

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: The Rapture: An American Prosperity Gospel

### The Rapture: An American Prosperity Gospel - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2021/8/21 19:29

At this point in redemptive history, nearly most of the educated Christian world has heard of or has been taught of the impending Rapture—the glorious day in which the Lord will take up His Elect and deliver them from the Great Tribulation to follow. During the time of the Great Tribulation, according to what has been coined as “Dispensational Premillennial” eschatology, men and women will have one final opportunity to repent and believe on Christ before Christ’s inevitable return, and before the commencement of the thousand-year literal reign of Christ and the Church on earth.

Of course, like all theological frameworks, Dispensational Premillennialism can be far more nuanced and can and does certainly contain varying opinions on some of its distinctives.

The most glaring distinctive of pretribulational theology, though, that is not ever up for debate, is the timing of the Rapture event itself.

Most of the evangelical Christian world believes this event will take place before the commencement of any real calamity in the world—before the “Great Tribulation.” That is, before the realized commencement of any real threat to one’s faith and physical well-being, Christ will return to save His people. As seen in many sensationalized enactments of what is to come via this Rapture event, Christians will one way or another be taken up to Christ, as He makes His second appearance to the world. In some premillennial circles, this return or appearance is referred to as the “Second Coming of Christ for the Church,” wherein He receives all who believe up until that point, later to come back once again to receive converted Jews, along with others, and commence His thousand-year reign on earth (akin to “Chiliasm,” which was resoundly defeated by the proclamation of the Nicene Creed). The focus here, though, is not so much what or who our friends believe Christ will return for, but the purpose of Christ’s re-appearing.

I find great issue with the proposition of this event—not only because it lacks any sort of historical or biblical precedent and is quite literally a modern invention of thought, but primarily because of its teleological purpose and all over-arching implications that come from its ultimate purpose.

As our world degrades at a rapid pace, calls of an impending Rapture event continue to grow. Calls by our Evangelical and Protestant friends maintain that, “it is coming! We will soon be Raptured and saved!”

We will indeed be saved, but as Orthodox Christians, our understanding is that we will be saved through the endurance of our struggles—that the coming calamities will orient us towards our God and Savior, yet we will suffer to the end, just as our forefathers and martyrs of the Church did.

What is the Rapture exactly?

The Rapture is the ultimate prosperity Gospel, wherein the blessed hope of the Christian is to be spared of any real and substantive persecution and suffering.

When we begin to affirm this eschatological and theological schema, our sense of reality is completely lost, as we see the preservation of a Christian future as purely futile, since the denigration of humanity will simply result in our physical separation from this world in an attempt to avoid any suffering leading up to the appearing of our Lord. This thought is opposed to Christianity. It is opposed to the Holy Scripture. It is opposed to the universal witness and testimony of our Holy Fathers. And it is an insult to every holy Martyr of the Christian Faith who gave their life for the preservation of Truth in a dying world.

To suffer in Christ is to grow in Christ, and while we may never understand why suffering comes at the time in which it does and in the magnitude in which it comes, we ought to rest assured that God allows this suffering for His own glory and for our own good, using it as a tool of purification for our souls to prepare ourselves for a life more worthy of His glorious Kingdom, just as the Shepherd of Hermas says,

“For as gold is tested by fire, and thus becomes useful, so are you tested who dwell in it. Those, therefore, who conti

nue steadfast, and are put through the fire, will be purified by means of it. For as gold casts away its dross, so also will you cast away all sadness and straightness, and will be made pure so as to fit into the building of the tower.â€  
We are not to seek neither comfort nor persecution, and we are certainly not to seek a false reassurance that we will be spared of any impending calamity in Christâ€™s name, as believing in the innovation of the modern-day Rapture would have us think. If it be, then may it be, but we have a strong witness that the promise of suffering exists in the Christian life, and it exists for the purpose of conforming us to the holy Image of our God. Difficulties are coming, and we ought to fast and pray, looking to the Fathers of our Church and to the Holy Spirit for guidance, wisdom, and courage to overcome impending tribulation however it manifests itself during our time.

St. Ignatius of Antioch writes:

â€œMay I enjoy the wild beasts that are prepared for me; and I pray they may be found eager to rush upon me, which also I will entice to devour me speedily, and not deal with me as with some, whom, out of fear, they have not touched. But if they be unwilling to assail me, I will compel them to do so. Pardon me : I know what is for my benefit. Now I begin to be a disciple. And let no one, of things visible or invisible, envy me that I should attain to Jesus Christ. Let fire and the cross; let the crowds of wild beasts; let tearings, breakings, and dislocations of bones; let cutting off of members; let shatterings of the whole body; and let all the dreadful torments of the devil come upon me: only let me attain to Jesus Christ.â€  
And elsewhere, he also writes:

