

VIII. The Doctrine of the End Times (Eschatology)

A. Individual Eschatology

1. Death & Immortality of the soul

- * Death is the termination of physical life by the separation of the body & soul.
- * It is ultimately the result of sin in this world.
- * Some get there faster than others.
- * *Show comic: Tombstone: I told you the job description was unreasonable.*
- * But physical death does not mean that we cease to exist (annihilation).
- * Rather, it is simply the passing from one mode of existence to another.
- * Humans are immortal.
- * "Immortality" is the soul continuing to live after physical death.

2. Intermediate State of Existence

- * There is definitely a biblical picture of an intermediate state (continued existence until the great judgment day).
- * It is not a soul sleep, not annihilation, but it is a conscious state.
- * We don't know all about what it is or will be like.
- * We do know the souls of believers immediately enter into the glory of heaven.
- * They enter a state of rest while they await the resurrection of all believers.
 - * 2 Cor. 5:8 "Rest/at home with the Lord" * 1 Thess. 5:10
 - * Phil. 1:23 "Be with Christ" * Rev. 14:3
 - * 2 Cor. 5:1 "building with God" * Luke 16
 - * Luke 23:43 "today you will be w/me in Paradise" (euphemism for

heaven)

- * Unbelievers die and awake in hell (punishment)
- * Our souls remain in this intermediate state until Christ's Second Coming ushers
in
the end times and final judgment day.

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- * Note: Catholics believe this intermediate state is a place called purgatory.
 - * Purgatory is a place to which the soul of righteous people go for further purification (II Maccabees).

3. The resurrection and afterlife

a. The nature of the resurrection

- * As humans, subject to the effects of the Fall, we will all die one day.
- * But part of our redemption is usher us from death to life.
- * Ultimately, our salvation is not complete until our bodies are raised and glorified.
- * We will be raised with new bodies, in newness of life (1 Cor. 15).
- * Paul teaches extensively that the resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of our resurrection.

b. **The future life**

- * The NT recognizes a state beyond death in which the spiritual life is continued under new conditions.
- * For the righteous, this new destiny is heaven.
- * It will be a glorious and wonderful eternity in the presence of God.
- * *Show comic: I could have been in heave 3 yrs ago had it not been for...*
- * *Show comic: Calvin, maybe heaven is a place that allows you to be bad.*
- * Universalism teaches that all people will ultimately be saved and go to heaven--but this is not so.
- * The destiny of the wicked is eternal separation from God, and eternal suffering of His wrath--known as the second death.

B. General Eschatology

- * The whole subject of “end times” can be very confusing.
- * Many people hold many different views on how everything is going to happen.
- * Some people don’t even really know anything about it.
- * *Show comic: Charlie Brown, there’s no tomorrow...*

1. **The Second Coming of Christ**

- * The Second Coming refers to when Jesus will return to this world.
- * The second coming is a certain event.
 - * This was clear in Jesus' teaching (Mt 24-25; 26:64; Mk 13; Lk 21; Jn 14)
 - * The early church taught this message (Ac 1:11; 3:19-21; 1 Thss 4:15-16)
- * The time of His return is not certain.
 - * Jesus refused to set a date, because the time is in the father's hands (Mk 13, Mt 24; 13)
 - * We need to be watchful and ready, because we do not know when.
- * When He returns, Jesus will resurrect the dead and rapture the living.
- * The Bible teaches some signs of the times of His coming.
 - * It will be preceded by troublesome times which include:
 - * war, economic difficulties, moral decline, apostasy, general perplexity.
- * There are several views on when Christ will return, in relation to other end-time events.

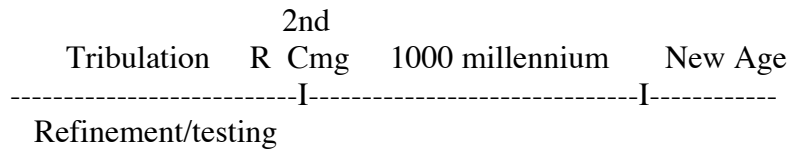
to deceive men and impostor Christ, even in their day.

- * Clearly Jesus anticipated this form of deception to start from their day on.
- * The NT speaks of this word in two senses: generally it refers to evil ones who are “anti-God.” (Paul states they are “present now” 1 Thss 2:4).
- * Specifically, there will be 1 who will personify a single “God-usurper.”
- * The book of Revelation calls this usurper the “beast.”

b. Three views relating to the rapture of the church

(1) The Post-Tribulation Rapture Theory

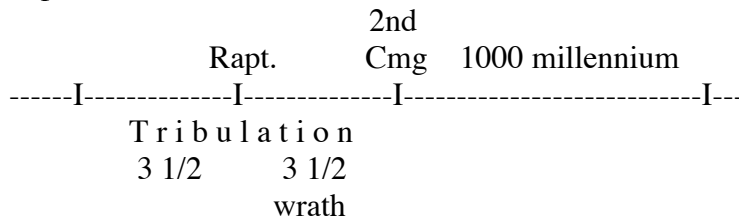
- * This view maintains that the church continues on the earth through the Tribulation until the second coming.
- * 70th week=7 years of tribulation (may/may not be a literal 7 yrs)
 - * The Rapture occurs at the end of the trib., at Jesus' 2nd coming.
- * Church will return immediately with Him to the earth to reign.



- * There is no difference between the rapture and the 2nd coming.
- * It is one event with two parts.
- * Tribulation is not judgment for sin but purification of the church through trial. The focus is the church.
- * They argue against imminency (nearness) of Christ’s return.
- * They argue that the Bible has multi Promises of tribulation.
- * Lk 23:27-31; Mt 24:9-11; Mk 13:9-13; Jn 15:18-19; 16:1-2,33)

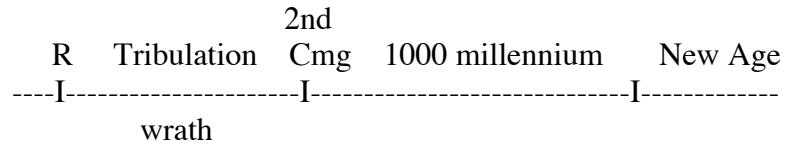
(2) The Mid-Tribulation Rapture Theory

- * This view maintains that the church will be raptured at the end of the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation.
- * The tribulation has 2 separate parts, each with distinct functions.
- * The first 3 1/2 yrs: the cleansing and the testing of the church
- * The second 3 1/2 yrs: the wrath of God from which the church is preserved.



(3) The Pre-Tribulation Rapture Theory

- * This view maintains that the church in its entirety, by resurrection and rapture, will be removed before any of the tribulation begins.
- * The rapture could happen at any time (time is unknown).
- * *Show comic: Chalkboard "rapture..."*



- * This view holds to a literal view of the interpretation of scripture
- * This is the only view to maintain the imminency (nearness).
- * Jn 14:2-3; Acts 1:11; 1 Cor 15:51-52; Phil 3:20; Col 3:4; 1 Thess 1:10; 1 Tim 6:14; Jms 5:8; 2 Pet. 3:34; 1 Thess 5:6; Titus 2:13
- * The Assemblies of God argues for imminent return of Christ.
- * The A/G is Premillennial, Pretribulational.

Conclusion

- * These are the 3 primary views on when Christians will finally be raptured to be with the Lord.
- * Depending on how one interprets Scripture, there is Biblical support for all three.
- * Since we don't know for sure, here is my theory: Pray pre, prepare post.