

Is the Rapture Really Biblical?

Will millions of Christians be “raptured” and spared from a horrific period of time on Earth known as the tribulation? That’s a central theological question and point of debate among the faithful, with various faith leaders taking divergent stands on the eschatological time line.

Christians who subscribe to dispensational premillennialism generally hold a belief in a future rapture event during which Christians will simultaneously leave Earth and ascend to heaven before the chaos of a seven-year tribulation period unfolds; it concludes, adherents claim, with the Second Coming of Christ.

Not everyone embraces this theology, though.

While debate has raged for quite some time, there is very little data on where American pastors—the individuals who are in the trenches teaching scripture in churches across America—stand on the issue of the rapture.

This is precisely why a survey was commissioned earlier this year by Charisma House publishers, with the results appearing in my newly released book, *The Armageddon Code: One Journalist’s Quest for End-Times Answers*.

One thousand Protestant pastors, ministers and priests were surveyed in January of this year based on a random sample of all Protestant churches in the U.S. The faith leaders were each asked the following question: “Which one of the following statements best describes your views on when the biblical rapture will occur?” Their options were as follows:

- The rapture has already occurred (a view associated with Preterism)

- Christians will be taken up before the tribulation period that precedes the Second Coming (often called the pre-Trib view)
- Christians will be taken up in the middle of the tribulation period that precedes the Second Coming (often called the mid-Trib view)
- Christians will be taken up before the great wrath of God is poured out late in the tribulation period that precedes the Second Coming (often called the pre-wrath view)
- The rapture and the Second Coming are describing events that will unfold simultaneously or close together at the end of the tribulation (often called the post-Trib view)
- The concept of the rapture is not to be taken literally
- None of these
- Not sure

Overall, 36 percent of pastors—the largest proportion by far—aligned themselves with the pre-tribulation view, with the second largest proportion (25 percent) saying that “the concept of the rapture is not to be taken literally.” An additional 18 percent aligned themselves with the post-tribulation belief that the rapture and the second coming of Christ are essentially one in the same.

As *TheBlaze* has reported, the debate over the biblical rapture is as contentious as ever. While proponents claim that the Bible backs the mass disappearance, others say that its advocates are confusing and misreading Scripture to conjure up a phenomenon that simply isn’t in the cards.

While numerous Scripture references point to an event or moment in which Jesus returns and Christians ascend to heaven, there’s a great deal of debate over the finer details, author and biblical expert Dr. Ron Rhodes previously told *TheBlaze*.

“You’ve got a lot of Christians who have different opinions on a lot of this ... and so I think it’s a good thing to come to

firm conclusions,” he said. “But I don’t think we need to have on boxing gloves.”

While he acknowledged that there are pre, post and mid tribulation theories out there, Rhodes personally believes that the Bible backs the pre-tribulation paradigm—and that many of the events going on currently in the world are intertwined with biblical eschatology.

Middle East chaos—which is certainly not unique to contemporary times, but which continues to rage—is a factor that leads Rhodes to conclude that the end times could be approaching. Others, of course, fervently disagree.

Read a detailed explanation of the rapture debate in my new book *The Armageddon Code* and download the complete research on pastors’ views on the rapture [here](#). {eo}

This article originally appeared on TheBlaze.