â€œSeeing, then, all things have an end, these two things are simultaneously set before us â€ death and life; and every one shall go unto his own place. For as there are two kinds of coins, the one of God, the other of the world, and each of these has its special character stamped upon it, The unbelieving are of this world; but the believing have, in love, the character of God the Father by Jesus Christ, by whom, if we are not in readiness to die into His passion, His life is not in us.â€

The promise of True Life is the promise of true suffering. It is not the promise of deliverance from any purifying persecution or suffering. The westernized innovation of the â€Raptureâ€ is nothing more than a type of prosperity Gospel, concealed in a way as to invoke a spiritual comfort in Christians so that they may never seek to embrace suffering as a tool of true sanctification. It is a prosperity Gospel that makes one feel comfortable with the idea of rejecting any supernatural outworking of daily miracles in the life of the Church, while granting comfort to the idea that Christ will work a miracle in actively preventing suffering in His Name before that very suffering descends on to the face of the earth in full force as to purify Christians everywhere. St. Paul writes, â€œâ€we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hopeâ€ (Romans 5:3-4).

Tribulation is not something to avoid, but rather something to embrace, as it prepares us to receive the heavenly Kingdom of God.

St. Justin Martyr writes:

â€œAnd when you hear that we look for a kingdom, you suppose, without making any inquiry, that we speak of a human kingdom; whereas we speak of that which is with God, as appears also from the confession of their faith made by those who are charged with being Christians, though they know that death is the punishment awarded to him who so confesses. For if we looked for a human kingdom, we should also deny our Christ, that we might not be slain; and we should strive to escape detection, that we might obtain what we expect. But since our thoughts are not fixed on the present, we are not concerned when men cut us off; since also death is a debt which must at all events be paid.â€  
St. Makarios of Egypt summarizes perfectly the futility of clinging to the perceived comforts of this life, in saying,

â€œSince the road leading to immortal life is extremely narrow and full of affliction, and on account of this there are few who traverse it (Matt. 7:14), we must staunchly endure every trial of the devil, awaiting with hope our heavenly reward. For, however great the afflictions we suffer, what are they compared with the promised future reward, or with the grace of the Holy Spirit that visits souls even in this present life, or with the deliverance that we have received from the obscurity of evil passions, or with the enormous debts we owe because of our sins? As St Paul says: â€The sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in usâ€™ (Rom. 8:18). Hence we must patiently endure everything for the Lordâ€™s sake, as brave soldiers dying for our King.â€

The Freedom of the Intellect, Philokalia 3

â€œBlessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Himâ€ (James 1:12).

from: <https://orthodoxidation.com/the-rapture-an-american-prosperity-gospel/>

**Re: The Rapture: An American Prosperity Gospel - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/21 22:27**

Hi all,

If you want to believe in a Post Trib coming of Christ I can accept that as Christ didnt definitely say "Just before the Great Tribulation I will take you out of this world" But he didnt say either "Their will be a great tribulation and every Christian will go through it"

But again the difference between "Tribulations" and a period of Time called "The Great Tribulation" is muddled up for the sake of perhaps argueing against a pretribulation rapture. These are different things and are not interchangeable except to say tribulation is not nice even if it is valueable.

This makes very hard reading because its full of innuendo and a misunderstanding of Pretrib believers take on the "doctrine of the rapture" and their take on "trials,tribulations and suffering".

An arguement could be made for instance that the post trib view is a "works gospel" devoid of any grace. We could also say that some post trib believers have a "Martyr Complex"

I dont want to go to Kabul to be Martyred do you?

Its a case of throwing the baby out with the bathwater because of emotional reaction to a false gospel rather than exegesis.

Because some post trib believers have such a hatred for "the prosperity gospel" then they throw everything out and not look at the scripture in the cold light of day. They should look at "Prosperity Preachers" as the wrong people on the right side of the arguement (when it comes to the rapture). Just because prosperity preachers have a false gospel doesnt mean the rapture is false. In the interest of balance I should say "possibly on the right side of the arguement"

The majority of Christians I know are Pretrib and also have a hatred of prosperity gospels

The majority of Christians I know are pretrib and expect trials and tribulations

All the Christians I know who are pretrib recognise the purpose of tribulations and trials and do not deny benefits of perseverance, character and hope as a result of tribulation.

The Majority of Christians I know are pretrib and believe the world is getting worse and worse and its harder and harder to be a Christian.

Havent Pretrib Christians died for their faith ?as have post trib believers?

The majority of Christians I know are pretrib value holiness and good behaviour.

All of the Christians I know who are Pretrib understand suffering by personal experience of trials and persecution . They would find it pretty degrading if I told them that "you never really suffered for Christ because you are a pretribber"

I think that an exegesis of the "doctrine of the rapture" has to be from biblical passages and I think that we have to understand a couple of things whether we are Post Trib or Pretrib.

