

THE COMING OF JESUS**MAY 29, 2011**

Over the centuries there have been many people who have predicted Judgment Day and the second coming of Jesus. So far they have all been wrong. Jesus said that He Himself did not know when He would return. He said that only the Father knew. As much as we would like to know, God has told no prophet, no writer of scripture, not even His Son, the day nor the hour when Jesus will come again.

Hello I'm Larry Murdock. I preach for the Gandy church of Christ.

Some people make a distinction between what they call the "Rapture" and the Coming of Jesus. Harold Camping, the founder of Family Radio, Inc. believed that the "Rapture" would happen on Saturday, May 21, 2011. Forty billboards went up in the Nashville, TN area announcing this earth shaking event. The person who paid for the billboards firmly believed that Mr. Camping had the numbers added up correctly and that Judgment Day would arrive on May 21, 2011. That day came and went but there was no sign of Jesus "rapturing" away His people. Are you missing anyone where you live?

Those who believe in a "Rapture" teach that Jesus will secretly come and take away from the earth the faithful Christians. They say this teaching is in the Bible. It is not in the Bible. It is in their interpretation of Bible verses that are interpreted without their context. When I was a child I still can remember hearing people say, "You can prove anything from the Bible, if you scissors and paste." In order to believe in the Rapture, people need scissors to cut away Bible passages from their proper context. Then they need paste to glue them all together to make them say what the interpreters want them to say. What you end up with is a sensationalized doctrine of the "Rapture."

Friends, you cannot find the word "rapture" in your Bibles. That's right. But someone says, "yes, but the idea is there." No. The idea is not there either. The idea is in the mind of teachers who believe in the rapture without sufficient evidence. Those teachers are like those who lived in the first century, and who Peter talked about. Peter said that some people who were unlearned and

unstable twist scripture making scripture say what they want it to say. Peter warned: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. ¹⁸ But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:17-18 (KJV).) The things that those false teachers were teaching were not found in "the grace and the knowledge" of Jesus Christ.

Friends, it behooves all disciples of Christ to "speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where the Bible is silent." And when we interpret scripture we must do so in the light of all that God has said on the subject. Those who believe in the "rapture" ignore other plain statements in the scripture in order to arrive at their fanciful conclusions. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST?

First, the Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is coming again. Jesus' apostles were with Jesus on the day that He ascended back to His Father. While standing on that mountain, the apostles asked Jesus, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." ⁹ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:6-11 (ESV).)

The apostle John also spoke of Jesus' coming in Revelation chapter 1. John was giving praise to Christ: "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." [And then John wrote this] "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him." (Rev 1:5-7 (ESV).) The

coming of Jesus will not be in secret. When He comes again “every eye will see him”, even those people who “pierced him”.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians about Jesus’ coming again: The Thessalonians were suffering persecutions because of their faith. Paul said those afflictions were evidence that God would turn that persecution around. Those persecuting now would receive affliction; those persecuted now would receive rest from their affliction. And when would this turn around happen? At the coming of Jesus: Paul put it this way: ⁵ This [persecution] is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— ⁶ since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷ and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven....” (2 Thess 1:5-7 (ESV).) Paul went on to describe the coming of the Lord Jesus. Jesus will come “with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and [away] from the glory of his might, [and “when” will this be?] ¹⁰ when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because [Paul says] our testimony to you was believed.” (2 Thess 1:7-10 (ESV).) Friends, do you believe Paul’s testimony about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ? If you believe Jesus is coming again then why don’t you get ready? Why allow Satan to rob you of this glory that is coming? Jesus is coming to bring “rest” for those who are now suffering on His behalf. He will bring the wrath of God upon those who do not believe in God or His Son, and thus they have not obeyed the gospel of Christ. They have not escaped from the clutches of their sins.

The very reason that Jesus came the first time was to give the world freedom from the snares of our enemy, Satan. I don’t know the full reason why Satan hates us the way he does, but I know He is my enemy. Peter described Satan as a “roaring lion, prowling around seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8.) Jesus said that Satan is a liar, a deceiver. Jesus accused some people of following

the example of their father, the devil! “You are of your father the devil, [He said] and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.” (John 8:44-45 (ESV).)

Friends - the doctrine of the “rapture” is a lie; it is from Satan! We cannot twist the scripture this way and get away with it. We will be held accountable for our handling of the Word of God. Even Satan Himself knows the Bible. That’s right.

Remember when Satan quoted scripture to Jesus? Satan was tempting Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the Temple and prove to himself whether he was the Son of God. Satan quoted Psalm 91:11, 12. But Jesus quoted another passage from Deuteronomy 6:16. Satan’s interpretation of Ps 91 violated the spirit of Deuteronomy 6:16. Satan’s interpretation of that passage was erroneous. Satan knows the Word of God concerning Jesus’ second coming. The Devil has given the world the teaching of the “rapture” so as to lead us astray. He has caused such men as Mr. Camping to calculate the coming of the Lord. But they have miserably failed. They have twisted the scriptures that they use to calculate the coming of Jesus.

Jesus spoke to his disciples about His coming. ³⁰ Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Matt 24:30-31 (ESV).) ““But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.” (Matt 24:36 (ESV).)

⁴⁴ “Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (Matt 24:44 (ESV).)

Jesus went to great length to warn you and me about believing in a false coming of Christ. He gave several illustrations in the form of parables. He talked about a master going into a far country and leaving his property in the hands of his

servant. The servant was unfaithful, forgetting that his master was coming back. When the master returned, he found the servant unprepared. That wicked servant had said to himself, **“My master is delayed,⁴⁹ and [he] begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, [Jesus predicted]⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know⁵¹ and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”** (Matt 24:48-51 (ESV).)

Friends, you and I do not want to be like that wicked servant. Do you believe in the Coming of Jesus? We are now living between two visits of the Lord of the universe. His first coming is a matter of history. His second coming is a matter of prophecy. Do you believe the history? Do you believe the prophecy? Friends, prepare for the coming of the Lord, while you have the opportunity, visit a church of Christ near you and get ready to meet Jesus Christ and His heavenly Father.