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Why the Rapture is Not Imminent



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #155 ~

First, we need to understand that the rapture takes place at the coming of Christ. Many people believe the rapture and Christ's coming occur at two different times, but that's not true. 1 Thessalonians 4:15 says, *"This we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep."* Verse 17 says, *"Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."* The same exact phrase, *"we who are alive and remain"* appears in both verses. Verse 15 speaks of those alive and remaining until the *"coming of the Lord."* Verse 17 says those alive and remaining will be *"caught up."* When you put these verses together and see how they relate to each other, it's obvious that the rapture takes place at Christ's coming, and is, in fact, the first event to occur at His coming.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 says the same thing: *“Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him…”* Being gathered is referring to the rapture, which happens at the coming of our Lord. Then there’s 1 John 3:2 that says we’re glorified when He appears, and 1 John 2:28 that says Christ appears at His coming. This means we’re glorified at Christ’s coming, and since we’re glorified when we’re raptured (1 Corinthians 15:50-52), then we know the rapture takes place at Christ’s coming. Look at Matthew 24:37-41 and 1 Corinthians 15:23 and you will realize they also validate this very important point, that the rapture occurs at Christ’s coming.

Second, we need to see that many prophesied signs and events occur before the coming of Christ. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, speaking of the day of the Lord, which occurs during the coming of the Lord, says, *“it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction* (the Antichrist) *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.”* From this we understand that four things will take place before the day of the Lord and before Christ’s coming, and therefore, before the rapture: the apostasy, the revealing of the Antichrist, the building of the temple, and the desolation of the temple. That Christ’s coming and the rapture are after these four things forces us to conclude that the rapture is not imminent, that it cannot happen until these events take place.

Matthew 24:4-31 also makes it clear that Christ’s coming isn’t imminent. In verse 27, Jesus tells us about His coming – *“For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.”* His coming is further described in verse 30 – “*They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.”* In verse 31, we find the rapture – *“they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”* What takes place before these things? In verses 4-26, Jesus tells us there will be false christs, wars, earthquakes, famines, great tribulation, the betrayal of Christians, increasing lawlessness,

false prophets, the preaching of the gospel, the desolation of the temple, Jews fleeing the enemy (the Antichrist), and signs in the heavens. All these things, including plagues, like the Coronavirus (Luke 21:11), will take place before Christ's coming (verses 27, 30) and the rapture of the church (verse 31).

By reading these and other prophecy passages (Mark 13, Luke 17, Luke 21, Revelation 6-7), it's obvious that many prophesied signs and events will take place before Christ's coming, proving that the rapture of the church is not imminent, and cannot happen at any moment. For example, it cannot happen today, tomorrow, next week, next year, 10 years from now, or any other time in the future, unless all these prophesied events take place first.

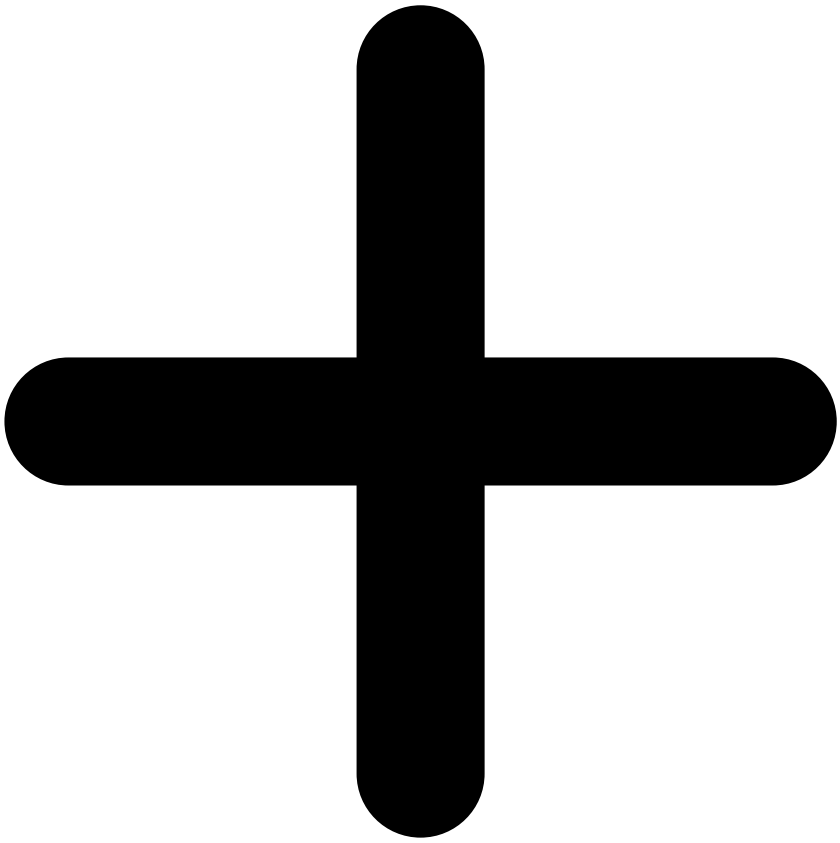
That the rapture is not imminent is confirmed by Matthew 24:33, for Jesus says, *"when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door."* When we *"see all these things"* Jesus talked about in verses 4-29, then we know His coming and the rapture is near, at hand, will take place very soon. To drive this point home, Jesus goes on to say, *"Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place"* (verse 34). When Jesus uses the word *"truly"*, He is being emphatic about the fact that Christians will see *"all these things"* before He returns to rapture the church. There will be a *"generation"* of Christians who will observe "*all these things"* and then be raptured.

Another key verse on this subject is Matthew 24:25, where Jesus says, *"Behold, I have told you everything in advance."* What is *"everything"*? It is *"all these things"* pertaining to His coming. Why has He told us these things? And why has He told us these things ahead of time? Just so we can know what they are. Of course not. Jesus is telling us these things because we need to know them, and when we see them taking place, we will be confident that His coming, and the rapture, is getting closer. Jesus wants us to know what will be happening before He raptures the church because He doesn't want us, His bride, to be afraid or caught off guard. He wants us to be ready, alert, and expecting and

looking for His return.

Jesus' coming and the rapture are not imminent and will not happen until particular signs and events take place. And He told you *"all these things"* because He loves you and doesn't want you to be surprised, but to be awake, aware of what is going on in the world, and excited about seeing Him. Jesus knows life will be extremely difficult for Christians on the earth at that time, and He wants you to have hope. But it's not just about you having hope, but about you telling others so they have hope, for Hebrews 10:25 says, *"encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near."*

P.S. This subject, that Christ's coming and the rapture of the church are not imminent, is extremely important for you to understand. Here are three other posts that will help you understand this subject: *"We Will See the Day of Christ Drawing Near"*, *"Reflections on the Timing of Christ's Return"*, and *"When Is Christ Coming Back?"*



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