

TREK 201

CORE CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

Lesson 13 – ESCHATOLOGY (THE END TIMES]

“Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear.” Philippians 2:12b (NLT)

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Lesson 13

ESCHATOLOGY (THE STUDY OF THE END TIMES)

Introduction

Perhaps of all the confusing and mysterious theological studies we have considered this semester, most Christians struggle with understanding the biblical perspective of the End Times. The subject of (Eschatology) the End Times is as fascinating as it is confusing. The Bible is full of prophecy and apocalyptic literature. The subject of the End Times should not be ignored. That is why we include it as our last study within Core Christian Beliefs, since you really need to know what you believe concerning the eminent return of Jesus Christ.

To help you navigate through a very confusing topic, this packet will outline, highlight, and point you to several scriptures which will give you comfort as you dive in to a difficult and often misunderstood subject. In the end, our heart is to help you ask pertinent questions related to the Bible, theology, and specifically here, the End Times. Prayerfully, your TREK leader can help explain difficulties and other areas where confusion about the End Times reigns. Know that you are not alone in being intimidated by -at times what seem to be- confusing scriptures and symbols in the book of Revelation, Daniel, and others. However, God has called every Christian to embrace their responsibility to know the Bible, and all of it, (even the hard stuff) – so that you can stand before the Lord, “as a workman who need not be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of God” (2 Timothy 2:15). Besides, the book of Revelation is the only book of the Bible which promises actual blessings to those who read and heed the instruction within it (Revelation 1:3). Thus, don’t miss out on God’s blessings (grace, knowledge, encouragement, wisdom, passion, and perspective) by ignoring the study of the End Times, but rather embrace your responsibility to deal with and struggle through the rich and often symbolic nature of apocalyptic Scripture as you seek to glorify God through this study (Col. 3:17).

What is the essence of the Message of the End Times?

Many Christians who love the Lord with all their heart at times disagree about important truths of Scripture. Thus, we see many different Christian denominations in our country. The subject of the End Times is no less debated than perhaps any other doctrine, and unfortunately has been a point of division rather than unity throughout Church history. **The point of this study, in essence, is to declare that the Bible teaches a clear and historical (FUTURE) re-appearing or second coming of Jesus Christ as Savior and Messiah over the whole World** (Acts 1:11). The imminent return of Christ is a non-negotiable core Christian doctrine that Evangelical Christianity has held for centuries and still holds to be true (Dan. 7:13; Zech. 14:4; Mt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7; 14:14). The imminent and visible return of Christ is as crucial a teaching as the virgin birth or the resurrection; in truth, they are all tied together through the life and ministry of Jesus the Messiah, based on hundreds of prophecies throughout all of Scripture.

That Jesus is coming back is a promise and a biblical warrant for Christ’s kingdom to be established on this earth (John 14:3). Jesus is coming again to this earth. To accept and hold to this biblical reality is in part what defines you as a Christian, since you are believing what Jesus

says about Himself and what the Bible claims as fact. Now, the rest of the details concerning how and when He returns are open to interpretation and discussion. So, not all Christians agree on the details. Godly and well meaning Christians view differing the events of Revelation as either *Preterism, Historicism, Idealism, or Futurism*.

- Some believe that the events of Revelation have already occurred in the past (hundred of years ago). Those who hold to this view are called **Preterists**.

- Others believe that the events of Revelation are only or primarily symbolic. These idealists hold to a more symbolic or allegorical understanding of prophecy and apocalyptic literature. Specifically, these hold that there will be no true (actual) one thousand years on this earth under the reign of Jesus as Messiah. Those who advocate a more spiritualized or symbolic approach to the events of Revelation can be generally called **Amillennialists** (A = as in “not” for Millennialism).

However, the author of this study holds that all prophecy in the Old Testament which pertains to the Jewish people, the Messiah, and the promises to God’s people in general are YET to be fulfilled and are still future. This means that this author holds that the events in Revelation have not yet occurred and are still future and that we are to expect Jesus not only to return physically in the future, but that the events of Revelation are real and will occur in the future – enacting the “End Times.” Those who hold this perspective are more generally referred to as **Premillennialists, since Jesus is understood to re-appear and claim His rightful throne on this earth BEFORE (PRE) the thousand year (millennial) reign.

As you study this doctrine of eschatology, even if you disagree with some of these conclusions, you still can be challenged and learn a lot about what the Bible teaches concerning the nature of Jesus, His work on the earth, and God’s redemptive act of restoration on the earth. In short, the book of Revelation is THE revelation of Jesus Christ. Any study concerning this doctrine will be a blessing to the student, as the study of Eschatology will reveal more about the wonder and glory of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Again, this study, as a prelude to the glory of Christ, is worth your time, devotion, and best effort. Press on to discover more!

