. Yes , they can point to things that Darby has written. Yes, they can point to some things that are attributed to Darby.

However, the statement itself is very wide. The evidence is often presented as not being available because the idea is th at it doesn't exist (i.e., the idea of a gathering of the Bride prior to the wrath of God on the Earth). Thus, if those individua ls cannot find it, then they deduce that Darby must be the guy who came up with it!

I sometimes wonder if it is the same sort of circular citations that are similar to the KJV-Only phenomenon. The books an d websites often quote one another rather than by presenting evidence that no one else prior to Darby had any such vie w.

You also wrote, "...if one knows nothing of Darby and his "movement" then one knows little or nothing about the origins o f the pre-trib belief."

I disagree. First of all, this statement relies upon the notion that the previous statement is absolutely true and beyond rep roof.

And, yes, there is at least some anecdotal written evidence from early church writing that indicated that some early Christians at least believed in protection during the time of God's wrath (or even removal prior to it). While such examples are few in number, one could also point out that there aren't exactly large libraries of early church writings to be seen (and most never touched on eschatological specificity).

Since there is very little Christian writings that exist from the first century (partially because literacy wasn't common, printing didn't exist and writing materials were hard to come by and those that did exist decomposed by time), this primary belief cannot be proven.

I would touch a little further on your statement. Does one have to know about Darby to believe that the idea of a "rapture" is possible? I would say no.

There are many believers who embrace the idea of a "catching away" prior to the wrath of God. Like I said, many of them really don't know who Darby is. I would think (or hope) that many of them may have studied this and attributed their belief to a Biblical foundation.

This does raise a very big issue in the Church today.

Many people believe in particular doctrines because they are taught to believe in those doctrines. There are probably people who believe that the rapture is indisputable because they were taught this by their local church and favorite Bible teachers. The weight of their own research is in reliance -- relying upon the research and "expertise" of others.

This is a flawed perspective no matter what we believe. Men -- and Bible teachers -- are fallible. We cannot blindly "follow" what they've said without questioning, testing or proving it from Scripture. Every preacher of the Gospel included on SermonIndex is fallible. We are all confined to this side of that "glass darkly."

Even if we go back to the Early Church, we find some corruption and compromise of the faith early on. Many of these are mentioned in the Book of Acts and in the epistles.

Furthermore, by the time of Constantine (b.272 A.D.), the heresies of pagan Rome were already being grafted into an eventual Empire-regulated "official" church. There was corruption found in "Christian" writings before and after the Edict of Tolerance and Edict of Milan. Many would even argue that the official state "church" had become little more than a compromised tool of the Roman Empire.

Most importantly, the discussion of doctrines should be done primarily by Biblical exegetical study (and discussion) rather than by pointing at quite limited anecdotal manuscript evidence (scarce as it is) from the centuries AFTER the Gospels and epistles were written.

Even as limited as it is, I think that we would be hard-pressed to find someone who has sifted through every ancient manuscript attributed (at least in part) to Christianity. Moreover, the time from the beginning of the Church until Darby is roughly 18 centuries. That is a lot of time (and evidence) required to sort through before we can declare such a "no doubt" statement.

Again, I hope that you didn't take this wrong. I am not motivated to point out any perceived flaw in your post. Rather, I think that it is important to approach this issue (and all non-essential doctrinal discussions) with the understanding that most of us are not here to take sides on an issue but to search for truth.

Sometimes, even after much study, we still don't arrive to a point where we can honestly say "yea" or "nay" on such matters. This is despite amazing access to materials that believers in the past never had access to.

This is why I think that it is always good to revert to the simplicity of the faith. As nice as it is to have so many resources (e.g., concordances, Bible dictionaries, commentaries, books, etc.), it is interesting to think that none of such things were available to the early believers. Many of them didn't even have copies of the Bible (and the New Testament was a set of books and letters passed between the local churches).

When people ask me about my views on eschatology and, specifically, the idea of a "rapture," I tell them that I am not certain. However, I tell them that I am certain about something much more important -- the need to be prepared. This preparation only comes about by keeping our eyes on the Lord. We must seek God always -- in prayer, study of the Word and

d worship. I believe that this will keep us during any period or trial, tribulation and, yes, wrath that we may or may not have to endure.

**Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2019/6/10 17:47**

/You said, "There's no doubt he was the earliest and leading propagator of these ideas..."

