

Christ in Prophecy

Rapture 11: Pre-Trib Rapture and Rapture Kit

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Part 1

Tim Moore: Welcome to Christ in Prophecy. 2023 is well underway and we have an exciting lineup of shows in store for you. On October 31st, 1517, Martin Luther nailed a document containing 95 theses to the door of the Catholic Church in Wittenberg, Germany. His bold act launched what would become known as the Protestant Reformation, with many of the protests centering on the excesses of the Catholic Church and its abandonment of the Word of God. Here at Lamb & Lion Ministries, we honor the entire Word of God. And we don't have to have 95 theses calling out the Pope for delineating our doctrine, our calling centers on one mission proclaiming the soon return of Jesus Christ to as many people as possible as quickly as possible.

Nathan Jones: Our ministry's overarching theme has been to emphasize the imminence of the Rapture, through this television program, our online presence, our various conferences, and our bimonthly magazine, The Lamplighter, our consistent message is Jesus is coming for His Church soon. And even with that clear message, we realize that there are many people who simply don't understand the meaning of the urgency of the Rapture. So Lamb and Lion Ministries has produced a wonderful booklet that explains the Rapture, offering insights to people as we wait for Jesus to call us to Himself and to others who will be left behind when He comes for the Church.

Tim Moore: It is often difficult to give credit to the ideas that are woven into our understanding or spark our creativity. I've even told other preachers that if I don't remember to cite them as the source for sermon ideas, I'll just give glory to the Holy Spirit who inspired them in the first place. But in this case, we know exactly where the idea for our Rapture booklet came from.

Nathan Jones: James Pannafino, who pastors a Baptist Church in Baldwinsville, New York, just outside of Syracuse, had a wonderful idea a few years ago, actually, as Tim indicated, we'll say that the Holy Spirit inspired James to have a wonderful creative idea.

Tim Moore: So instead of describing this idea, we've asked James to join us today to explain what the Lord laid on his heart. So, without further ado, James welcome to this episode of Christ in Prophecy.

James Pannafino: Hey, guys. It's so good to be with both of you. It's quite an honor.

Tim Moore: Well, it's our honor to have you here, again through the miracle of modern technology. So, for our viewers who might not really understand what we're talking about, what is the Rapture? What does the Bible tell us we should be looking for as sons and daughters of Christ?

James Pannafino: Okay. I'll take, like, 45 minutes to explain that.

Tim Moore: Yeah.

James Pannafino: No, I'm just kidding. The Rapture is really our Blessed Hope in Titus 2:13 And it's quickly and succinctly referenced in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. It's called the catching away, "harpazo" from where we get the word rapture from, from the Latin Vulgate. And it really is our blessed hope. It refers to, I believe, clearly in Scripture a Pre-Trib, before the Tribulation seven years and it's for the believing church, all the believers will be caught up to meet Christ in the air. That's our transformation. That's our we put on incorruption, we get our resurrected body in the Rapture.

Nathan Jones: Well, excellent. Well, Pastor James, we have the same passion for the Rapture of the Church and the imminency of it and proclaiming the message as you. Years ago, we made this disc, Did Many People Disappear? Jesus came. What's next? If you want to see a very younger Nathan Jones, we have this available and we put this online. We also have your Rapture booklet now, which is just an excellent booklet, and brother we thank you so much for the idea because now our ministry has created our own Rapture booklet to coincide with this one. So, I want to ask you, though, where did you see a void in the church for the message of the Rapture? Because so many people, when you even that you even have to define the word rapture is telling that churches just aren't teaching it.

James Pannafino: Well, as you guys certainly know and you speak on quite often that is we have-- I'd like to go back to slightly in history, if you go back to the 70s when the "Late, Great Planet Earth" came out, that had a great influence on my life coming to Christ, and really my view of eschatology, including obviously the Rapture, the Pre-Trib Rapture. But it does appear that from the 70s, 80s, 90s and on to 2022 the emphasis on eschatology, in particular the Pre-Trib Rapture, has waned quite a bit. And what I've seen, and again I know you also have seen this, and what has replaced it is a variety of Post-Millennial and Amillennial views that basically mock or eliminate the Rapture and Bible prophecy in general. So that's what concerned me, and that's why the ministry that we have Perspective in Prophecy is that's what it's all about, awakening the Church as much as we can to what the Lord has already given to us regarding prophecy for today.

