

# Your Final Final Final Warning

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## Get Ready For the Rapture

One area of prophecy that is the most significant for the Christian believer is the expectation of Jesus Christ's return for the Church. The pre-tribulation rapture is the moment when Christ comes in the air to catch away all who are spiritually ready. The rapture is the doorway between two opposite worlds. On earth we have sin, suffering, and strife. In heaven, there is nothing but holiness, happiness, and cries of "hallelujah."

"The dead in Christ will rise, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:16-17)."Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [must] put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

Because the pre-tribulation rapture is likely to be the next major event on God's calendar, it is all-important to be cognizant of the rapture's nearness. If you should find yourself left behind, you'd suffer a double tragedy of missing out on the splendor of heaven and having to face the various judgments God will be pouring out on the earth. The rapture is clearly something any person with a logical mind would not want to miss. Unfortunately, most people are unprepared to meet the Lord Jesus. One of the biggest reasons for the lack of readiness has to be the fact we are drowning in a sea of warning signs.

"So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Mat. 24:33-34).

## Final Warning Incorporated

Authors of prophecy books have a natural tendency to aim for book titles that imply the most dire scenario. I've run across dozens of books and sermons that have the phrase "final warning" in their titles. I know those words sound catchy, but they imply that you should not expect any more warnings from the author. For the sake of continuity, if not honesty, any subsequent books by the same writer should be given titles such as "Final Warning 2," "Final Warning 3," or "More Final Warnings."

Asahel Nettleton wrote a sermon entitled, "The Final Warning." I was never able to determine when he wrote it, but I do know Nettleton died in 1844. More than 150 years later, we still have plenty of "final warnings" in publication. Here are a few book titles from the past few years:

**Final Warning**

**The Final Warning**

**The Final Warning: Your Survival Guide to the New Millennium**

**God's Trumpet Call: A Final Warning**

**Jesus' Final Warning**

**God's Final Warning to America**

**666: The Final Warning**

**The Last Day: The Final Warning**

**Final Warning: Daniel's Prophecies Decoded**

**A Final Warning to America**

I've talked to some of these authors, and most of them seem to believe that it doesn't matter if the passage of time has thrown doubt upon their "final warning" cries. They assert that their main goal in writing the books was to make people aware of the approaching end times.

In the story of the boy who cried "wolf!" the young lad was certainly active in warning the villagers, but we all know he eventually warned them a little too often. A "final warning" title may increase sales of books, but if the Lord Jesus fails to return on cue, everyone who has read these books will become immune to the end-time message.

“Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation” (2 Pet 3:4).

### **Jesus Did Say He’s Coming Back**

When I talk to unsaved people about the rapture and world events, 90% of them agree with the validity of Bible prophecy. Most of them even admit that we are headed towards the tribulation hour. If I try to tell them we might be getting near to the end, that’s when I get strong opposition from them. “Not in our lifetime,” is the average reply I receive. I always try to reason with them by saying, “You agree Jesus is coming back, and the likelihood of His return only increases each year. Because there is nothing to prevent Him from returning, why not at least be open to the possibility?” A large portion of the population strongly refuses to consider the prospect of prophecy being fulfilled in our generation. In all honesty, many of these people probably have a good reason for not wanting to see the end times: the start of the tribulation would signal their doom.

In most wars in which two main forces are at odds, it’s historically common for fighters to realize they’re on the losing side and then defect to the side that’s winning. This is particularly true in tribal conflicts. If you’re not in Jesus’ camp, you’re on the losing team. For the time being, sinners still have the opportunity to abandon their loyalty to Satan and to realign themselves as soldiers in God’s army. Once Jesus returns to earth, it will become too late for someone to change his or her allegiance.

“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Rev 6:15-17).

### **Seven-Day Warning**

I often wondered what would happen if the Lord supernaturally announced to the world that He was coming back in seven days. Of course, the proclamation would obviously have a profound impact on society:

**Global stock markets would close.**

**Manufacturing would slow to a halt.**

**Stores would freely distribute their goods.**

**Livestock would be freed to roam the countryside.**

**It would be impossible to get an airline ticket to the Holy Land.**

**Prostitutes would become nuns overnight.**

**All media outlets would have continuous news coverage from Jerusalem.**

**A spirit of piety would sweep over the world.**

During the Miller Movement of the 1840s, as people looked forward to the predicted return of Christ, a number of people did things they later regretted. When the date failed to produce the Lord Jesus or doomsday, most folks went right back to their previous sinful lifestyles. The fact that people would make phony commitments immediately before a known rapture date is the most likely reason the Bible says we shouldn’t expect a warning.

“Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh” (Matthew 24:44).

### **The Window Of Opportunity**

During the tribulation, people will be able to calculate exactly when Jesus is coming back to earth. From the time the Antichrist declares himself to be God, saints will know that the second coming will take place in 42 months **(Rev 13:5)**.

An obvious question some folks might ask: Why is the timing of the rapture a big secret, while the timing of the second coming is known? The answer is simple: For the most part, it currently doesn’t cost the average person much to live for Christ.

Once the tribulation starts, all believers will be in a whole new ball game, one in which most will have to suffer martyrdom in order to hold on to their Christian faith. Knowing how bad it is going to be for those left behind, I certainly don’t envy their benefit of knowing when the tribulation will end.

Some Bible scholars go to the extreme by promoting the idea that it's impossible for people to find salvation after the rapture. Their general attitude is if you're foolish enough to miss the rapture, you should be out of luck. Once a person is left behind, his flesh might be in a dreadful state of affairs, but his soul still has a chance at redemption. (An article on the main page of Rapture Ready called Second Chance for Salvation refutes the teaching that there will be no tribulation salvation.)

I have a difficult time understanding where these people get the idea that the tribulation is a time when people will be able to blissfully wait for Jesus to come and rescue them. The tribulation is going to be a time of immense persecution. Few people realize we are living with a window of opportunity that will soon close. Most of the saints who will find salvation after the rapture will not physically live to see Jesus' glorious return.

“And it was given unto him (Antichrist) to make war with the saints, and to OVERCOME THEM: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations” (Rev. 13:7).”He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13:10).

### **There's No Such Thing As a Final Warning**

If you've visited Rapture Ready, I could say, like other people, that this could be the last time you encounter the Gospel. But that would only be speculation on my part. You might be presented with the salvation message 100 times after you read this article. Because man has no control over his destiny, it's impossible for him to know when he'll have the final opportunity to turn his life over to Jesus. Because you have no guarantee you will be here tomorrow, it should be obvious that you need to be ready today.

Because of what we know about the aging process, we know a 20-year-old man has a greater chance of being around a year from now than does a 90-year-old man. However, unless the older gentleman is in declining health, he's not likely to have a deeper focus on his spiritual state than the man who's still a youngster. If someone is 90 years old, he typically expects to live to see age 91. If he makes it to 99, he generally believes he'll make it to 100.

Death is always a surprise. Because there is no certainty you're going to be here tomorrow, you need to accept Jesus as your eternal Savior today. To do this, you first must ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins.

“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).” And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

After you commit yourself in words to Jesus, you then begin to follow Him with your actions. Committing yourself to faith in Jesus Christ is the easy part. Fulfilling that pledge is where the difficulty comes in.

Once a big-time evangelist visited a large city in central Africa. During one crusade service, more than 10,000 people raised a hand to show that they had accepted Jesus into their life. Several months later, a Christian organization did a follow-up study. They found that less than 1% of those people were still practicing their faith. The other 99% had heard the warning message, but they must have assumed that in the future they would yet be offered a final, final warning or possibly a final, final, final warning.

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2).

### **Article Information**

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