

Where's The Church ***During The Seven Year Tribulation?***

Compiled/Formatted By Tom Stephens

This paper reveals only one of many sources of proof that the only Christians on earth during the seven year Tribulation are those who were born again *during* the Tribulation. These are they who will, for the most part, die for their Savior because of the blood of the Lamb, their testimony, and the willingness to sacrifice their lives for the Kingdom of God.

In my personal studies and “searches” in the Word of God, I found strong indication that there are *no* Gentile ministries from the Dispensation of Grace carried over into the final 7 year Great Tribulation.

Note the ministries *I did find* in the book of Revelation:

- 1) **Tribulation saints**—all races—6:9-11; 7:9-17, and 12:11. (Jesus’ blood; their testimony; death)
- 2) **144,000 Israelites**—7:4-8; and 14: 1-5. (World ministries to every lost soul)
- 3) **Two Israeli witnesses**—11:1-14. (Jerusalem Ministry)
- 4) **Angels of God**—Soaring through the heavens preaching God’s eternal gospel—14:6.

Where's the Church of Jesus Christ during the seven year Tribulation Period?

We're in heaven—after being rewarded with our crowns, our seats with Christ, and our robes of white linen—showing we have presented ourselves before the *Judgment Seat Of Christ* (4:4). And finally, preparing to participate as *His bride* in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (18:23; 21:2, 9; 22:17).

I would like to direct your attention to Revelation 7:9-17. Please read carefully so you will see that we can know that this great multitude which no man can number—is not the Church—but are those who washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb during the Tribulation! Then they will be resurrected prior to the end of the Tribulation and will attend the Marriage Supper as “friends of the Groom”.

The Church of Jesus Christ cannot be found among the ranks of *those who dwell on the earth!* So. . . .

These Biblical truths were written to simply confirm both Jesus’ and the Apostles’ teachings are supported throughout the Word of God; for the truth of the Rapture is taught by the *consuming character* of our God. I am truly amazed at the awesome insights revealed by the prophets *and* apostles to deliver to us the beautiful character of God as revealed in this doctrine of the rapture of the Church! Yet the Church today, for the most part, has no inkling of what to believe concerning the rapture! We have no concept of how to rightly discern the scriptures. We have become like the radical Jews who consistently resisted the Words of Jesus, denying both His deity and His Son-ship to the Father (John 5:18-47). We are shamed with our lack of knowledge!

The world is seeking an authoritative *religious* leader who will have the answers to all problems—personal, religious and political. We who live according to God’s Word also look for One, the only begotten Son of God Who will appear from Glory to establish heaven’s authority and power on earth. He will descend from heaven, and with all His glorified saints will reign for a thousand years of peace.

“That man” for whom the world seeks is expected to be born on earth—a man dedicated to the death of all mankind. He is the *man of sin*, the *personal antichrist*, the *false messiah*, the *beast*, who will very soon be manifested in our midst. No matter if he is an entity of evil, or a spirit from the pit, the world will accept him. You can depend on this one thing: The “man of sin” will be welcomed by the elite of this world—and he will be on time!

Therefore, we who are committed to the Master—who loves us unconditionally, without any respect for individual persons of race, creed or color (Acts 10:34)—will continue to strive toward the discernment so necessary for continued spiritual growth in Christ Jesus. We can know them *by their fruits* (Matthew 7:16, 20).

In the New Testament—and especially in the Revelation—it appears that *Those That Dwell On The Earth* are the deceived and have claimed the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. They are judged as guilty and will be “*cast alive in the lake of fire burning with brimstone*”. (19:20)

In Revelation, The Inhabitants Of The Earth Are The Unjust.

- I. *Behold, the LORD maketh **the earth** empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad **the inhabitants thereof**.* (Isaiah 24: 1)

Comment: God’s triumph for His elect over the entire earth. This chapter focuses on the overthrow of the corrupted earth.

- II. *The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and **they that dwell therein are desolate**: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.* (Isaiah 24:5, 6)

Comment: The desolation of peoples on the earth because of sin; a breach of the covenant is applied, generally to the wicked nations.

- III. *For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to **punish the inhabitants of the earth** for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.* (Isaiah 26:21)

Comment: When earth discloses the blood of the poor and needy that it has swallowed from the hands of ruthless tyrants, it will bear testimony against those who do evil. The Lord will avenge them. (See Genesis 4:10).