Tim Moore: And really, I think you would agree it's not just what He's given us looking forward, it's also what He's given us to lay a foundation. James, you and I were talking about the Creation, what we've referred to, and you used the same phrase, the bookends of the Bible. And so, there's only one eyewitness of what happened at the beginning, and one eyewitness who knows what will happen at the end, and that is God Himself. And yet, too often we don't emphasize within Christendom or the church, at least in the West, the foundational understandings of creation as dictated and proclaimed in Scripture itself. And so, with so many young people have no foundation upon which to build their faith, and they tend to flounder or drift away from it. And frankly, once again, it is a blasphemy to deny the very testimony of the living God when He says, listen to what I've done and I'm telling you for a reason.

James Pannafino: Yeah, I think that like we were talking about the other day, there's definitely a parallel with taking Genesis 1-3 and taking what we would call end times eschatology, the things that refer to Bible prophecy being fulfilled today in the future in the millennium and, you know, to the consummation. But I think what we have is that if the things of Scripture become allegorical, which is really the root, I do believe, and it goes back in history in a lot of the churches absorbed the allegorical way of interpreting Scripture instead of the plain rendering. So, when you take Genesis, for instance, and you say that's not a literal six day creation, its Day Age Theory or something of that nature where it becomes very different than what the Bible

teaches, including the creation of Adam and Eve, the Fall, and the subsequent outcome of that. If that was not literally true in real time, in real history, then as I've mentioned to you the other day, I work with a lot of college students, and a lot of high school students over the last couple of decades, and they bring it up, they say, "Well, if that's not true, then what parts are true?" And often similar to say, how do I know John 3:16 is true in the literal form of for God so loved the world? But I think that same allegorical method has also been applied to eschatology, and therefore we end up having a variety of, I'll say opinions, that are not really rooted in Scripture, they're rooted in theory, a different type of interpretation than what we're used to. Amillennial in particular would be very troubling, to me it is, that, well, it doesn't mean what it says. It means there's no real Millennium, the Church has replaced Israel, we're living in somewhat of a kingdom, unspecified time age right now. Satan has been bound ever since the cross. These things do not line up with reality, and they certainly don't line up with Scripture. Yet, a lot of churches have gone this way over the last couple of decades, which is for me, it's hard to understand.

Tim Moore: It's hard for me to understand as well. And I would just point out that the very first words uttered by Satan as recorded in Scripture were in Genesis 3:1, "Indeed, has God said?" In other words, Satan at the very beginning trying to undermine the credibility of God and trying to undermine the testimony of God, and to sow confusion and really plant deception in the heart of man. And we know what that led to in the very garden itself. It's still leading today to people moving away from faith in the true and living God and in His Word, to making up, if you will, fairy tales of their own instead of standing on the Word of God.

Nathan Jones: And this is why I think the Apostle Paul, in the very first sentence of one of the major passages when it was related to the Rapture, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, he says, "But I don't want you to be ignorant." And it seems like what we have today is an ignorance, not only of Bible prophecy, because that's a segment of the Bible 31%, but the Bible overall. We live in a time period where we have Bibles everywhere, apps everywhere, Christian resources everywhere, but people just aren't reading. They're a mile wide, an inch deep. And if they only read, what a beautiful passage this is, "But I do not want you to be ignorant," in other words, I want you to know this, brethren, "concerning those who are fallen asleep," who have died, "lest you sorrow as others who have no hope." So right there he's saying, hey, this is going to give you hope. What is it? "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, God will bring with Him those who sleep 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, will by no means proceed those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with the shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up," and there's the word "rapio" or rapture "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." And what does He say here? "Therefore," verse 18, "comfort one another with these words." It just seems like so many people today have been robbed of that comfort.

James Pannafino: You know, the irony of all this is, I don't think we can exaggerate it, in a time when in our country, like with the past few years in the COVID situation, a lot of people have abandoned church, they've abandoned Christ. There's an epidemic of hopelessness which can be seen in the rise of depression, anxiety, and suicide. And so, we see these things happening concurrent with our contemporary time, when we should be, at least as the Church, we should be a message, a messenger, I should say, of great hope, and the Rapture is right on

top of that. And so, if we don't do that, we're actually, I don't want to say robbing people, but we're denying people of the greatest access to hope that they ever could find, and that is Jesus Christ. And so that's why we do prophecy. It's about Christ. It's about His return. It's about the hope that we have. And I love that passage you said especially verse 18, we're commanded there to proclaim this message of hope.