A. WHY STUDY THE END TIMES? WHY READ THE BOOK OF REVELATION?

I believe there are three reasons, apart from receiving God’s promised blessings, why God wants us to read this last Book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, making an attempt to try and fully grasp and assimilate the knowledge and revelation that is contained in this Book:

1. An important reason to read and study the book of Revelation is due to the fact that it is the very last Book of the Bible; it is the very last “chapter” of God’s redemptive history. The book of Revelation unfolds the climax to our whole story in the Lord. As such, each Christian should know exactly how life and key moments in world history will eventually play out and exactly what our final ending is going to be in the Lord – as He has revealed it to us through Scripture.

Can you imagine reading a good fiction novel, and then all of sudden you quit reading as you get to the last chapter, never finding out what the final ending came out to be? Can you imagine watching an exciting movie on the big screen, and then all of sudden you walk out on the last 10 minutes of the movie never finding out exactly how the movie was going to end?

If you ask many Christians what the final end of their story in the Lord is going to be, they will tell you that when they die and depart from this earth, they will go straight to heaven and live with God, Jesus, and all of their saved loved ones forever in heaven. This is true! However, unless you have read from the book of Revelation and other biblical verses that pertain to end time events, you would not know that there are two more interesting events that will occur after you have already died and entered into heaven.

The Bible teaches that saints who have been living with Jesus in heaven will be coming back to rule with Him on this earth during His Millennium Kingdom (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:10; 20:4, 6 22:5). The Bible describes that the Millennium Kingdom will last 1000 years and will be on this very earth (Rev. 20:9). After this 1000 years have passed, the next, last, and final event will be God the Father creating a New Heaven and a New Earth where He will and Jesus will then rule this new earth from the new holy city of Jerusalem for the rest of all eternity. As a Believer in Jesus, your eternity is tied to serving the Lord, ruling the earth with Him, and then being a part of eternity in the New Heaven and New Earth (within the New Jerusalem). For Believers, our new life in Christ (after our earthly death) will be the most glorious beginning to NEW life and life eternal. As a Christian, according to Revelation and the rest of the Bible, you have so much to look forward to... "Eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). In the book of Revelation, we discover God's plan for redemption, retribution for the lost, and restoration for those He saves.

2. A second reason that each Christian should have basic knowledge on the End Times is so they can share and transmit this knowledge to other Christians who do not have or have ever been exposed to this future historical certainty. We are called to encourage each other (Hebrews 3:13; 10:24-25). What could be more encouraging than sharing the truth of Scripture and the hope of eternity with others?

Until more churches start to teach on this subject matter, you are going to have many Christians, especially in the times we are living at right now, who are going to be very hungry for information on this topic, and they will seek out teachers who can educate them on this topic.

3. The third reason that every Christian should be fully armed with knowledge on this topic is because we will never know which generation will be the one that will start to live through these end time events. And once these end time events start to take place, **your knowledge on this subject matter** and **one's faith in the Lord** will be the only two things that will help get you through some of these horrific events. You will need to know biblically how End Time events will play out. If you do not, you could easily lose your faith in the Lord due to the extreme activity that will be occurring during those very trying times.

This is why the Lord explains in great detail in the Bible on this entire subject matter. He wants to give all of us more than enough fair warning on exactly what will be coming down the road so we can properly prepare ourselves, others, and future generations to be able to handle all of it once it begins.

No one knows the exact date of our Lord's return back to this earth, but there is no question that the end time events prophesied to occur from the Bible will unfold in God's perfect timing. Only time will tell if our generation will be the one to see our Lord's visible return back to our earth. However, sooner or later, all of these end time events will eventually occur because our Bible tells us so. As such, each and every Christian should have some basic fundamental knowledge on this

part of our walk with the Lord so they cannot only have it for themselves and their own knowledge base in the Lord, but so they can also have it to be able to teach and encourage others about it. Since God promises a blessing for all those who read and obey what the Lord commands in Revelation, we owe it to ourselves, our children, our Church, and our community to be as informed as possible about the biblical Revelation of Jesus Christ. This study is well worth your best effort. Press on and take heart at all the Lord has prepared for those He loves and be sober-minded about all that will occur to those who openly reject Jesus as Savior.

- What Do We Gain from the book of Revelation?