- IV. *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, **and they that dwell therein** shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.* (Isaiah 51:6)

Comment: Isaiah looks toward the later times to when the heavens (atmosphere) and earth will be destroyed (and made new). He sees the earth age like an old garment, evil mankind under judgment of death, and only those who are under His wings (in heaven) shall return with singing unto Zion (Jerusalem), in everlasting life.

- V. *...for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread [grapes], **against all the inhabitants of the earth.*** (Jer 25:29, 30).

Comment: God’s Tribulation punishment on inhabitants of earth. Those Tribulation saints who remain faithful to Him and make it to the end, will “be hidden” and will wait before the Lord in prayer until He has accomplished His purposes and the final redemption arrives.¹

- VI. *And all the inhabitants of the earth [are] reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, **and [among] the inhabitants of the earth**: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* (Daniel 4:35)

Comment: God is, and always be Lord of the Heavens and the earth. His will is accomplished in both heaven and the earth. No evil in this world can disarm the Lord of hosts.

¹ *For behold, the Lord cometh forth out of His place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.* (Micah 1:3)

VII. *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, **and all that dwell therein.*** (Nahum 1:5)

Comment: The Lord is pouring out judgment like fire. The mountains quake and the earth is burned at His presence. Yet He is a stronghold in the day of trouble to all those who trust Him. Like all the prophets, Nahum predicts judgment and hope conditioned on man's response.

VIII. *For as a snare shall it come on all **them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.*** (Luke 21:35)

Comment: As Christ comforts His disciples concerning judgment on the nations during the end-times, He also comments on the godly destruction of all evil in that hour of Tribulation.

—Where? She's No Longer On Planet Earth!—

IX. *And hath made of one blood all nations of men for **to dwell on all the face of the earth,** and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;* (Acts 17:26)

Comment: Luke asserts that all people must repent and turn to Christ, because the resurrection—and a judgment day—are coming soon (God is no longer winking at sin).

—Where's The Church?—

X. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation (testing), which shall come upon all the world, **to try them that dwell upon the earth.*** (Luke 21:36)

Comment: This verse contains a promise that Christ will rapture genuine believers out of the world before the Tribulation period begins. The hour of temptation is the period of worldwide testing (7 years) still in the near future (cf. Dan. 12:1; Matthew 24:21, 29). Christ promises to keep them (committed Christians) *from* (Greek, ek, "out of") the full seven-year Tribulation. They will not enter into that period *at all*. The Tribulation is specifically for those who have rejected the Saviour, Jesus, and are appointed to God's testing (wrath)—and are *the dwellers of the earth*. All who love and follow after Jesus are *the dwellers of Heaven*.

—She Is Risen With Christ!—

XI. *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on **them that dwell on the earth?*** (Revelation 6:10)

Comment: The fifth seal presents the martyrdom of Tribulation saints throughout the world. They will come to faith in Christ following the Rapture (cf. 7:9-17), and many will be killed by satanic opposition to their testimony of Christ. They plead for God's judgment on their unbelieving oppressors (antichrist system). Their white robes show their righteous standing before God. More saints will be martyred, since there is much more of the Tribulation coming.

—Where's The Church? She's not here!—

XII. ***And they that dwell upon the earth** shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them **that dwelt on the earth.*** (Rev 11:10)

Comment: The unbelievers on the earth, having submitted to the authority of the beast, will rejoice, because they hate the plagues and the message of the two prophets [the two Israelite witnesses in Jerusalem] (cf. 1 Kings 18:17; John 16:20).

—Where's The Church? She Is Risen!—

XIII. ***Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea!** for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.* (Revelation 12:12)

Comment: The Tribulation will be Satan's final attempt to prevent the establishment of Christ's Kingdom. He has great wrath and intensifies his persecution of Israel, God's chosen nation (vv. 13-17), while setting up his own counterfeit kingdom through the beast, false messiah (13:1-17). He lost the battle at Calvary, but God is now using enforcement!

—Where's The Church? She's In Heaven!—

XIV. *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8)*

Comment: The book of life is the register of those who receive eternal life, in contrast to *them that dwell on the earth* (20:12, 15). Just as it was God's plan before the world began that Jesus, the Lamb of God, would be slain for man's sin, so the names of believers have been included in the Book of Life from the beginning (17:8). The verse strongly states that *all* who are dwellers on the earth will serve and cling to the antichrist system; and will have his mark.