Tim Moore: Yes, we are. I love what Peter has to say in 2 Peter 1, beginning in verse 16, he said, "For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitness of His majesty." In other words, even His First Coming, all of the accounts, all the way back to Genesis that Jesus gives us as the revealed person of God, the Word of God Himself are true. They're not made up. They're not tales. And so, Peter goes down in verse 19, he says "That you have the prophetic word," speaking about the Church itself, "which is even more powerful than Peter's own eyewitness experience of witnessing the transfiguration of Jesus Christ." And then, in a dramatic understatement, he said, to which you would do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart." And he says beyond that, "that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men move by the Holy Spirit who spoke from God." So, all of God's prophetic Word is as valid as the red letters you might say, but we would do well to pay attention to it, because that is the testimony of Jesus Christ and it points to His coming, which is what gives us hope in our Blessed Hope, in spite of the despair we see infecting the entire world around us.

Nathan Jones: And how exciting too, when you go to the other major Rapture passage, 1 Corinthians 15:51, "Behold, I tell you a mystery," well, right there, that's exciting, a mystery, "we shall not all sleep," in other words shall not die, "but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of the eye at the last trumpet for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed." And it goes on and on to tell us about our mortality, and how death has lost its sting, and we praise the Lord for it. This is exciting, and I wish the whole church would be excited about this. But all I hear is crickets whenever you bring up the Rapture, most Christians just do not know about the Rapture.

James Pannafino: One of the things just mentioned, that verse 51, where he says, behold, I show you a mystery, "mysterion" can also be translated very easily a secret. And I've heard many people say in a mocking tone, "You guys believe in a secret Rapture." I said, "Well, that's what Paul said, so I'm only believing what the Scriptures say." But if we, I think both of you have noted that, if we don't use the Scripture as our primary text for doctrine and for what we believe, then it's every man for himself, and that would explain a lot of the chaos that we see in the Church today.

Nathan Jones: Absolutely.

Tim Moore: James, one of the things that really thrills my heart and it's been part of Nathan's motivation, I think as long as he's been here at Lamb and Lion Ministries, probably before, is not just the message we proclaim to Christians today, to those who we call to flee from the wrath to come, in other words, we're trying to pronounce to the church and to those who don't yet know Jesus Christ, come to the faith and be faithful in looking forward to our soon returning King. But you also have a heart to be able to reach people after the Rapture, which is why your booklet and we borrowed this as well, is "What happened and why?" Which means that this booklet is

not only for here and now, it's an explanation for people who are indeed left behind, so that even then they would embrace Christ as their Savior and Lord.

Nathan Jones: Because that's your mission, right? You want to get this to as many people as possible, as quickly as possible, so that they can give these to people who we know will be left behind, that aren't saved, to bring them to salvation in Jesus. Right? So, the real impact is probably not so much before the Rapture, but after?

James Pannafino: Well, yeah, you hit the nail on the head. If you go back to the root, why did I sense the Lord led me to put this together? And obviously you guys are doing the same thing, which is great. Revelation 7:9-14, John is in the future, the future of even from right now, and he sees what he terms innumerable, in the Greek it's cannot be numbered, it's a huge throng of people coming into heaven. And he asks, "Who are they?" And I know you guys are familiar with it, but he's announcing these are the Tribulation Saints, most likely in the early part of the Tribulation. This is those who I like to think maybe some of them have read these booklets, yours, mine and others. They've gotten the material. They procrastinated, maybe they never understood, maybe they didn't have a church background, but when the Rapture happens, I think it's safe to say the greatest revival the world has ever seen or ever will see will take place. And I think we have a direct connection, the Great Commission doesn't stop with our last throes, the Great Commission goes beyond into the Tribulation period when we're not even here. To me, to have this opportunity is exciting. I'm so grateful to the Lord for having this opportunity to be able to communicate to people that we won't meet this side of eternity, but we will someday.

Tim Moore: You know, even as you cite that passage out of Revelation, I'm reminded of going to various places in Israel in particular I think of a Yardenit where we go and have a baptismal service and there are people who stream to that location to be baptized in the Jordan River from every nation of the world. You can hear so many different tongues. They even have plaques in various languages. And to me it's just a little microcosm of what Heaven is going to be like, with people from all over the earth, speaking all sorts of different languages, but all united in their love and their faith of Jesus Christ. And so, it's just a little preview of Heaven, so to speak. What else are you working on today, James, as your heart is to proclaim the Gospel, to get people excited about Jesus Christ, and to have that message linger even after the Church is removed from the world?