1. The goal of this the study is to better understand Jesus as Lord and God –

In the Revelation of Jesus Christ we discover greater *Intimacy* with Christ – greater *Knowledge* of Christ – and greater *Joy* because of Jesus. all which lead to greater worship of Jesus as reigning Lord of all!

- Further, we gain God’s blessing in Revelation to those who read & do what is instructed therein (Rev. 1:3; 22:7)

2. In the book of Revelation, we gain a better understanding of God’s plan for His redeemed children, this world, people-groups on the planet, and the Jewish race (Israel). [Rev. Chps. 7, 9] – The Book of Revelation is best understood in context with other Old Testament prophetic books such as Isaiah, Zech. Dan., Obadiah, Joel, Amos, the Gospels of Mt. 24 /Lk. 21, 1-2 Thess., and 1-2 Peter.
3. In the book of Revelation, we gain motivation to share passionately our faith with a lost world. [2 Th. 2:3-12]

- What Do We Learn in the book of Revelation?

1. Christ is Holy & demands holiness (Provides holiness through His Spirit) and enables holy worst in our daily lives – Preparation for eternity [1 Pet. 1:13-16]
2. God’s judgment is real; Hell is real; Hope in Christ is real (rescue/salvation) since Heaven is displayed as absolutely real. [Rev. Chs. 6, 8-10, 16; Ch. 20; Ch. 21]
3. Because God is a God of promise, in the book of Revelation, displays God’s ultimate fulfillment of His many promises and blessings to Israel [Rev. 12, 14].
4. Because God loves the world, in Revelation, He gives multiple opportunities for their rescue and salvation = 2 Witnesses, 144 thousand witnesses, even Angels are all sealed and commissioned to share, preach the gospel of salvation to the lost world [Rev. 9:20-21; Ch. 11, 8:13 & 14:6]. God gives the world every possible chance to respond to His mercy and grace BEFORE He brings judgment upon them for their rejection and disbelief.

What do we **DO** with the book of Revelation?

1. Read it, meditate on it, and write out questions.
2. Think about your lifestyle, your concept of worship, your own personal holiness – am I Holy? Am I Preparing for eternity now?
3. Think about those who are lost around you. What is your action plan for those lost loved ones in your family? Local community? Globe?

B. Definitions:

1. The term **Tribulation** is a future period of the outpouring of God's wrath upon unbelievers (revealed in detail in Rev. 6–19). This period is also called Daniel's Seventieth Week and will last seven years (Dan. 9:27). The last 3.5 years is especially intense and is called the Great Tribulation (Rev. 7:14; cf. "great distress," Matt. 24:21; "time of distress," Dan. 12:1; and "time of trouble for Jacob," Jer. 30:7).
2. Whereas **Millennialism** (the literal thousand year Reign of Christ on this earth) concerns the timing of Christ's Second Coming (as either before "PRE" or after "POST" -Millennialism), *tribulationism* addresses the timing of the **Rapture** (the removal of the Church from the earth). Amillennialists and postmillennialists see Christ's Second Coming as a single event when saints are caught up to be with Christ in the clouds and then return immediately to the earth. Premillennialists often advocate two stages: the Rapture (Christ takes believers from the earth to heaven) and then after the 7 yr. tribulation event, the **Second Coming** (Christ reaches the earth).
3. The term *rapture*, despite what many believe, is a biblical term: The Greek word from which we take this term *rapture* appears in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and is translated 'caught up.' The Latin translation of this verse uses the word *rapturo*, from which we derive our English word *rapture*.

C. Dispensational Premillennialism

Amillennialists in general take the approach to the book of Revelation that the events therein are to be interpreted symbolically or allegorically, whereas those who understand the events in Revelation to be literal and symbolic are called Premillennialists, since they hold that Jesus will actually return to earth for a literal thousand years to rule as Messiah on this earth and will actually fulfill all the promises God made to ancient Israel during that millennium. Differing from Preterists, Historicists, Idealists (Amillennialists), and Postmillennialists – Historical Premillennialists are another group of premillennials who are unsure about the nature or reality of the rapture. However, Dispensational Premillennialists hold to an actual rapture event of the church before an actual (7 year) Tribulation, an actual Second Coming of Christ, and an actual millennium (thousand years of Christ's reign) on this earth.