—The Church Is Not Here—

XV. *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. (Rev 13:12).*

Comment: Great signs such as calling fire from heaven and giving breath and speech to the image of the first beast, are persuasive. These signs are similar to those performed by the 2 witnesses (11:5, 6). The performance of signs by Satanic power is part of the mass deception prophesied by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2: 8, 9 (also see Comment XVI).

—She Is Not On Earth—

XVI. *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by [the means of] those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. (Revelation 13:14)*

Comment: (See note on XVII)

—She Is Not On Earth—

XVII. *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water. (Revelation 14:6,7).*

Comment: This angel preaching the gospel helps to fulfill God's promise that the gospel "will be preached to all the world as a witness to all the nations" (Mt. 24:14) before Christ returns. The word *gospel* is used only in this verse of Revelation. Even at this late stage of judgment, He continues to offer everlasting life to the world. The gospel message at this point pleases with the lost to fear God and give glory to Him and except the hour of His judgment. The activity of this angel may be behind the scenes, prompting a worldwide proclamation of the gospel by those who will declare the truth—even at the cost of their lives (12:11).

—She Is Preparing For The Marriage Supper Of The Lamb!—

XVIII. *The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. (Revelation 17:8)*

Comment: The description of the beast as one who was, and is not, and will ascend. . .and go to perdition is a conscious contrast to the description of God in 1:4, 8. *Was* apparently indicates the beast had been manifested in the past (Dan. 7). *Is not* suggests the beast was not working his evil in John's day. *And go...into perdition* suggests eternal ruin or punishment. Those whose names are not written in the book of life (13:8; 20:12,15) are deceived by the beast because they don't know its certain eternal destiny (from the use of the word *wonder*). All they see is one who once existed and has now made an incredible re-emergence.²

—She Is Ruling With Christ Jesus!—

XIX. *1) Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2) With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made*

² Comment/s from The KJV Study Bible; Thomas Nelson Publ., Nashville; ©Copyright 1988 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

drunk with the wine of her fornication. (Revelation 17:1, 2)

Comment: This verse continues 16:17-21. The coming reference to BABYLON THE GREAT (vs. 5) has the same linking effect. *Many waters* are interpreted in v. 15 as “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” Though Babylon is only called the *harlot* in vs. 1, 5, 16, and 19:2, her habitual fornication was introduced in 14:8 as was her imminent judgment. Both the *kings of the earth* and the *inhabitants of the earth* are seduced into committing spiritual adultery with Babylon. Indication is that she made them drunk with power, material possessions, false worship, and pride. The wine of Babylon’s fornication (14:8) is judged forcefully and finally by God in “the wine of the fierceness of His wrath” (16:19).

—**She Watches While Christ Defeats Satan And The Earth Dwellers**—

There are only two dwelling places during the Seven year Tribulation period:

- 1) Those who dwell in Heaven...and
- 2) Those who dwell on earth. (The Tribulation Saints who do not survive this period will be resurrected in time to attend the Marriage Supper of the Lamb—Revelation 20:4).

A Standard Against The Enemy

So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. (Isaiah 59:19)

It is not hard to imagine the awful condition this world will be in after all real Christians have been snatched away to be with the Lord in the rapture—especially when we realize that many in high places—rulers, governors, and political leaders, are Christians. Perhaps, Yet, compared with those who are unsaved and continuing to reject Christ, the number may be *a lot* less than many. In 1 Corinthians 1:26, we read: *"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."* (1 Corinthians 1:26).

But we know there are some in high places who truly know the Lord, and will be caught away with the church at His coming. Their removal would be like the breaking of a dyke, permitting the rushing waters of the worst kind of corruption to sweep over every nation. Just think about how evil will then be intensified. What frightening lengths the lost will go to in their efforts to bring about an unrighteous and Christless millennium. Whether carnal men realize it or not, the true Christians are the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

Let every Christian suddenly be taken away from this scene, and you will have gross darkness covering the earth. With the godly power of righteousness gone, the masses will be given up to corruption and violence. Read the account of the days before the Flood, and you will have some sense of the chaotic condition that will very soon prevail on this earth. We see lawlessness spreading everywhere in the world, and it is with much difficulty that only now men of God are realizing that the vile demons from hell *are reigning* in our own U.S of A, even in this once great land of liberty! And back of all this is a Satanic effort to destroy all faith in God and His Word, and to substitute, instead, evil systems that can only result in eternal ruin to *all those who dwell on the earth*.