James Pannafino: Oh, my, my where do we begin? One of the projects, and if people have interest you could just type my name on Facebook, James Pannafino. You know, I'm pretty sure I'm the only Pannafino on there. And I write every day a one page devotional to encourage. A lot of it's apologetics driven. But I'll cover a variety of topics and especially Bible prophecy. So that's one project I do every day keeps me in the Scriptures because 24 hours goes by real fast, so I better make sure I do something biblical and constructive. I'm out speaking at conferences with other churches. One of the major ministries that I have and I don't know, I'm not going to say it's unique because I have no way of knowing that, but I would like to encourage churches, and their pastors and maybe they're not trained in prophecy, maybe their seminary background was not something that emphasized eschatology, so they don't feel equipped. Places where maybe they don't watch Prophecy Watchers, they don't watch Lamb and Lion, they don't know about Jan Markell or the rest. They're not into this stuff. And so, I'm trying to reach out to those pastors and church leaders to mentor them. And in some sense, I suppose disciple them in Bible prophecy. My teaching, like most pastors, it's directly from the Scripture, it's heavy with Scripture. The devotional that I do every day on Facebook and also my teaching on Bible

prophecy and all other topics. So, these are the projects that keep me, and I also pastor a church. So, it's like there's never a dull moment.

Tim Moore: You're a busy man.

James Pannafino: And plus, we have family that my mother-in-law moved in with us recently and is 92, and our daughter moved back from Colorado with a two year old, and two month old, so those aren't necessarily ministry projects, but they certainly keep us busy and we're very grateful for it.

Tim Moore: You're a busy man for sure.

Nathan Jones: Brother, I just love the heart you have for reaching people for Jesus Christ. Likewise, I think what you did with this Rapture booklet, we put this out at conferences we make sure people know about so they can get that out there. And of course, thank you for sharing your idea with us, so our ministry could also produce a booklet. And again, we've left so many materials on our website at ChristinProphecy.org, our own left behind message that people can share. And brother, I think we're going to make a bigger impact after the Rapture than even we're doing now.

James Pannafino: Well, I hope so. That's our, like I mentioned earlier, that's our goal is to reach people that are at this moment unreachable. But at the same time, like yourself, we're trying to encourage the body of Christ. We're trying to bring Bible prophecy, the hope, the blessed hope of Christ to people today. And you read the same stats that I read. Barna recently put out the thing from Arizona State Christian University, I couldn't believe it, that's probably another program. But I just could not believe what I was reading from evangelical pastors. The Bible has many predictions of the last days, and one of them is one that concerns all of us that is apostasy, that falling away. And we see it happening. I know lots of pastors out there, I'm rubbing shoulders every week with them, and I see a lot of churches, a lot of pastors struggling to stay the course. So, our mission, like yourself, is really to encourage by the truth of the Scripture, and Bible prophecy is central to it because it's unfolding right before our eyes. So, these are exciting days to be living in.

Tim Moore: Well, James, I just have to tell you how appreciative I am for the heart you have for serving the Lord. Your faithfulness to the inspiration He laid, and the fact that you're willing to share it with us and with others to say, hey, make your own product, whatever you need, but let's get this message out. I'm reminded of what Jesus said in Mark 9:40, when He said, "He who is not against us, is for us." And clearly we are all for Jesus Christ. So, thank you again, James, for joining us today. I think there is another program in our near future to get together again, but we do pray the Lord's continued blessing on you, on your ministry, and on your family as well.

James Pannafino: Thank you, and God bless you both. And I love Lamb & Lion, keep up the good work.

Tim Moore: Thank you, sir. We'll take a short break, and when we return, we'll have a special offer that will allow you to share the good news that Jesus is coming soon.

Part 2- Application- Embracing the Blessed Hope

Nathan Jones: For many Christians, the doctrine of the Rapture seems about as alien as an eight-track to an eight-year-old! Why, our ministry's founder, Dr. David Reagan, often quipped that most people when they hear the word "rapture" think it's the sensation you get when your girlfriend kisses you!