The 5 Major Events in Revelation:

- 1) The Rapture of Christians (The Church) before the tribulation starts
- 2) The Tribulation (7 Years) on this Earth
- 3) The Second Coming of Christ before the millennial Kingdom established
- 4) The Millennial Kingdom and reign of Jesus as Messiah on this earth
- 5) The Judgment of all beings; The Creation of New Earth, Heaven, & Jerusalem

Tenets of what Dispensational Premillennialists believe are as follows:

- The promises made to Abraham, David, and the ancient Israelites are unconditional and, in no sense have these promises been fulfilled by the Church in the last two thousand years of Church history.
- It follows, therefore, that God has separate programs for the Church and Israel, both which will be dealt with individually and intentionally in the End Times.
- The “church” is not Israel nor takes the place of Israel nor assumes (appropriates) the promises and blessings of Israel in the O.T.
- Jesus Christ came to offer an earthly kingdom to Israel. The Jews, however, rejected the offer and had Jesus crucified.
- Jesus is coming again to "rapture" the Church and to finally establish the earthly kingdom promised to Israel.
- This second coming occurs in 2 stages: First comes the 'Rapture', when Christ comes *for* the saints and they are caught up to meet Him in the air. Second comes Jesus' return to earth, when He comes *with* His saints--also known as 'The Appearing' or Second Coming.
- There are, at least 3 biblical resurrections: 1) of the righteous before the millennium (at the rapture), 2) of the 'tribulation saints' (those who turn to Christ during the Tribulation) at 'the appearing,' and 3) of the unrighteous after the millennium who will be raised to face ultimate judgment.
- In short, Dispensational Premillennialism takes the Bible as accurate, infallible, inerrant, and holds that where possible – the Bible should be interpreted literally (allowing for figurative speech and symbolism). Therefore, these believe that the Bible literally teaches a millennial reign, a rapture, a second coming of Christ, and a New creation of heaven and earth.

D. What is the Rapture?

1. **Pretribulationists** teach that the *Rapture* (the removal of the Church and all true Christians) will precede the seven year Tribulation (1 Thes/ 4:16; Ti. 2:13; Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Co. 15:51-53; 1 Thes.4:15-5:11)

2. They believe no Christians will be on the earth at the start of the Tribulation (Rev. 3:10), since the purpose of the tribulation is to punish evil and evil-doers within the world, purge the world of sin, push unbelievers to repent of sin, and provide proof that Jesus is the Messiah and Savior of the world.

The nature and purpose of the Tribulation is “to test those who dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10b), a phrase used over a dozen times in the Book of Revelation. Each time this “phrase occurs... the *enemies* of the church are always in mind” (Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 120). Since the church is not to be tested, what would be the reason for the church to be present during this time of testing? The purpose of this time is clearly explained in Revelation 11:18:

“The nations were angry; and your *wrath* has come. The time has come for *judging* the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great — and for destroying those who destroy the earth.”

3. The Church will never come under God's wrath (John 5:24; Rom. 5:9; 8:1; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). Although the church has been promised persecution and tribulation (John 16:33; Acts 5:41; Phil. 1:29), this is different from the wrath that describes the Tribulation (Rev. 6:15-17; 11:18; 14:10, 19). God’s Wrath and earthly (ungodly) persecution are not the same!
4. The Spirit’s work of restraining evil will be absent during the Tribulation (2 Thess. 2:7-8). His restraining ministry is mentioned elsewhere in Scripture (Gen. 6:3; John 16:8-11). It is hard to conceive of a time period when the Spirit’s restraining influence will be curtailed but the Church will still be present.
5. There is no mention of the Church in Revelation 4—19, the part of the book relating to the Tribulation. Rather, the church (the “tabernacle of God”) is in heaven (Rev. 13:6; cf. Eph. 2:21-22) as Bride (19:1, 7-8) ready to return to the earth at Christ’s Second Coming.
6. Since the Rapture is imminent (can happen at any moment) it must be pretribulation. Christians are not to wait for signs of His return but for His coming itself (Ludwigson, 40). The New Testament teaches that the next event on God's eschatological calendar is an imminent Rapture:

E. What is the Tribulation?

THE TRIBULATION

Seven-year period between Rapture and millennium. God’s judgment unveiled on the unbelieving. [2 Peter 3: 3-7]

- What is the purpose of the worldwide seven year Tribulation?

1. To Judge the Nations: God is a God of justice as well as a God of love. His wrath must be shown to demonstrate Him to be consistent with His balanced character (e.g., Zeph. 1:15; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 11:18; 15:1; 16:1).