1: Many great preachers and teachers who love Christ have argued differing sides of the coin

2: Whatever our view is ,it will colour the rest of our Church/Biblical views, for instance if you are a Post Tribber you will probably also believe you can lose your salvation and if you are pre tribber you will probably believe in once saved always saved.

So your tribulation view has an importance including those like David Wilkerson who said he had a "pan tribulation view" ie it will all pan out right in the end. Believing this view may appear middle of the road but it also will colour your Christianity,

I think that its good to discuss the rapture but I would ask post trib brothers and sisters not to muddle up "Trials and Tribulations" with the period of time called "The Great Tribulation" and to understand that most pre trib believers have experienced suffering as much as post tribulation believers have. The trick if there is one is not to base your theology on experience while taking into account experience as of great value,urs staff

**Re: The Rapture: An American Prosperity Gospel - posted by narrowpath, on: 2021/8/22 16:14**

I agree with here staff. The rapture is definitely biblical.

1 Thess 4:15-17 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.

and also

1 Thessalonians 5:9

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

Just because the rapture spares the church from Gods wrath it does not mean that it is an easy way out.

The bible warns us to watch and pray that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things. So there is a real danger to fall asleep and be trapped.

God as a father chastises his children but he also spares them. If you only do not see these attributed in balance you will end up with a distorted image of God.

Premillennialism still offers the best eschatological framework. One might differ on the point of time when the rapture will happen - pretrib, midtrib, or posttrib. I believe it is purposely shrouded in mystery so that we focus rather on Christ than on timelines and events.

Persecution and hardships are good for sanctification, but glorifying martyrdom has lead to gross idolatry. We live in days that are marked by relative peace and prosperity and absence of persecution as far as the West is concerned. I dare to say it is just as difficult to stay close to God in an environment of materialism and hedonism, peace and prosperity than during persecution.

I am quite concerned that recently so many orthodox sources are being quoted here. The orthodox church is quite similar to the catholic church though they differ in some areas.

They have priests in robes, rely on icons for worship, have a territorial view of the church, strange ideas about salvation, and heaven and hell, practise infant baptism, chrismation, mandatory celibacy for priests, excessive liturgy and rituals...all things that not agreeable with biblical Christianity.

Another article on this site states the benefits of ecumenical union with the catholic church - back to Rome.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2021/8/23 7:45**

How many raptures are there? Paul says one.

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/23 13:19**

Hi TMK,

I think the problem with answering your question is that the post only becomes a Post Pre debate which we have had on many many occasions.

My points on the post are not to do with the rapture as such but a comment on the post.

1 The exegesis used in the post is not based on scripture

2 Post Tribulation believers continually muddle up the term "tribulations" and a fixed period of time called "The Great Tribulation" sometimes deliberately I am beginning to think.

3 Post Tribulation believers have pre conceived ideas about Pre tribbers that are incorrect such as the subject of "suffering"

4 Many good teachers who love the Lord have argued on different sides of the debate

5 Our rapture views are important either way as they affect our Church/Christian life on issues like salvation etc

Urs staff

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2021/8/23 13:53**

//The exegesis used in the post is not based on scripture//

Come on staff. Your view became dominant in just the last century. Are you telling me that, prior to the advent of dispensationalism, eschatological views were not based on scripture?

The point of my question is that if there are not 2 raptures(btw there are not) then pre-trib must fail.

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/23 15:56**

Hi TMK,

The exegesis in this post is not based on scripture ,Ignasius and Justin Martyr are not cannon and regardless of where or when the theological argument comes from the exegesis has to be from scripture.

What I am saying for the reasons listed the original post makes a poor critical case.I accept that you are trying to make a critical case against the rapture.I accept that you could make a thoughtful,scriptural argument against a pre trib view but that this post does not in my opinion.

Again the problem with the post is its ideas of what Pretribbers think of suffering is incorrect,the non use of scripture in the post relying on non cannon ,the idea that because the false prosperity gospel believes the rapture then the rapture is wrong by association rather than exegesis and the misuse of the term tribulation as being interchangeable with the period of time called the great tribulation .

I could also add that no pretribber I know is saying that there will be no suffering ,trials ,tribulations or even Martyrdom before the rapture

One last point would be the problem with the prosperity gospel is not the rapture ,the problem with the prosperity gospel is the prosperity gospel and it should be scrutinized scripturally because of this.Belief in a prosperity gospel is not interchangeable with being a pretribber,

urs staff

**Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2021/8/23 17:46**

Quote:  
-----I could also add that no pretribber I know is saying that there will be no suffering, trials, tribulations or even Martyrdom before the rapture  
-----

No, pre-tribber that YOU know. I don't know where you live but I live in the buckle of the Bible belt ' East Tennessee and I am surrounded by pre-tribbers that actually believe they will NOT suffer (my Pastor and his wife are two of them), they believe they will escape.