Sure, they may have somewhere heard about the Rapture, often likely in the negative, but rarely do people ever ponder over how much the world needs Christ to return or to see that this glorious event could possibly ever take place in their lifetime. And very rarely do preachers ever teach about the Rapture, resulting in the Church over the past 2,000 years generally ignoring what Titus 2:13 describes as our Blessed Hope.

I can – at some level – understand and almost excuse the disregard for such a vital teaching. After all, the Great Commission commands all Christians to "go and make disciples of all nations" in sharing the Good News. Then there's discipleship, which involves yielding to the Holy Spirit and the lifelong process of spiritual refining through personal spiritual disciplines. So, Christians are kept pretty busy.

But, still, a vital part of the Christian walk is lost when we are not anticipating the return of our Lord. The teaching of the Rapture encourages us, motivates us to holy living and evangelism, and inspires hope, all important for surviving these dark days.

And this is exactly why Lamb & Lion Ministries exists – to proclaim the hope-filled message that our Savior is coming back in victory. Soon and very soon, every person, living and dead, who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior will be "caught up" to meet Him in the air. We will be transformed into our glorified, eternal bodies, to live with our Heavenly Father in the place He has prepared for us before the world descends into the chaos of the Tribulation.

Well, thankfully, throughout Church history, there has been a like-minded remnant of believers who have also longed for our Lord's appearing. The Apostle Paul was one of them, as well as others who down through the ages longed for the Rapture to happen in their lifetimes.

Men like William Blackstone and Clarence Larkin urged their fellow Christians to anticipate Christ's appearance. In 1970, Hal Lindsey released the book *The Late, Great Planet Earth* which focused on the imminency of the Rapture. No less than *The New York Times* declared Lindsey's book to be the bestselling non-fiction book of the 1970s, and its teachings helped fuel the Jesus Movement.

Well then, in 1995, Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins released the bestselling *Left Behind* series of books and movies which presented a fictionalized account of the post-Rapture world. And today, a wonderful modernization of the first *Left Behind* movie will be released in early 2023. I watched the rough cut and believe it to be very promising with a high production value and an all-star Christian cast. As Paul Lalonde, the movie's producer, points out about the Rapture, "It's a true story—it just hasn't happened yet."

Even those who have dismissed the urgent warnings of Christian watchmen are realizing that our society is running dangerously amok. The global order is breaking down at a breathtaking pace. The prophecies God's Word foretold about the end times are coming to pass, and right before our eyes, and even the secular world is taking notice.

But, when I make the argument for the value of studying the doctrine of the Rapture, don't take my word for it. I encourage you to open God's Word. Read the account of the end times as

foretold by the prophets. Realize that the signs of the times are proclaiming the imminent return of Jesus Christ. Recognize that embracing Christ's promise to rescue His Church from the wrath to come does not lessen our faith, but rather, inspires it.

My fellow Christians, let's embrace Christ's command to "look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near," by making that knowledge the blessed hope that empowers us each and every day victoriously until our Savior's glorious return. God bless!

Closing

Nathan Jones: Well, Tim, it's a great joy to partner with other watchmen who share the same passion we do for the soon return of Jesus Christ.

Tim Moore: You're exactly right. And it's a privilege for us to connect with you each week as well. We know from your letters and emails and phone calls that many of you share the same passion for Jesus and His coming. We are ongoingly grateful for your prayer and financial support so that we can proclaim His coming far and wide.

Nathan Jones: Well, you've already seen how you can partner with Lamb and Lion Ministries, Prophecy Partners are what make this ministry possible. Well, today we want to offer you a special double feature. Let's call it a triple feature, because for only \$20, including shipping, we'll send you two of our Rapture booklets, one of this other Rapture booklet and the I Am a Watchman Kit. You'll find all of them informative and inspirational, and you'll be eager to pass them on to somebody else. All in fulfillment of both the Great Commission and your role as a watchman.

Tim Moore: We do not know when God, the Father will tell His Son to go and get your bride. But we sense that His coming is imminent. That could mean today, this week, this year, or in the next few years. Regardless, while we have breath, we are called to warn every person we can to flee from the wrath to come and into the loving arms of our Savior.

Nathan Jones: Jesus is coming soon. When He does, He will either be your blessed hope or your holy terror. Do not delay. Put your trust in Him today, then commit to serving Him as a watchman.

Tim Moore: Join us again next week when we will have another special surprise in store for you. Until then, I'm Tim Moore, along with Nathan Jones. Do not be afraid or dismayed but be encouraged as we see the day drawing near. Godspeed.

End of Program