- a. This will be a period when God gives those who killed His people the fruits of their sin (Rev. 6:11; cf. Ps. 2:5; Jer. 25:30-32; Zech. 12:3; 2 Thess. 2:12; Rev. 3:10; 6:15).
 - b. God has always judged sin and does so at the present, so this period is not out of line with His actions in the past (Rom. 1:18-20).
2. To Discipline Israel: Israel will need a time of difficulty to turn her heart to the Lord in order to fulfill the prophecies of the nation's restoration in repentance (Deut. 30:1-3; Isa. 1:25; 4:2-4, etc.; cf. p. 119c point D).
 3. To Save Israel: God's mercy will be shown to Israel by saving her after this time of trouble.
 - ◆ Jer. 30:7 refers to the "time of Jacob's trouble" that will lead to national salvation.
 - ◆ Dan. 11:36-45 shows how God will miraculously save Israel from the attacks of Antichrist.
 4. To Establish the Millennial Kingdom: The Tribulation will end with the elimination of the kingdoms of this world so they can be replaced with Christ's kingdom (Dan. 7:17-18; cf. Rev. 17-18 removes Babylon before Rev. 19-20 sets up Christ's reign).

In the Tribulation, we see the:

Rapture of Believers in Jesus [the Church]

Retribution toward believers of Satan, those who follow Anti-Christ and the False Prophet.

Rescue for the Jews and Gentiles who will believe in Jesus

- How do we know the Tribulation is for 7 Years?

1. Revelation 11:3 says that God's two witnesses will prophecy at Jerusalem for "one thousand two hundred and sixty days..." (1260 divided by 360 = 3 ½ years)
2. Revelation 12:6 says that the woman, Israel, will be hidden in the wilderness for "one thousand two hundred and sixty days..." (1260 divided by 360 = 3 ½ years)
3. Revelations 13:5 says that the "beast" (Antichrist) with the big "mouth" was granted to "continue" for "forty-two months..." (42 divided by 12= 3 ½ years)
4. Daniel 7:25 says that the saints will be given into the hands of the "little horn" (Antichrist) for "a time and times and half a time..." (This is a Jewish idiomatic expression where the term "time" means one year) (1+2+ ½ = 3 ½ years)
5. Daniel 12:11 says that from the time that the sacrifice is caused to cease until the "abomination of desolation" is "set up" will be "one thousand two hundred and ninety days..." (1290 divided by 360 = 3 ½ years and an extra 30 days) We don't really know what the extra 30 days are about here. At this point it is still a mystery.

6. Daniel 12:12 says that their will be “one thousand three hundred and thirty five days...” to the “day” when all who arrive there will be called “blessed...” (1335 divided by 360 = 3 ½ years and an extra 75 days) Undoubtedly this is referring to a “red letter” day that will occur in the Millennial Kingdom of Christ calculated from the day that sacrificed was stopped at the middle of the Tribulation.

Tribulation = O.T. “Day of the Lord”: Understanding that God will Judge all Israel and Judah (along with the Gentiles) that His people of Truth might be redeemed and restored. Destroys sin/ death and establishes God as King over all world.

1. Time of Great Destruction [Is. 2: 1-12, Is. 22: 1-5, Is. 34: 1-14, Jer. 46:3-6, 10, Ezek. 7:5-7, Joel 1:15] Jacob’s Trouble [Jer. 30:1-11]
2. Time of Reckoning [Is. 2: 12, Is 34:8, Obad. 15]
3. Destruction of Idols and pagan worship [Is 12:18, Ezek. 30: 13-14]
4. Physical Manifestations of Destruction [Is 2:18-20, Is 13:6-9, Is 22: 1-25, Jer. 46:1-25, Ezek. 7:1-20, Am 5:18-20]
5. Inescapable Judgment: Sudden, unbearable, and final [Jer. 46:6-12, Ezek. 13:5, Amos 9: 5-9]
6. Remnant will turn to God: Both Jews and Gentiles [Zeph. 1:7-8, 2: 1-3, 3-8]
7. God delegates the Nations [Zech. 14:3-7, 14:12-15]

Tribulation = “Seventieth week” of Daniel: Daniel 9 and 12

Jesus Taught of this time: Matt 24:4-14, Mark 13:5-13, Luke 21: 8-19]

- Time of Great deception: Signs before hand and during.
- Warns of abomination of desolation
- Day of the Lord of Jesus Christ... New Testament
*Crucifixion= mini day of the Lord
- Day of Judgment
- Time when Satan tries to usurp God’s power [2 Th. 2: 2- 12]

TRIBULATION EVENTS:

- Antichrist rises to supreme power – brings peace to Muslims & Jews; builds new Jewish Temple in Jerusalem; establishes false “peace” for 3.5 years.
- God seals 144,000 male Jews for world evangelism; 2 Prophetic Witnesses teach unharmed at the New Temple for 3.5 years
- Then, Anti-Christ declares himself as Messiah and God; defiles temple in Jerusalem. Has False Prophet declare world to worship anti-christ.
- Unparalleled chaos, persecution, and martyrdom unleashed upon all Jews and Christians.
- Gentiles overrun the temple
- God unleashes 4 sets of global disasters – global killers & chaos

- The central global city “Babylon” – the financial, political, and religious center of the earth is destroyed.

