

Pre- or Post-Tribulation Rapture?

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | October 17, 2019



I'm an ex-Catholic. I came to the saving knowledge of truth when I started studying Bible prophecy... I came across your channel only recently and started watching your videos, and the way you explain design law really makes sense and helped me understand this God of love and helped bridge the gap between OT and NT. That is why it's all the more confusing to understand this post-tribulation rapture doctrine. ...If our God is the God of love, then why would his bride go through all the pain and suffering reserved for the lost world? I appreciate the good work you guys are doing.

Thank you. Kevin from India

Thank you for your question, Kevin!

Whenever I answer such questions, I want to be practical first and foremost. This is why you won't find many topics like this one on our website; they are hypothetical — what might happen in the future. In other words, such discussions have very little practical application.

And because there is no way to prove a future event, discussions about topics like this one often lead to unnecessary arguments and, most important, they rarely lead to unity in Christ. The various

interpretations are usually made based on underlying beliefs and assumptions — starting date for various prophecies, method for interpreting biblical prophetic time, mortality or immortality of the soul, what sin is and how the plan of salvation works, the character of God and His methods, etc .— and those assumptions rarely get discussed, even though they impact each person’s interpretation.

Additionally, because the rapture is a future event, what difference does it make on our salvation to believe in either a pre- or post-tribulation rapture? What difference does it make regarding our need for Jesus as our Savior? What difference does it make as to whether we are reborn and develop a Christlike character or not? In other words, doesn’t a person need to be reborn and saved from sin regardless of their particular belief about the rapture? And can’t a person be reborn and saved from sin and still believe in either of these two options?

So, I see little practical usefulness in focusing our attention on such questions when it comes to day-to-day Christian living.

Benefits and Perils

That said, there is a potential benefit to the post-tribulation view, but only for those who are alive when the event unfolds. If believing in a pre-tribulation rapture has caused some to expect it to such a degree that if the reality is a post-tribulation appearing of Christ, then there is the risk that they may be mentally, emotionally, and spiritually unprepared to endure the trials. The belief that they won’t be here for the tribulation could set them up for discouragement, disillusionment, disappointment, and possibly believing they weren’t right with God, or else they wouldn’t have been “left behind.” So, it is possible the pre-tribulation rapture belief could contribute to some abandoning the faith if the reality turns out to be a post-tribulation rapture.

Conversely, what is the downside to believing in a post-tribulation rapture? If it turns out that the saved are spirited away to heaven without going through the tribulation, do you think those saved will be disappointed and lose their faith, or will they be celebrating God’s delivery?

Thus, one potential benefit of the post-tribulation rapture is the possibility of better mental, emotional, and spiritual preparation, along with a decreased risk of disappointment if one’s expectations are not realized.

But regardless of whether the “great tribulation,” which encompasses the entire world, occurs before or after the rapture, many individuals do and will experience their personal tribulation because of their faith:

- Christians were burned at the stake during the Dark Ages
- Rwanda Genocide in the 1990s[\[1\]](#)
- Christians were beheaded in 2015 by Islamic Extremists[\[2\]](#)
- Christian are persecuted in India, Sri Lanka, North Korea, and Nigeria[\[3\]](#)

Because of this, I find it best to focus on preparing hearts and minds to live in unity with Christ in the face of tribulation and, thus, choose to believe in the post-tribulation rapture.

However, I also let people believe whatever they want on this issue and don’t get into controversy over it, because it will become self-evident when Christ does take the righteous from the earth. Therefore, our ministry puts nearly all our focus on preparing people to meet Christ and stand firm in

righteousness in the face of trials, whenever in human history they occur.

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rwandan_genocide

[2] <https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/05/16/coptic-christians-beheaded-in-libya-returned-to-egypt-for-burial/>

[3] <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>