

Why Jesus Has Not Come Yet

Bill Brinkworth

“... Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”

II Peter 3:2-4

We must be in the “last days”, prior to the coming of the Lord. What was prophesied in II Peter 3:2 is true today. It was told over 2000 years ago, that in those days, there would be many that would mock (scoff) at the Lord saying, “where is His coming?” (paraphrase from vs. 4). Indeed today, many poke fun at earlier biblical promises that Jesus would come again. Some of the scoffers are even those that claim to be Christian!

Peter explains here why the Lord has not returned yet. Although many of us are anxious for Jesus’ quick return, the Father is not. His priority is not time.

God’s priority is souls. He wants as few to go to hell as possible (II Peter 3:9). The longer we have on this earth, the more opportunities there are for the lost to get saved. If He had come over 2,000 years ago, when the apostles and early Christians were looking for His return, then billions would never have had the opportunity to go to heaven! You

and I would not have had the privilege to know that we are saved and on our way to eternity with Him.


God looks down from heaven and sees our sins. He sees the millions of little babies being killed by abortions before they are allowed to be born; the many proudly defying God’s commandments; those that commit crimes against others and supposedly have escaped criminal prosecution; those who sin without restraint, and many other sins. God tolerates mankind’s evilness, because He knows that in His time it will be dealt with. He is longsuffering (II Pet. 3:9); He does not want any to suffer in hell, if it can be avoided.

However, there will be a day when God decides His toleration and longsuffering are enough. It will be then that Jesus will come as a “thief in the night”; when no one expects it (II Pet. 3:10). There will no longer be any opportunities for those that have already heard the plan of salvation to be saved. God’s longsuffering will be ended.

That time will finally come about. It could be today or tomorrow, or twenty years from now. Are you ready?

**READY OR NOT:
JESUS WILL
COME!**

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The Rapture

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Hundreds of biblical prophecies have been fulfilled. In I Thessalonians 4, there is one mentioned that will be the next to be fulfilled. Billions, in the last two thousand years, have been waiting for this one (I Thes. 4:13-18) to be accomplished. It is the great catching up of the dead in Christ, and the Christians that are living (vss. 16- 17) at that time.

“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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” I Thessalonians 4:15-17

The Greek word for “caught up” (vs. 17) is “harpazō”, and it means “to catch away, to seize,

pluck, pull, and take by force”. It is very similar to the English word “rapture”, which means “transport, seizing away”. Although “rapture” is not used in the preserved King James text, this futuristic happening is often referred to by that name.

Continued on Page 2

When Will the Rapture Occur?

Bill Brinkworth

Next to the coming to the earth of Jesus the first time, His death and resurrection, and plan of salvation, Revelation 4 signals an event that is a most anticipated promise given to believers. Every Christian from the time of the first church anxiously awaited the event that is described in this verse. Revelation 4:1 announces the occurrence of the long-awaited rapture!

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew

Continued on Page 2

The Rapture

Continued from Page 1

When the Lord shouts, the archangel's voice is sounded, and God's trumpet is blown, the rapture will occur (vs. 16). The first to ascend will be the dead in Christ. Those that have trusted Christ as Saviour and died will be called up. Their souls are already joined with him (II Cor. 5:8, Eccl. 12:7) as a soul never dies, but the body sleeps (vs. 14) awaiting its wake-up call by the heavenly summoning of the rapture.

The second group to meet the Lord in the air will be those Christians which are alive. Before the terrible happenings of the Tribulation occur, somewhere after Rev. 4:1, many Christians will be called up also — without dying. No one knows when this catching away will occur (Mat. 24:36). It could be today. It could be tomorrow or twenty years from now, but it will happen; God promised!

If the heavenly trumpet were blown to call the living saved from this world, are you absolutely, positively sure you would be called away home to heaven? What a terrible time it will be when a lot of well-intentioned, good-deeders, and many religious-but-lost find out that they never were summoned

by the heavenly call. It will be too late for those that have already heard God's message and have rejected it. What a frightful time it will be when the prophesied wrath of God is finally poured out on this earth to give those that have never heard the Gospel message a chance to turn to Christ for salvation.

If you are not sure you will be going up during the "catching away", make sure of your transport "ticket" today. Admit your sinnership, and trust Christ's death on the cross as the only payment for your sins. If you do, then you may be one of many that will hear the heavenly trumpet sound its victory call to Christians one day soon.

When Will the ...

Continued from Page 1

three things which must be *hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.*

Revelation 4:1-2

The rapture is when God says, "Enough" of rampant sin and takes his church, living and dead, out of this earth (I Thessalonians 4:16-18). After the church is removed, then all the terrible prophecies con-

cerning God's wrathful judgment upon the residents of the earth will begin. For the living child of God from this point on in the book of Revelation all that happens on this earth will not involve him; as he will be gone to heaven!

Although Revelation is a record of what John saw and heard revealed to Him by Jesus, it is meant to give us an understanding of what will happen during those times. It is believed that verse one is when the rapture happens because:

☞ It says "After this ...". After what? After the seven church ages are completed (Rev. 2-3). The last church age, as compared to the church of Laodicea, pictures perfectly how the majority of churches have become today — spiritually lukewarm and disobedient to His Word! It is after God sees the last person has gotten saved, that He ends the church ages and starts a new era; an era of His judgments!

☞ "... a door was opened in heaven ..." A door is a means to pass from one place to another. This "door" moves the dead and living in Christ from this earth to the next "room"; the "room" where God is!

☞ In Revelation 3:20 the door was where Jesus was last standing. He gave all an opportunity to trust Him as Saviour one more time during the indifferent, Laodicean church-age. No more answered His pleas, so He opened the door of

Heaven and called His own home.

☞ The trumpet of God was sounded just like it was foretold it would be at the time of the rapture (I Thes. 4:16).

☞ A voice was heard calling John to heaven as it was prophesied (I Thes. 4:16) the church would be summoned up: "... Come up hither...."

☞ It was prophesied that the Lord would come again when the earth became like the days of Noah (Mat. 24:37-38, Luke 17:26).

☞ After the Lord judged the world of Noah's time, He sent a reminder of His judgment: the rainbow. In Rev. 3:3, there was a rainbow around God's throne. The judgment of Noah's day preserved only God's own who were inside the ark. The upcoming rapture will also have His own safely preserved (in Heaven), while God's judgment of the tribulation takes place on earth.

☞ The church is no longer mentioned in what occurs on the earth from this time on in the Book of Revelation, because the church is no longer here!

Since we are currently in the last church age, the rapture mentioned in Revelation 4:1 is the next event in God's plan. It could be today or tomorrow. The big question is are you absolutely positively sure you will be included in the rapture? If not, now may be your last opportunity to trust Christ as Saviour and be saved!

"WE ARE GOING EITHER BY THE CLOUDS OR BY THE CLOUDS. ARE YOU READY?" — Pastor Tommy Seay