F. What is the Second Coming of Christ?

The Second Coming of Christ refers to the imminent and immediate return of Jesus Christ to this earth to establish His kingdom and enact His final stage of redemption upon the earth (Mt. 25:31; Lk. 1:32-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30).

The Second Coming of Christ will be in two stages: the *Rapture* (Christ’s coming for His own in the air to take them from the earth before the Tribulation) and the “*Appearing*” (Christ’s coming with His own to judge unbelievers upon the earth after the Tribulation).

These two events (the Rapture and second Coming) are *similar* in some respects:

- 1) Both events are literal returns. The Bible never refers to these events as only allegorical returns since in both instances Christ actually will return to the earth.
- 2) Both events find Christ as their central figure.
- 3) Both are future events which will come suddenly (Rapture in 1 Cor. 15:51-53; Revelation in Matt. 24:38-44).
- 4) Both events are sometimes referred to by the same word (e.g., "coming" refers to the Rapture in 1 Thess. 4:15 and to the Revelation in Matthew 24:27).
- 5) Like elements:

	<u>Rapture</u>	<u>Revelation</u>
a) clouds	1 Thess. 4:17	Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7
b) angels	1 Thess. 4:16	Matt. 24:31; 25:31; Mark 13:27
c) trumpet	1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:52	Matt. 24:31

However, the Bible clearly distinguishes two different events in reference to Christ’s coming (second advent) to earth.

- In the rapture, Christ returns only “in the air” in order to gather His Church, all Believers alive at that moment. All Believers are glorified and receive new spiritual bodies.

- In the actual Second Coming (Christ’s Appearing), Jesus physically returns to this earth (Mt. of Olives in Jerusalem) and brings the saints with Him.

Differences between the Rapture and Christ's Second Coming:

The Rapture	The Second Coming
1	1
Pre-tribulational (Rev. 3:10)	Post-tribulational (Rev. 19:11-21)
2	2
Christ will <u>come in the air</u> (1 Thess. 4:16)	Christ will <u>come to the earth</u> , His feet touching the Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14:4)
3	3
A coming <u>for</u> the saints (1 Thess. 4:15-17) to bring them to the Father's house (John 14:1-2)	A coming <u>with</u> the saints (Matt. 25:31; 1 Thess. 3:13; Rev. 19:14)
4	4
<u>Saints</u> (dead and alive) will be <u>caught up</u> ("raptured") from the earth to meet the Lord in the air and taken to heaven (1 Thess. 4:16-17)	<u>Saints</u> who are already on earth will <u>remain on the earth</u> (no rapture) to be ushered into the Millennial Kingdom (Acts 15:16; Rev. 5:10; Matt. 6:10; ch. 24)
5	5
Produces <u>comfort and hope</u> (1 Thess. 4:18)	Produces <u>fear and judgment</u> (Matt. 24:27-31; Luke 21:20-28; Rev. 6:15-17)
6	6
<u>Mystery</u> truth revealed only in the New Testament age (1 Cor. 15:51)	<u>Central</u> in Old Testament prophecy but clarified in the New Testament (Jer. 30:7; Zech 14:1-3; Matt. 24:30; Col. 3:4)
7	7
Bodies of church saints <u>glorified</u> (1 Cor. 15:51-58; Phil. 3:20-21) and brought to heaven for seven years (1 Thess. 4:17)	Bodies of tribulation saints left in <u>mortal state</u> to continue to live on the earth in the millennium (Matt. 25:31-34)
8	8
<u>Imminent</u> , no signs needed (1 Thess. 4:16)	<u>Not imminent</u> but preceded by spectacular signs in the heavens and on the earth (Matt. 24:29-31; Luke 21:25-28; Acts 2:19-21; Rev. 1:7; chs. 6-19)