What's going on in Afghanistan is blowing their mind. We talked about it at church but it is still half way around the world. Out of sight, out of mind.

Edit: martyrdom will not be for them, just for the other countries.

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/23 18:29**

Hi Lysa,

The majority of the Christians I know are Pretribbers and have a very biblical view of suffering.

As you know both Post tribbers and Pretribbers adhere to wrong understanding of the bible at times.

Again you cant argue from experience ie "Afghanistan" and make a theology from it. Whats happening in Afghanistan sh ouldnt make you believe in the Pre trib or the Post trib.

A theology has to come from scripture or is in line with scripture.

Also what can a pastor in North America do about Afghanistan ?We can pray .Its not his fault that people are getting kille d.

Just because Christians are dying or suffering doesnt mean that the Pretrib rapture is wrong. Dying or suffering has nothi ng to do with the rapture pre trib or post trib.

This theology comes because Post tribbers are muddled up regarding the difference between "tribulations " and "The gr eat tribulation".

What pre tribbers are saying is you will have tribulations but you wont go through the great tribulation.

The original post had many things wrong with it and I was pointing out that it didnt do the Post Trib side of the debate an y favours as it was relying on hearsay ,it didnt understand the pretrib point of view and its muddled up on what the Great Trib is compares to tribulations.

In fact when I have debated this on SI with Post trib believers they always end up saying that the Great Tribulation wont be world wide and things will be relatively normal just before Christ returns,

Well you cant have a Great Tribulation and things will be relatively normal both cant be true at the same time, urs staff

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/23 18:41**

Hi Lysa,

If I put it another way. If the Taliban burst through my doors with allguns blazing and they demand I convert to Islam or b e killed ,it doesnt change my Tribulation view. All it means is that I didnt make it to The Great Tribulation and I was marty red before I was raptured, urs staff

**Re: - posted by murrcolr (), on: 2021/8/24 22:27**

This subject has always been easy for me...

Why you may ask.

When I heard God speak about the move of God he was going to send he said - he was going raise up a "victorious peo ple" These be those who will get a the victory over the beast, his image, his mark and his name.

**Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2021/8/25 2:09**

Hi TMK,

To be fair, there are MANY widely embraced idea that were prevalent in the Church (from even before Constantine) that are now dismissed. There are gnostic gospels that were spread long before too. There are traditions of men and "high church" beliefs that were the "accepted" view of most congregations in the world.

Even after the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, there were still some high church traditions that most of us now understand to be extrabiblical. They are historic doctrinal traditions -- but we understand to be some of those "added" parts that developed over time during the nearly-2,000 years of the Christian faith.

Remember: The Anabaptists were once the "radicals" of the world because they believed that you should only be baptized after conversion (and not in infancy). The notion of baptism by immersion was almost unheard of until the

1500s.

While many (if not most) scholars believe that immersion was the primary (or even only) form of baptism in the Bible, there are indications of sprinkling or pouring becoming common by the fourth century (even before the advent of the Roman Catholic institution).

So, just because something seems to be a more "modern" teaching, it doesn't mean that it is false. Moreover, history shows us that there were already sectarian views very early on.

As such, I feel that the widely claimed notion that the "rapture" (I personally don't like this word even though I embrace this as a very possible event) is entirely a "modern" idea is somewhat inaccurate. There is evidence that people long before the 18th century may have believed in a "catching away" of the Church before the period of God's wrath.

There is, of course, a loss of historical records in much of the early Church. We have the Gospels and Epistles (rare as they were in those days) and little else. After all, writing material wasn't readily available for most (especially the early persecuted Church).

Yes, there are "early church fathers" who have a tangible record of views; however, we don't have a full record of either the true Church (including godly apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) and those who were already embracing notions that were extrabiblical.

Unfortunately, there is a habit of generalizing those of us who might embrace the notion of a "catching away" prior to the period of God's wrath.

I've read numerous posts about how those of us who might believe (or, in my case, lean toward) this idea are somehow under the impression that we shouldn't face persecution or tribulation in this world. It's suggested that we want to somehow find "confirmation bias" that would coincide with a desire for "comfort believism."

As staff mentioned, aside from the prosperity cult, I don't know anyone who believes that Christians are immune to trials, tribulation or persecution in this world. In fact, I see quite the opposite! I've known people who believe in a "pre-tribulation rapture" who willingly endure enormous persecution and tribulation for the faith.

There is, of course, a difference between earthly tribulation and persecution (even guided by Satan) and that period known as the "wrath" of God. The question isn't whether believers will suffer persecution or tribulation (we certainly will...and do) but whether we will suffer the wrath of God that will be poured out upon the whole world.

The roll of preachers included in the database of sermons at SermonIndex include many who held different views on eschatology (as well as other doctrinal issues). Many very well-respected men of God believe in a pre-tribulation rapture. Others don't.

