**Nov. 1, 2024**

Greeting to all . . .

I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirit for that wonderful day coming up called Thanksgiving for the abundances Our Lord has giving us.

As stated on last month **BSL**, this month issues will be on Pretribulational view on the Rapture of the church. It is good to know both views and no matter what position you take, one thing for sure . . . It’s going to happen and we need to be ready to meet Our Lord in the clouds.

So, let get started.

Your Brother in Christ, Tony Gonzalez

**1 Peter 3:15**

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, **always being prepared to make a defense** to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

**What are the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Pretribulational View of the Rapture**

**Bible Scripture Letter #52**

*(By clicking on the BLUE text, it will redirect you to the scripture)*

In eschatology, it is important to remember that almost all Christians agree on these three things: 1) there is coming a time of great tribulation such as the world has never seen, 2) after the Tribulation, Christ will return to establish His kingdom on earth, and, 3) there will be a Rapture—a translation from mortality to immortality—for believers ([John 14:1-3](https://www.bibleref.com/John/14/John-14-1.html);[1 Corinthians 15:51-52](https://www.bibleref.com/1-Corinthians/15/1-Corinthians-15-51.html); [1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](https://www.bibleref.com/1-Thessalonians/4/1-Thessalonians-4-16.html)). The question is when does the Rapture occur in relation to the Tribulation and the Second Coming of Christ?  
  
 Through the years three main theories have emerged concerning the timing of the Rapture: pretribulationism (the belief that the Rapture will occur before the Tribulation begins), midtribulationism (the belief that the Rapture will occur at the midpoint of the Tribulation), and posttribulationism (the belief that the Rapture will occur at the end of the Tribulation). This article deals specifically with the pretribulational view.  
  
 Pretribulationism teaches that the Rapture occurs before the Tribulation starts. At that time, the church will meet Christ in the air, and then sometime after that the Antichrist is revealed and the Tribulation begins. In other words, the Rapture and Christ’s Second Coming (to set up His kingdom) are separated by at least seven years. According to this view, the church does not experience any of the Tribulation.   
  
 Scripturally, the pretribulational view has much to commend it. For example, the church is not appointed to wrath ([1 Thessalonians 1:9-10](https://www.bibleref.com/1-Thessalonians/1/1-Thessalonians-1-9.html), [5:9](https://www.bibleref.com/1-Thessalonians/5/1-Thessalonians-5-9.html)), and believers will not be overtaken by the Day of the Lord ([1 Thessalonians 5:1-9](https://www.bibleref.com/1-Thessalonians/5/1-Thessalonians-5-1.html)). The church of Philadelphia was promised to be kept from “the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world” ([Revelation 3:10](https://www.bibleref.com/Revelation/3/Revelation-3-10.html)). Note that the promise is not preservation through the trial but deliverance from the hour, that is, from the time period of the trial.   
  
 Pretribulationism also finds support in what is not found in Scripture. The word “church” appears nineteen times in the first three chapters of Revelation, but, significantly, the word is not used again until chapter 22. In other words, in the entire lengthy description of the Tribulation in Revelation, the word church is noticeably absent. In fact, the Bible never uses the word "church" in a passage relating to the Tribulation.   
  
 Pretribulationism is the only theory which clearly maintains the distinction between Israel and the church and God’s separate plans for each. The seventy “sevens” of [Daniel 9:24](https://www.bibleref.com/Daniel/9/Daniel-9-24.html) are decreed upon Daniel’s people (the Jews) and Daniel’s holy city (Jerusalem). This prophecy makes it plain that the seventieth week (the Tribulation) is a time of purging and restoration for Israel and Jerusalem, not for the church.   
  
 Also, pretribulationism has historical support. From [John 21:22-23](https://www.bibleref.com/John/21/John-21-22.html), it would seem that the early church viewed Christ’s return as imminent, that He could return at any moment. Otherwise, the rumor would not have persisted that Jesus would return within John’s lifetime. Imminence, which is incompatible with the other two Rapture theories, is a key tenet of pretribulationism.   
  
 And the pretribulational view seems to be the most in keeping with God’s character and His desire to deliver the righteous from the judgment of the world. Biblical examples of God’s salvation include Noah, who was delivered from the worldwide flood; Lot, who was delivered from Sodom; and Rahab, who was delivered from Jericho ([2 Peter 2:6-9](https://www.bibleref.com/2-Peter/2/2-Peter-2-6.html)).  
  
 One perceived weakness of pretribulationism is its relatively recent development as a church doctrine, not having been formulated in detail until the early 1800s. Another weakness is that pretribulationism splits the return of Jesus Christ into two “phases”—the Rapture and the Second Coming—whereas the Bible does not clearly delineate any such phases.   
  
 Another difficulty facing the pretribulational view is the fact that there will obviously be saints in the Tribulation ([Revelation 13:7](https://www.bibleref.com/Revelation/13/Revelation-13-7.html), [20:9](https://www.bibleref.com/Revelation/20/Revelation-20-9.html)). Pretribulationists answer this by distinguishing the saints of the Old Testament and the saints of the Tribulation from the church of the New Testament. Believers alive at the Rapture will be removed before the Tribulation, but there will be those who will come to Christ during the Tribulation.  
  
 Some point to Jesus’ statement in [John 6:40](https://www.bibleref.com/John/6/John-6-40.html) as posing a difficulty to pretribulationism: “My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.” Jesus promises believers a resurrection “at the last day,” but the pretribulational model has believers being raised at the rapture, at least seven years before the Christ’s second coming. The answer to this involves a general use of the word *day*—the end times, called “the last day,” will span the entire time from the rapture to the second coming. Also, the rapture will mark the end of the church age and thus is “the last day” of this dispensation.  
  
 And a final weakness of the pretribulational view is shared by the other two theories: namely, the Bible does not give an explicit time line concerning future events. Scripture does not expressly teach one view over another, and that is why we have diversity of opinion concerning the end times and some variety on how the related prophecies should be harmonized.

*Source* : gotquestions.org