9	Primary purpose is <u>deliverance</u> of the saints from this world (1 Thess. 1:10)	Primary purpose is <u>judgment</u> of unbelieving (Matt. 25:31-46)
10	<u>Invisible</u> and private as only believers see Christ; God deludes via the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:11)	<u>Visible</u> and public since "every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7)
11	Fulfills a promise to the <u>Church</u> where Jew-Gentile distinctions do not exist (1 Thess. 4:15; cf. John 14:1-3; Eph. 2:11-16)	Fulfills promises to <u>Israel</u> of covenants made in the Old Testament (Gen. 12:1-3; Ps. 89; Isa. 11:11-14; cf. Rom. 11:26-27)
12	Evil begins to <u>increase</u> (2 Thess. 2:1-12)	Evil is <u>suppressed</u> (2 Thess. 1:7; Ps. 37:9-10)
13	<u>Church</u> removed (1 Thess. 4:13-18)	<u>Satan</u> removed (Rev. 20:1-3)
14	Christ shown as <u>Head</u> of the Church and all things (Eph. 1:10, 22; 4:15; Col. 1:18; 2:10)	Christ vindicated as <u>Messiah</u> to Israel (Zech. 14:3-4; cf. Acts 1:6 with v. 11)
15	Judgment seat of Christ for <u>believers</u> (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:13)	Judgment of <u>Israel and Gentiles</u> (Ezek. 20:34-38; Matt. 25; Zech. 14:4; cf. p. 160)
16	The <u>Lord</u> is at hand (Phil. 4:5)	The <u>kingdom</u> is at hand (Matt. 24:14)
17	Nature subsequently <u>ruined</u> (Rev. 6—16)	Nature subsequently <u>restored</u> (Rom. 8:19-22; Isa. 11:6-9; 35:9; 65:25)

G. What is the Millennial Reign of Christ?

The Millennial Kingdom is an actual (literal) dominion of Jesus Christ on this present (though restored after the wrath of God during the Tribulation) earth. During the millennial reign of

Christ, Jesus as Messiah reigns for one thousand years the nations of all the earth – those who survived the tribulation and we saved (Jew and Gentile). These new Believers who have yet to die, will re-populate the earth and establish new countries and nations, and will be ruled by Christ and His heavenly host of redeemed and glorified saints (Rev. 20:1-7).

During this thousand years, Christ will restore Israel as the center of His theocracy and will perfectly and ultimately fulfill ALL the promises God had made (covenanted) in the Old Testament with Adam, Noah, Abraham, (Isaac), Jacob –ISRAEL- Moses, David, etc.

In the thousand year reign of the Messiah, Christ will rule perfectly as prophesied: Isaiah chapters 60-65. (Cf. Ezek. 37:21-28; Dan. 7:17-22; Rev. 19:11-16)

MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST

REVELATION 20

1. Israel will be restored to a position of favor with God.
(Rms. 11:26-29, Zech. 12-14)
2. Israel along with gentile believers will enter the millennial kingdom.
(Mt. 25:31-46, Dan. 7:14 &27)
3. Satan will be bound for 1,000 years.
(Rev. 20:1-6)
4. Jesus Christ will come to this earth and rule personally in fulfillment of the Davidic promises.
(Ezek. 37:23-28)
5. The entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of God.
(Isa. 11:1-2, 9)
6. Israel will occupy all the land promised Abraham from the Nile to the Euphrates River.
(Gen. 15:18)
7. The Holy Spirit will personally indwell the believing Jews and gentiles.
(Jer. 31:31-34)
8. The Curse on man and the physical creation will be lifted.
(Isa. 11:6-9, Isa. 65:20-25)
9. There will be world peace and prosperity.
(Isa. 2:4, Isa. 62:8-9)

10. Satan will be released once more to deceive the nations.
(Rev. 20: 7-10)

11. Earth is removed and all without Christ are resurrected and judged.
(Rev. 20: 11-15)

12. The creation of a new heaven and earth.
(Rev. 21)

AXIOMS of Eschatology:

1) Jesus Christ will imminently and visibly return:

When Jesus told the disciples, “I will come back and take you to be with me...” (John 14:3) He actually used the present tense (“I am coming”) with a sense of the immediate future without any intervening signs (Hoyt, 96).

Other NT passages imply imminency or that Christ will come unexpectedly or before the Tribulation: (Matt. 24:36-39; 42-44, 50; 25:13; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 12:40; 1 Cor. 16:22; Phil. 3:20; Tit. 2:12-13; Heb. 9:28; 10:25; James 5:7-9; 1 Pet. 1:6-7; 4:7; 2 Pet. 3:10; 1 John 2:28; 3:2-3; Rev. 1:3; 22:7, 10, 12, 20).

2) The End Times as described in the book of Revelation portray the ultimate Redemptive plan for God’s Children on this earth and in eternity. The Bible declares that Heaven is real. (Rev. 20:15, 21-22; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:2ff).