I think that it is important to not (and I am not implying that you or anyone here is doing this) simply dismiss the integrity of us who might believe in a gathering of the Bride of Christ before the period in which the wrath of God is poured out upon the Earth. Most of us want to believe in TRUTH and only truth. If the Scriptures clearly said one thing -- we would believe it.

For me, the Scriptures aren't exceedingly clear in this. I understand the Biblical argument for why some believe that we will go through the "Great Tribulation." I also understand the Biblical argument for why some believe that we will be gathered with Christ before it.

In fact, I prefer to know both (or all) possible end-time eschatological scenarios. I may lean toward one but I understand the others. However, I'm not even prepared to proclaim any of them as an indisputable "truth." If I'm not convinced entirely in either (or any) way, then I am satisfied that I will live my life for Christ -- fully prepared for whatever may come.

After all, there have been many believers (including some who have been a part of this community of believers) who were waiting for a rapture, tribulation or second coming yet have already breathed their last breath in this life. In fact, nearly every believer that has ever lived has, well, died. They never saw the end of this chapter of history -- no matter how much they longed for it (or believed that it was imminent in their lifetimes).



Yet, I suppose that's the key. Like John seemed to exhort us in the final chapter of Revelation, we should long for the Lord's coming.

Quote:

-----"He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."

- Revelation 22:20

**When is the wrath poured out? - posted by jochbaptist (), on: 2021/8/25 8:17**

Hi Christopher

You said:

"There is, of course, a difference between earthly tribulation and persecution (even guided by Satan) and that period known as the "wrath" of God. The question isn't whether believers will suffer persecution or tribulation (we certainly will...and do) but whether we will suffer the wrath of God that will be poured out upon the whole world.

..... I think that it is important to not (and I am not implying that you or anyone here is doing this) simply dismiss the integrity of us who might believe in a gathering of the Bride of Christ before the period in which the wrath of God is poured out upon the Earth."

I would appreciate it if you could show me from scripture where you find the wrath of God being poured out after believers are removed. (Besides the book of Revelation if possible, but you can include them.)

Blessings

**Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2021/8/25 9:12**

First, let's start with that I should have never mentioned Afghanistan because that has taken us in a direction that I didn't want to go. Please dismiss anything about Afghanistan going forward!

Quote:

-----Staff wrote: The original post had many things wrong with it and I was pointing out that it didn't do the Post Trib side of the debate any favours as it was relying on hearsay, it didn't understand the pretrib point of view and it's muddled up on what the Great Trib is compared to tribulations.

1. What do you deem as "hearsay"? Any writings not found in or outside the KJV of the Bible? Just trying to find a starting point with you!

2. And you've mentioned suffering vs the great tribulation and how your pre-tribbers have a very biblical view of suffering and post-tribbers are "muddling it up." Can you describe that more also so we can be on the same page?

Thank you and God bless,

Lisa

**Re: Chris - posted by Lysa (), on: 2021/8/25 10:00**

Quote:

----- In fact, I prefer to know both (or all) possible end-time eschatological scenarios. I may lean toward one but I understand the others. However, I'm not even prepared to proclaim any of them as an indisputable "truth." If I'm not convinced entirely in either (or any) way, then I am satisfied that I will live my life for Christ -- fully prepared for whatever may come.

After all, there have been many believers (including some who have been a part of this community of believers) who were waiting for a rapture, tribulation or second coming yet have already breathed their last breath in this life. In fact, nearly every believer that has ever lived has, well, died. They never saw the end of this chapter of history -- no matter how much they longed for it (or believed that it was imminent in their lifetimes).



Amen Chris!! If you remember I used to argue adamantly for post-trib but the Lord HAD to set me down and ask me point blank: how many do you know that has gone through Pre-Trib? Well, none. How many do you know that went through Post-Trib? Well, again Lord, none. He said, "That's right, then why are you arguing about it? Everyone so far has gone the way of the grave. If you keep this arguing up, you will lose influence with people (I will lose influence through you) because of a stance that you don't know one way or the other." I don't want to lose influence because of "me" and my opinions about things I don't know!!!

I know you lean pre-trib and I lean post-trib but we both understand each other!

God bless you,  
Lisa

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/25 15:40**

Hi Lysa,

The biblical view of suffering is that we can have suffering in this life but that whether we have suffering or trials or tribulations or persecution it has nothing to do with a period of time called "The Great Tribulation"

Post tribbers muddle up these two things and say because we have suffering it proves that we go through the "The Great Tribulation". They think that the two subjects are interchangeable and they are not.

It's like saying that because God has rescued me from a bad situation, a dangerous situation where I was going to die except for he intervened, then that proves that God will rescue me from going through the Great Tribulation and hence proves a pre trib rapture. Obviously that's a bogus argument and so is the Post Trib view that because we go through trials and tribulations and persecution and suffering then that proves the post trib view.