Actually, I believe that there is doubt. That is part of the reasons why there is a never-ending debate on this issue. Some times, the words "no doubt" often are used as a precursor to a discussion to end it before it begins (or to offer a conclusion). It can become a "shutdown" statement used to digress and pull the discussion in a certain direction rather than by conversational analysis.

In this case, you're saying that there is no doubt that one man -- Darby -- originated this concept (of a "rapture" or gathering of the Bride before the Lord's wrath is poured out upon the world).

Normally, I would ask what led you to this conclusion. What research did you perform? Is this a conclusion drawn from others who have staked this claim? Are you actually well-read into what Darby, the writings of his contemporaries or what was written or taught alongside other believers over the last 2000 years (for comparison's sake)?/

I've done the research more than once and came to the same conclusions each time. The early church fathers nearly as a whole were not pre-trib in their views. There are a few here and there who make some small or passing reference that may lead some to believe that they were referring to a pre-trib catching away etc. but even then in my opinion their statements seem to be stretched a bit beyond what they actually meant. Notable and well respected scholars such as Tregelles, Newton and George Mueller and others who were contemporaries of Darby objected to the "new theories" being promoted because they saw no evidence of them in church history. So yes, I have done research and tried to look objectively at the historical evidence.

/This oft-repeated belief -- pointing the finger at John Darby -- has been repeated many times by teachers, books and websites that espouse the view that the Bride of Christ will not be gathered prior to the wrath of God being poured out upon the Earth. In the times that I have inspected the claims (including books), they seem to be somewhat short on proof. Yes, they can point to things that Darby has written. Yes, they can point to some things that are attributed to Darby.

However, the statement itself is very wide. The evidence is often presented as not being available because the idea is that it doesn't exist (i.e., the idea of a gathering of the Bride prior to the wrath of God on the Earth). Thus, if those individuals cannot find it, then they deduce that Darby must be the guy who came up with it!/

I believe what is being taught today as far as pre-trib goes was mainly pushed and advanced by the Brethren Movement of the 1830s of which Darby made himself the unchallenged head. Many sources attest to this. They sponsored many conferences and Darby himself made several trips to America to evangelize for his view and for Christ and then Scofield took up the mantle.

/We must seek God always -- in prayer, study of the Word and worship. I believe that this will keep us during any period or trial, tribulation and, yes, wrath that we may or may not have to endure./

I couldn't agree more. Well said and thank you again for your thoughtful and well laid out and spoken thoughts.

Blessings.

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2019/6/17 22:12**

Chris,

I understand well your point and do appreciate it.

I also think it is tragic when churches split over differing views of eschatology. I knew it has happened in Mennonite Churches but did not realize others can be that narrow minded as well. Oh, well...all are human....

In any case I believe the devil is having fun getting people all in a wad about their differing points of view on end times. Conflicts so severe it will intimidate people from studying Revelation: "if more learned men cannot agree on it why should we?"

d I think I can make sense of it" so the devil argues. And people listen and refuse to read the book that promises a blessing to those who read it. Sad.

I think people make a big mistake that they think they need to know exactly when these events will take place. I believe one should read it for the sheer enjoyment of learning to know God, how he thinks, how he acts and what heaven is like. To visualize the events described therein...Oh, Lord! so awesome. All major doctrines are addressed in the book - it is doctrinally rich, chuck full of inspiration. I have read it many times and every time I do I gain new insights, so much it has become my favorite book in the New Testament!

Love the book. And have learned to enjoy OT prophecy as well.

Sandra

**Re: Proper context also important - posted by docs (), on: 2019/6/18 9:18**

/I have read it many times and every time I do I gain new insights, so much it has become my favorite book in the New Testament!

Love the book. And have learned to enjoy OT prophecy as well./

Wow, that's something!

One of the things that has helped me is reading the book of Revelation in what I think is its proper context.

There is a symmetry between OT prophecy and what is found in the NT capped off by the Revelation of John.

Moses made an astounding prophecy in Deut 4:30-31:

30 When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice.

31 For the Lord your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.

Here Moses has made an accurate forecast that trouble and tribulation would follow the nation even into the latter days of history and this age.

Then Daniel spoke of an unprecedented time of trouble to occur for the nation just before the resurrection of the dead occurs:

“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress SUCH AS NEVER OCCURRED since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.

