

THE CHURCH IN THE LAST DAYS

THE RAPTURE: FACT OR FICTION?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

Jeff Schreve

“The rapture is a racket. Whether prescribing a violent script for Israel or survivalism in the United States, this theology distorts God’s vision for the world. It is not biblical. We are not raptured off the earth.”

Dr. Barbara Rossing, The Rapture Exposed

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

Is it biblical to believe in the rapture of the church?

1. The Bible clearly teaches there will be a rapture.

*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

- The rapture is not the same as the return.

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

2. The issue of the rapture is timing.

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



And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. Revelation 19:14

3. The timing of the rapture precedes the day of the Lord.

Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

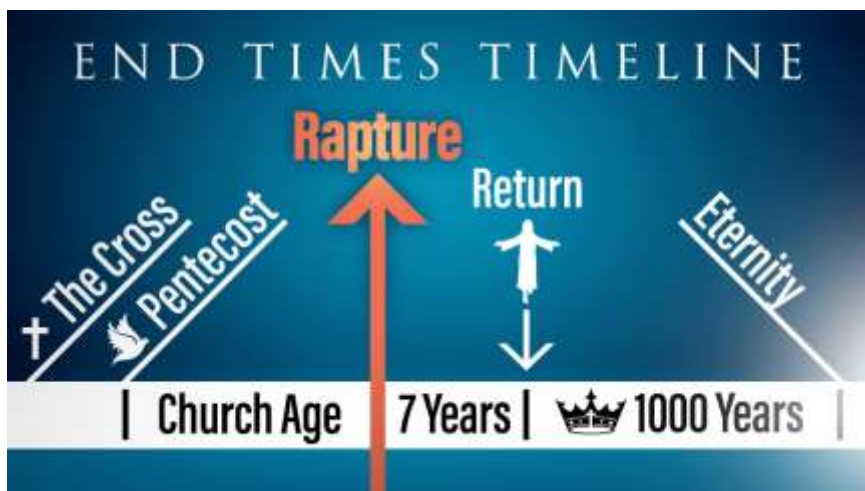
A. There will be a falling away from the faith.

B. There will be a removing of the restrainer.

And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8

C. There will be the revealing of the Antichrist.

For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come. 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10



Are you ready if He came today?