If a Post tribber debated other reasons using scripture rather than what Ignatius said then the believer would be using canon rather than what other people think about scripture,  
urs staff

**Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2021/8/25 17:53**

Quote:

-----Staff: The biblical view of suffering is that we can have suffering in this life but that whether we have suffering or trials or tribulations or persecution it has nothing to do with a period of time called "The Great Tribulation"

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///Post tribbers muddle up these two things and say because we have suffering it proves that we go through the "The Great Tribulation". They think that the two subjects are interchangeable and they are not.///

Which "post-tribber's" are you talking about? And if what you say is true and you can prove actual people (post-tribbers) believing such malarkey, then, of course, I would agree that it is a bogus argument.

I have been post trib for nigh onto 23 years and I've never muddled up today's suffering proving we go through the Great Tribulation and those I know haven't either.

Are you sure you are not taken what a post-tribber said and turned it into your argument?? I'm not trying to be mean but I'm not sure who is saying this.

Thanks,  
Lisa

**Re: The Rapture: An American Prosperity Gospel - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/25 18:11**

Hi Lysa  
FROM THE ORIGINAL POST

"We will indeed be saved, but as Orthodox Christians, our understanding is that we will be saved through the endurance of our strugglesâ€"that the coming calamities will orient us towards our God and Savior, yet we will suffer to the end, just as our forefathers and martyrs of the Church did"

Here is a clear example of a Post tribber making the case or building the case that because we have over come calamities and struggles we will go through The Great Tribulation

BELOW is another of example of a Post tribber building the case that because have affliction etc we will go Through the Great Tribulation.

"

â€œSince the road leading to immortal life is extremely narrow and full of affliction, and on account of this there are few who traverse it (Matt. 7:14), we must staunchly endure every trial of the devil, awaiting with hope our heavenly reward."

So the Whole original post is base on the fact that we go through trials and tribulations and suffering we will go through The Great Tribulation and that the Pre trib view is wrong.

Any fair minded person who reads the fist original post will agree that the main arguements are

We go through suffering etc and we must endure to the end and because we have sufferings and endure we go through The Great Tribulation

And that the Pre Trib view is a johnny come lately gospel ,

So the Post clearly muddles up suffering trials and tribulations and persecution with The Great Tribulation, urs staff

**Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2021/8/26 8:09**

Quote:

-----Hi Lysa  
FROM THE ORIGINAL POST

"We will indeed be saved, but as Orthodox Christians, our understanding is that we will be saved through the endurance of our strugglesâ€"that the coming calamities will orient us towards our God and Savior, yet we will suffer to the end, just as our forefathers and martyrs of the Church did"

Here is a clear example of a Post tribber making the case or building the case that because we have over come calamities and struggles we will go through The Great Tribulation

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"Just as our forefathers & martyrs of the Church did" to me, does not even allude to building a case for the Great Tribulation. Maybe that's just me. To me, the author is speaking as you speak... that there will be suffering all through our life.

Staff, it seems to me if you really wanted to support your argument that there is suffering in this present world for Christians, you would use this phrase from the 4TH paragraph of the OP:

Quote:

-----Most of the evangelical Christian world believes this event will take place 'BEFORE' the commencement of any real calamity in the worldâ€"before the â€œGreat Tribulation.â€ That is, before the realized commencement of any real threat to oneâ€™s faith and physical well-being, Christ will return to save His people.

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You're fight isn't with Post-Tribbers, it's with the majority of Pre-Tribbers who believe in the escapism of the Rapture. You need to be proving THEM wrong and not picking fights with post-tribbers thinking we are "making or building cases."

God bless you brother,

Lisa

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/26 17:34**

Hi Lysa

You make my point perfectly

Post tribbers wrongly believe that The Rapture is "escapism"

They believe this because of mixing or muddling up suffering and persecution and trials and tribulations with a period of time called "The Great Tribulation".

They are different things totally and Post tribbers think because we have suffering and persecution etc that this experience proves we have to go through the Great Tribulation.

Put another way if the original post is not making these points, What point is it making?

The post is clearly making a case about pre tribbers ie

1 Pre tribbers don't understand suffering and think we don't have to go through it which is totally bogus

2 Based on our experience of suffering etc we will go through the Great Tribulation

Post tribbers have to rely on experiential doctrine rather than scripture.

Experiential doctrine being "because we go through suffering, persecution etc we must have to go through The Great Tribulation"

The original post is relying on both experiential doctrine and non-canon sources to make a case against a pre-trib rapture.