In our day, though the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of God is here to lift up a standard against him. The Word of God tells us that the mystery of lawlessness does already work, but during this dispensation there is one who hinders the full development of evil, that is, the Holy Ghost; but when He is taken out of the way—when the Holy Spirit takes the church up to meet the Lord in the air—then the last hindrance to every evil, will be gone; there will be no restraint on the wiles of the devil. In heaven, the saints will be presented before the judgment-seat of Christ, and for the last time Satan will appear as *the accuser* before God’s throne. But he will be *strongly cast out of heaven*, and will come down to the earth, having great wrath, because he knoweth that his time is short:

11) *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. 12) Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhibitors of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

. . .but he will not be revealed until after the church of the firstborn has been raptured in the presence of the Lord (2 Thessalonians 2:7-9).

The Antichrist And His Description

He will be a Satan-controlled, God-defying, conscienceless, almost super-human, man—an individual whose manifestation will mean the consummation of the present apostasy, and the full deification of humanity to his bewildered dupes (junkies/haters). So the world will turn away from the Christ of God and stretch out eager hands to welcome the coming "Man of Sin." And, depend upon it. The Word has declared his advent as surely as it predicts the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ from glory.

"And the king shall do according to his will ; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honor the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. And at 'the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." (Daniel 11: 36-45)

It is stated that a king will arise in Jerusalem who will be an atheist—a Jew; for it is distinctly predicted that he shall not regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women." The expression "the God of his fathers" means the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as frequently used in Scripture. He will soon throw off all restraint; and, exalting himself, will magnify himself against every god, and speak marvelous things against the God of gods during the last three 3 1/2 years of Daniel's 70th week.

In Revelation 13:11 we read: *"I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon."* He seems, at first, to have the meekness and strength of the Lamb of God, but his dragon-speech betrays him. It is the speech of self-exaltation, which indicates that his condemnation is the same as that of his master, the devil, who fell through pride.

Now Daniel tells us that though the willful king will not regard any supernatural god, yet he will honor one who is called "the god of forces"—evidently a man, for he is one to whom he pays tribute: *"a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and precious stones, and pleasant things."* This mighty one will be the backer of the Antichrist, and, in return for his protection, he will cause Palestine to submit to his authority, and pay tribute to him. Thus *"a strange god shall he acknowledge and increase with glory, and shall cause him to rule over many, and divide the land for gain."* Now this same thing is implied in the 12th verse of chapter 13: *"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed."* He is the vicegerent of the first Beast; and this first Beast, whom the world recognizes as a god (in the sense it recognized the Caesars of old as gods), is the

master whom he enriches with Jewish wealth. But he is not only an astute statesman, a crafty politician, but a wonder-worker as well:

"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." (Rev. 13:13, 14)

With this agrees the striking account of "the lawless one":

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God . . . even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie : that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2: 3-12)

One of the signs of the times is the unhealthy craving for marvels and wonders, which is so prevalent today. We are too near the end of the dispensation to expect—and accept—everything seeming to be miraculous; but Satanic signs and wonders will increase; and when the Antichrist himself appears, he will give men all the marvels for which they long—only to deceive them, and to lead them to accept his ungodly pretensions. *Have we already entered into this time of deception?*

The darkening apostasy is making rapid strides toward the end goal of a New World Government, bringing into the world a famine for the hearing of the Word of God. While we remain in the day of grace, all men should come to Christ in humble repentance for sin; and receive the precious coverage of His blood unto salvation.³

"For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened." (Zech. 11:16, 17).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 20:8).

John said, **10)** *"And He (God) said to me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 11) He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12) And behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13) I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."* **14)** *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they might have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. 15) For without are dogs, sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."*

"He that heareth My Word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and cometh not unto judgment, but is passed from death unto life. (John. 5:24)

Blessings from Tom and Linda Stephens
www.christsbondservants.org

³ Revelation, Lectures on. By H.A. Ironside; varied; Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, N.J.; 1st Edition, September, 1920.