3) The End Times as described in the book of Revelation portray the ultimate wrath and final judgment of God toward the rebellious lost masses. The Bible declares that Hell is real. (2 Th. 1:9; Rev. 20:7-15; 2 Pt. 3:10; Mt. 7:13-14, 21; 25:41; Jn. 5:22)

- Therefore, **if** Christ did die on the cross for all sin, and *Hell is real* as a consequence of God’s judgment, **then** every Christian who desires to be obedient to Christ and sensitive to the merciful heart of God should **witness** (share the gospel of salvation) to every person with whom he/she comes into contact – as their soul and eternity may depend on you ... Acts 1:8; Ro. 10:13-17!

APPENDIX A

Practical Implications of the Rapture

How should your belief in Christ's future return change the way you live now?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Knowing that at the Rapture we'll see Christians who have died prevents us from hopeless grieving. Once we are with the Lord we'll *never* be separated from Him—that's encouraging (vv. 17-18)!

1 Corinthians 15:35-49

We'll receive a new body at the Rapture so we shouldn't be absorbed with "body worship" now.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Christ's return will show that he defeated Satan—this gives us victory over sin now (vv. 54-57).

Our future hope stabilizes us now (v. 58).

Christ's sure return motivates us to diligent service since it's not done in vain (v. 58).

2 Peter 3:1-9

The more scoffing about His return we hear, the more encouraging this should be for us (vv. 1-4).

The longer it takes for Christ's return, the more His patience is demonstrated towards us (vv. 8-9)

2 Peter 3:10-18

The destruction of all we can see should motivate us to invest in the things we can't see (vv. 10-13).

The judgment of the earth should motivate holy living (vv. 11, 14).

Knowing the Day of the Lord is coming will give us the wisdom that protects from false teaching (vv. 15-17).

APPENDIX B

The Antichrist

I. The Post-Rapture Crisis for Leadership

- A. The need for a world leader after the Rapture cannot be overstated.
1. Someone will need to explain the disappearance of millions of Christians.
 2. Communications, transportation, economic, and all other systems will be disrupted.
 3. The middle-east problem especially will need to be resolved.
- B. Difficult times have always set the stage for a strong man to take control. The world scene after the Rapture will be a perfect environment for the Antichrist to gain power.

II. Names for the Future Anti-Christ

- A. The names are many, describing his multifaceted character and the great emphasis placed upon this man in the Bible.
- B. List of the names in scriptural order:

Bloody and Deceitful Man	Ps. 5:6
Wicked One	Ps. 10:2-4
Man of the Earth	Ps. 10:18
Mighty Man	Ps. 140:1
Assyrian	Isa. 10:5-12
King of Babylon	Isa. 14:4
Sun of the Morning	Isa. 14:12
Spoiler	Isa. 16:4-5; Jer. 6:26
Nail	Isa. 22:25
Branch of the Terrible Ones	Isa. 25:5
Profane Wicked Prince of Israel	Ezek. 21:25-27
Little Horn	Dan. 7:8
King of Fierce Countenance	Dan. 8:23
Prince that shall Come	Dan. 9:26

One who causes Desolation	Dan. 9:27
Vile Person	Dan. 11:21
Willful King	Dan. 11:36
Idol Shepherd	Zech. 11:16-17
Abomination of Desolation	Matt. 24:15
One Coming in His Own Name	John 5:43
Man of Sin	2 Thess. 2:3
Man Doomed to Destruction	2 Thess. 2:3
Lawless One	2 Thess. 2:8
Antichrist	1 John 2:18, 22
Angel of the Bottomless Pit	Rev. 9:11
Beast from the Abyss/Sea	Rev. 11:7; 13:1
[Scarlet] Beast	Rev. 17:3, 8, 12

III. Summary of the Activity of the Future Anti-Christ

A. Peaceful beginning	Rev. 6:1-2
B. Makes 7 year treaty with Jews	Dan. 9:27a
C. Heads 10 nation confederacy	Dan. 7:20
D. Dominated by world church	Rev. 17:3-11
E. Dominates world church	Rev. 17:12-16
F. Breaks covenant with Israel	Dan. 9:27 (midpoint of the Tribulation)
G. Counterfeits death/resurrection	Rev. 13:3a
H. Worshiped worldwide	Rev. 13:3b-8, 11-15
I. Sets up image for worship	2 Thess. 2:3-4
J. False prophet promotes mark	Rev. 13:16-18
K. Two witnesses slain	Rev. 11:7
L. Persecutes Jews & Victorious in Israel	Dan. 11:40-43
M. Defeated by Christ	Rev. 19:11-19

N. Doom in Lake of Fire

Rev. 19:20