Again you cannot make a theology based on "bad things happen to Christians" and say because bad things happen to Christians "we must then by extension go through The Great Tribulation". Equally you cannot make a theology on "Good things happen to Christians" therefore we must be raptured before the Great Tribulation,

Both Pre and Post have to use scripture to argue the case, yours staff

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2021/8/26 18:12**

1. The word for "meeting" the Lord in the air in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 (apantesin) is used in two other places in the New Testament: Matthew 25:6 and Acts 28:15. In both places it refers to a meeting in which people go out to meet a dignitary and then accompany him in to the place from which they came out. One of these, Matthew 25:6, is even a parable of the second coming and so a strong argument that this is the sense of the meeting here in 1 Thess. 4:17-that we rise to meet the Lord in the air and then welcome him to earth as king.

2. The wording of 2 Thessalonians 1:5-7, when read carefully, shows that Paul expects to attain rest from suffering at the same time and in the same event that he expects the unbelievers to receive punishment, namely, at the revelation of Jesus with mighty angels in flaming fire. This revelation is not the pre-tribulational rapture but the glorious second coming. Which means that Paul did not expect an event at which he and the other believers would be given rest seven years before the glorious appearing of Christ in flaming fire. Vengeance on unbelievers and rest for the persecuted church come on the same day in the same event.

3. The wording of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 suggests that the "assembling to meet him" is the same as "the day of the Lord" about which they are confused. But the assembling is the "rapture" and "the day of the Lord" is the glorious second coming. They appear to be one event.

Supporting this is the reference to "gathering" the elect in Matthew 24:31. Here there is a gathering (same word) but it is clearly a post-tribulational context. So there is no need to see the gathering and the day of the Lord in 2 Thessalonians as separate events.

4. If Paul were a pre-tribulationist why did he not simply say in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 that the Christians don't need to worry that the day of the Lord is here because all the Christians are still here? Instead he talks just the way you would expect a post-tribulationist person to do. He tells them that they should not think that the day of the Lord is here because the apostasy and the man of lawlessness have not appeared. (See the AM sermon of 8-30-87 for more on this one.)

5. When you read Matthew 24 or Mark 13 or Luke 21, which are Jesus' descriptions of the end times, there is no mention of a rapture removing believers from the events of the end. A normal reading gives no impression of a departure. On the contrary, he talks as if the believing listeners and then the readers would or could experience the things he mentions. See Mt. 24:4, 9, 15, 23, 25f, 33, etc.

6. Going through tribulation, even when it is appointed by God, is not contrary to Biblical teaching. See especially 1 Peter 4:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-10; Hebrews 12:3-11. But even so, Revelation 9:4 suggests that the saints will be in some measure protected in the time of distress by the seal of God.

7. The commands to "watch" do not lose their meaning if the second coming is not an any-moment one. See Matt. 25:1-13 where all ten maidens are asleep when the Lord returns. Yet the lesson at the end of the parable is, "Watch!" The point is that watching is not gazing up for an any-moment-return of the Lord; it is the moral vigilance that keeps you ready at all times doing your duty—the wise maidens had full lanterns! They were watchful!

Nor does the teaching that the second coming will be unexpected lose its force if post-tribulationism is true. See Luke 12:46 where the point is that if a servant gets drunk thinking that his master is delayed and will not catch him—that very servant will be surprised and taken off guard. But as 1 Thess. 5:1-5 says, "You (believers) are not in darkness for that day to surprise you like a thief." We still teach that great moral vigilance and watchfulness is necessary lest we be lulled asleep and fall prey to the deceptions of the last days and be overtaken in the judgment.

8. The strongest pre-tribulationist text, Rev. 3:10, is open to another interpretation without any twisting. It says, "Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial which is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell upon the earth." But to "be kept from the hour of testing" is not necessarily to be taken out of the world during this hour, and thus spared suffering. Compare Gal. 1:4 and Jesus' prayer for his disciples in John 17:15 where to "keep from" does not mean physical removal. And notice the inevitability of martyrdom in Rev. 6:9-11. The promise is to be guarded from the hour in the sense of being guarded from the demoralizing forces of that hour.

9. The second coming does not lose its moral power in post-tribulationism. New Testament moral incentive is not that we should fear being caught doing evil, but that we should so love the appearing of the Lord that we want to be pure as the Lord is pure, for whom we hope, as 1 John 3:1-3 says.

~~John Piper

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/26 18:32**

Hi TMK,

The points you are making are using scripture to argue a post trib coming of Christ and I can accept that. I don't agree with a post trib rapture to be clear but I can accept that you are using scripture to argue the point. The original post did not and relied on other sources and on experiential doctrine.

You are making the "suffering case" on scripture rather than on experience which is the difference.

Put another way even if pre tribbers think that the rapture is escapism (which I don't accept) that shouldn't alter the doctrine of the rapture or the way we debate it at all.

What pre tribbers think about the rapture doesn't alter in any way whether it will be pre or post,  
urs staff

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2021/8/27 7:40**

Just to be clear as I indicated at the bottom that was a quote from John Piper.

I am not post trib- I suppose I am more amillenial but primarily I am pan-millennial.

