

WHO ARE THE LEFT BEHIND?

ONE OF THE PROMINENT VIEWS about the rapture out there is that it is imminent, any day, any hour, any moment now a large part of the earth's population could disappear in the twinkling of an eye. Many see the natural disasters, economic crises, our move toward globalism, a worldwide currency, and the ever intense Israeli / Palestinian conflict as indicators pointing toward the rapture.

However, it appears that these events point to an imminent appearance of the Antichrist instead of the rapture. The Antichrist is that politician who will be given power by the devil to bring peace with Israel, establish a one world currency, and remove Christians and Jews, not through a rapture, but martyrdom. Here's why I see it from this growing perspective:

1. The Apostle Paul writes that an apostasy of the church must precede the arrival of the Antichrist and the return of Jesus (2 Thessalonians 2:3). This is also confirmed in Revelation chapters two and three where we are given a description of the apostate church prior to the appearing of the Antichrist in Revelation chapter six. How can the church be rapture ready when it is deceived and living in apostasy?
2. Revelation 14:14-16 is clear that the rapture takes place here. Notice that the rapture takes place after the seventh angel blows his trumpet (Revelation 11:15). This is an important revelation. The Apostle Paul is clear in 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 that the rapture takes place when Christ returns at the blowing of the seventh trumpet. Paul refers to this seventh trumpet as the "last" trumpet. (1 Corinthians 15:51,52) When we remember that Revelation is written in chronological order and that out of the seventh seal appears the seven trumpets (Revelation 8:1, 6-9:1-11) and out of the seventh trumpet appears the seven vials (Revelation 11:15, 15:1, 16:1-21), then we must also acknowledge that the rapture takes place after the Antichrist and the great tribulation has already taken place.
3. Matthew 24:29-31 also gives insight into when the rapture takes place. Here it is clear that the return of Christ and the rapture takes place "immediately" after the great tribulation. The great tribulation is that horrible time when God's people are greatly persecuted and martyred by the Antichrist.

The order of the rapture that Scripture reveals is that the antichrist appears, the church is martyred, Christ returns, and the remnant that remains are raptured to meet Christ in the air. As much as I would like to think that the rapture takes place before the mass execution of God's people, it just won't happen. The pre-tribulation view of the rapture must add interpretation to the verses they use to support their view. It is important to stay with the clear teaching of Scripture. One of the reasons so many are confused about when the rapture takes place is because they do not understand the proper ordering of events as revealed in the book of Revelation. My new book, *Revelation and the*

Age of the Antichrist is a summary of the book of Revelation which clearly reveals the order of the revelation as God gave it to the Apostle John.

The success of the "Left Behind" book series, with over 17 million copies sold, reveals the prominence and popularity of the pre-tribulation deception. However, the clear teaching of Scripture is that all God's people will be "left behind" and will be here when the Antichrist appears, and his great tribulation is unleashed against all God's people. The good news is, we will not be here when God pours out His great wrath upon the earth in the course of one, sixty-minute hour.

2010