

Greg Laurie: The Rapture is Coming, 'Are You Ready to Meet God?'

The eschatological debate among believers of a pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation or post-tribulation rapture will most likely never be settled. But Greg Laurie, senior pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in California, is sure of his stance on the subject.

In a recent sermon series, the inspiration behind the hit movie Jesus Revolution says that while he realizes nobody except the Father knows the day and time it will happen, the rapture is "the next event on the prophetic calendar" and that it "could occur" at any time.

In his opening prayer, Laurie spoke to God: "As we open Your Word and we think about heavenly things, as we think about Your soon coming, as we have just sung 'Lord Jesus, Come,' that is the prayer of our hearts. Help us to see how this applies to us. Help us to see how we ought to live in the light of the fact that Jesus could come at any moment."

Many kingdom leaders acknowledge that we are living in the end times. Laurie says that one of the greatest signs of the end times is a greater awareness of and the understanding of Bible prophecy, as relayed in Daniel 12:4:

"But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

"God is saying in the last days knowledge will increase, and also an awareness of what Scripture teaches us about end times events will increase as well," Laurie explains. "So, we are living in that time I believe that is known as the end of

days. The Bible is the one book that dares to predict the future not once, not twice, but hundreds of times with 100% accuracy. The Bible tells us that the age is coming ultimately to a close.”

During his Aug. 6 sermon titled “What is the Rapture? And Why It Matters,” Laurie drew upon 1 Thessalonians 4 and Luke 12 to help believers understand the significance of the Rapture and why not only it should not be something Christians should fear, but also that it will be a time of great reunion—a reunion with love ones who have died before us.

First Thessalonians 4:13-14 reads, “But I would not have you ignorant, brothers, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.”

“I want to comfort you and I want to give you a heavenly perspective on what happens to loved ones who believe in Jesus when they die,” Laurie says. ‘You’re going to see them again. So, I want to establish that fact. And I don’t want you to give like people who have no hope.”

Laurie says the rapture is the “first phase of the return of Christ” and implores believers to be ready for it. Many in the kingdom refuse to study the end times because, as Laurie says, they claim “no one can figure it out anyway.”

“We should study end times events and we need to understand what they mean to us today,” Laurie says. “Again, Paul says, ‘I don’t want you to be ignorant.’ Jesus said, ‘When you see the abomination spoken of by Daniel the prophet, let the reader understand.’

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"It is important that we understand these things, and also I think that when we understand prophetic teaching—or eschatology, the study of last things—if we understand it as we ought to, it will bring hope to us."

And our only hope, Laurie hopefully relayed, lies in Christ. If you are struggling, whether you are a Christian or among the lost, Laurie says that it's not too late for repentance—at least for now.

"The Bible says, 'Prepare to meet your God.' You want to be ready to meet God," Laurie says. "Are you ready to meet Him? If Christ were to come back tonight, would you be caught up in the air to meet him. Or would you be like one of those wicked people living a compromised life that we be left behind?"

✖ Luke 12:35-36 reads, "Let your waist be girded and your lights be burning, and you be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door immediately for him when he comes and knocks."

Laurie's ministry and the Jesus Revolution movie are getting people ready, as record amounts of baptisms are happening across the country.

Jesus Christ died for your sins, Laurie says, so the door is wide open.

"He paid the price for every wrong you have ever done," Laurie says. "And if you will turn from your sin and put your faith in Jesus to be your Savior and Lord, you can be forgiven and you can be given a fresh start, a new beginning."

Michael Youssef's *book Is the End Near? explains what Jesus told us about the last days.* {eoa}

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