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/28 5:11**

Hi TMK,

If I were to sum up

"Post Tribulation belief has become reactionary"

It looks at the elements of the pre trib side like "prosperity gospel" and reacts to it. The reaction is that it must be wrong because these guys believe it.

They then take a grand canyon theological leap across teachings and say because the bible says "we may suffer" in this life we therefore must go through The Great Tribulation.

I am taking into account when I say these things that we may suffer or be persecuted or have trials and tribulations in this life and it does build character and hope but that this does not mean we go through The Great Tribulation.

Also I can say that just because Post tribulation christianity is reactionary doesn't mean it's wrong, rather it's arguing in the wrong manner.

One of the actual bigger problems the Post Tribulation belief has is that it ultimately has to believe in a "Soft Great Tribulation". They ultimately have to say there is no widespread war or famine etc it's localized,  
urs staff

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2021/8/28 7:55**

I used to be pre-trib- it seems everyone was at one time because that's all anyone's been taught in latter half of 20th century- at least evangelicals.

My biggest problem is that I don't think there are 2 raptures. If there are 2, then you can calculate when the 2nd coming is, and Jesus says that is not possible.

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/28 11:44**

Hi TMK ,

Jesus didn't say it was impossible ,he said that no man knows the day or the hour except the father in heaven.

He didn't say they would not know the season nor did he say that this would never be revealed.

Also with the post trib you can calculate the 2nd coming as you know it's straight away after The Great Tribulation or a least straight away after the sun is darkened etc.

Even if it is true that the pre trib is a Johnny come lately doctrine and I have heard it argued that it is not that doesn't make it incorrect as we can expect more revelation (in line with scripture) as the day approaches.

The argument has to be along scriptural lines regardless of what is being taught and when the teaching began.

Unfortunately the original post was guilty by association rather than guilty,  
urs staff

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2021/8/28 15:49**

Thatâ€™s why Iâ€™m not post trib either. No literal 7 year trib IMO.

**Re: - posted by murrcolr (), on: 2021/8/28 15:52**

Quote: If there are 2, then you can calculate when the 2nd coming is, and Jesus says that is not possible.

Here is a thought

Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. Rev3:3

If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief.

If you are awake will you know when he comes?

For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 1Thess 5:2

But read a bit further

But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 1 Thess 5:4

For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. 1 Thess 5:5-6

Jesus coming for us will not be a surprise...

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/28 17:38**

Hi TMK,

Then nothing is literal ,no literal Jesus and no literal crucifixion.Its all a fantasy and we can decide for ourselves whats real and whats not.

The only position that I think has no merit what so ever is that there is no literal Great Tribulation,  
urs staff

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/28 17:39**

Hi Murrcolr,

I agree it will not be a surprise ,the thief will not surprise us ,  
urs staff

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2021/8/28 18:53**

Staff where does scripture say there will be a seven year great tribulation? Itâ€™s a questionable construct at best. By the way that was a rhetorical question. I know what scriptures are twisted to come up with it.

BTW if you want to believe in a literal 7 year great tribulation that you will escape Iâ€™m perfectly fine with it. If true Iâ€™ll expect to escape right along with you and if that happens Iâ€™ll shake your hand for being right.

**Re: - posted by staff, on: 2021/8/28 19:52**

Hi TMK,

I don't think this is a post to talk about a non literal great tribulation as the post is about a post trib view and a pre trib view which both believe in a literal tribulation.

The Tribulation is not 7 years its 3 1/2 yrs.The literal 7 year period is described in detail in Revelation with the witnesses for the first half telling everyone to repent and the Anti Christ taking over for the 2nd half .

However no matter what view you have you will be able to tell when Jesus is coming.

Jesus says "immediately after" unless that's not literal either .So for anyone of any view to say we will not know when the

Lord is coming is not correct,

The sun darkened  
No light from the moon  
stars fall  
powers of heaven shaken  
sign of the son of man will appear in heaven  
everyone mourns  
And the Son of Mna comes from heaven in glory

So as soon as I see the sun darkened I will know the Son of Man is coming.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days: "The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken." 30 At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.

So for anyone of any view to say we will not know when the Lord is coming is not correct or it is equally incorrect to reject a view because you will be able to tell when the Lord is coming .

For the record this coming is the 2nd coming in my opinion not the rapture but it doesn't matter we all will know if we are around when Christ is coming

The Pretrib view will know because they are not children of darkness and they will know when he is coming.

The Post view will know by counting 7 years and/or by the darkening of the sun

The Mid will know by counting the first 3 1/2 years

The No view believers will know by the Sun darkening after The Tribulation Christ talked about unless they think Christ was talking garbage.

Again this isn't about escapism as many pre tribbers have martyred over the years as other views . Trials tribulations , persecutions are a different doctrine than the period of time called the great tribulation

urs staff