2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

Jesus spoke of this same time of trouble:

21 For then there will be a great tribulation, SUCH AS HAS NOT OCCURRED (quoting Daniel almost verbatim word for word) since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

22 Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. (Matt 24:21-22)

The Revelation of John describes this time of trouble in my opinion. True to the words of Moses even until the end, Daniel and Jesus and the Revelation describe the time of unprecedented trouble to come at the end of this present evil age. There is a divine symmetry at work here as they describe the same thing.

**Re: Todd - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2019/6/18 9:41**

Quote:  
----- Todd...Folks get very jumpy and defensive when long held views are challenged. Its like having to give up a security blanket or teddy bear.

It certainly applies to eschatology, but also many other areas.

It would seem that the best attitude would be "I think I have this right, but there is certainly a possibility that I might be wrong."

For some reason people don't like to do this; like Chris said they either feel its being wishy-washy or weak in faith. Nothing could be further from the truth. It's just being honest.

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This right here folks is probably one of the best posts I've ever witnessed on SI. There's a great message here for all of us that like to keep God in a box...Thanks for this wonderful and refreshing post.

**Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2019/6/18 14:23**

Believing in a post tribulation rapture has caused me much pain church wise as I had to move out of a church because in a sermon they called it leaven of those that don't believe

It is hard when you so want to find a church that is a spiritual home and even when you evangelize people are as dead

It has been so hard going from a church that was about as friendly as a graveyard which taught the NAr then a prosperity church.

It has been so hard as with church I find it hard to relate to people if the church is full of 90 year olds and will be dead in 20 years or does not sing any hymns that I know .

I just want exegetical preaching of the word where people can go through a book of the bible rather than what they have had for lunch last Saturday or a pep talk

I found it hard to listen to things on bible prophecy if say certain groups don't believe they will go through the tribulation it is like preaching about riding a bike but never ride a bike , why believe that the mark of the beast will be an RFID chip , if you don't believe that won't happen.

I have been thinking of doing a bible for those that believe in the pre tribulational rapture with most of Revelation such as the antichrist and the parts not written to the Jews taken out

Pray as I found it so hard since working at the Christian.

Most non Christians do not care about anything

There is lots in the early church fathers to do with the tribulation , I keep on finding new things

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2019/6/19 7:05**

Dom-

How will you know when the tribulation period actually begins? Of course pre-tribbers say it begins immediately after the pre-trib rapture but I am not sure how post-tribbers time its beginning.

**Re: Jesus crystal clear when the tribulation begins - posted by docs (), on: 2019/6/21 7:23**

15 “Therefore WHEN YOU SEE THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

17 Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

18 Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

21 For THEN (when you see the AOD) THERE WILL BE A GREAT TRIBULATION, SUCH AS HAS NOT OCCURRED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD UNTIL NOW, NOR EVER WILL. (see Daniel 12:1 for the same time of trouble being declared))

22 Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. (Matthew 24:15-21)

It's obedience to the words of Jesus to go to Daniel in reference to the abomination and the resulting tribulation. The abomination is not mentioned once but four times.

11 It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down.

12 And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper.

13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, “How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while THE TRANSGRESSION OF DESOLATION (KJV) causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?”

14 He said to me, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored.” (Daniel 8:11-14)

27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the WING OF ABOMINATIONS will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (Daniel 9:27)

29 “At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before.

30 For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.

31 Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION. (Daniel 11:29-31)

11 From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION is set up, there will be 1,290 days. (Daniel 12:11)

Paul elaborates on this event in the NT in II Thess 2:3-4.

It was Jesus who gave us this invaluable key and it's obedience to His words to go and make note of what Daniel spoke of. It's not seeking prophetic sensationalism but simply taking heed of and obeying the words of Jesus regarding the end of the age and the signs of His coming.

WHEN you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION spoken of by Daniel the prophet THEN shall be GREAT TRIBULATION since as has not occurred since the beginning of the world nor ever shall again. Ending in the second coming of Christ AFTER THE TRIBULATION of those days (Matt 24:29-31).

Thank Jesus for personally instructing us ("let the reader understand" - Matt 24:15)) to go to Daniel to see when these things begin. Hardly difficult and shedding light on the fact that all prophecy is not shrouded in a great lack of clarity as if to be a mystery within an enigma no one can understand. The words of Jesus instructing us are BASIC 101.