

What's Next?

Part Two - God's Calendar

“What's next on God's calendar is Christ's return.”

Revelation 1:3, God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near.

Revelation 20:1-3, Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit and a heavy chain in his hand. 2 He seized the dragon - that old serpent, who is the devil, Satan - and bound him in chains for a thousand years. 3 The angel threw him into the bottomless pit, which he then shut and locked so Satan could not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were finished. Afterward, he must be released for a little while.

Four Eschatological Views

1. **A-Millennialism**: Denies the literal 1000-year reign of Christ on earth prior to the resurrection and believes that Christ's reign on earth is spiritual and happening now through the presence of the church.
2. **Post-Millennialism**: Denies the literal 1000-year reign and believes the world will become more and more Christian and finally usher in Christ's reign.
3. **Pre-Millennialism**: Believes in a literal 1000-year reign following Christ's conquering the anti-Christ. This view breaks into two camps:
 - a. **Historic Pre-Millennialists** and **Dispensational Pre-Millennialists**, with doctrines differing in when the rapture happens and how they see Israel and the church's role in end-time prophecy.

The Succession of What's Next

1. The Rapture of the Church

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will be the first to rise. 17 After that, we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 51 But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! 52 It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.

2. The Seven Years of Tribulation and the Rise of the Antichrist

Daniel 9:27, That ruler will have a firm agreement with many people for seven years, and when half this time is past, he will put an end to sacrifices and offerings. The Awful Horror will be placed on the highest point of the Temple and will remain there until the one who put it there meets the end which God has prepared for him.

1 Thessalonians 5:9, God doesn't intend to punish us, but wants us to be saved by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 3:10, Because you have kept my admonition to endure steadfastly, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is about to come on the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

3. The Glorious Appearing/Second Coming of Christ.

Revelation 19:11-16, 11 Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. Its rider was named Faithful and True, for he judges fairly and wages a righteous war. 12 His eyes were like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him that no one understood except himself. 13 He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven, dressed in the finest of pure white linen, followed him on white horses. 15 From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress. 16 On his robe at his thigh was written this title: King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

4. The 1000-Year Reign of Christ

Revelation 20:4, Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

5. The Final Judgement

Revelation 20:11-15, 11 And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. 12 I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. 14 Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. 15 And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.

6. The New Heaven and the New Earth.

Revelation 21:1-4, 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. 2 And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

"As believers, we must approach life with a focus on what's next on God's calendar."

How to be Ready for What's Next

1. Be prepared.

2 Corinthians 6:2, For God says, "At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you." Indeed, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation.

2. Be aware.

- **There will be a great falling away.**

1 Timothy 4:1, Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons.

- **There will be an increase of lawlessness**

2 Thessalonians 2:7, For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

- **There will be a loss of love for God**

Matthew 24:12, ...and because lawlessness will increase so much, the love of many will grow cold.

- **There will be an increase in violence and corruption**

Genesis 6:5, 11, 5 The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. 11 Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence.

3. Begin to share.

Romans 10:14, But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

Ezekiel 3:18, If I warn the wicked, saying, 'You are under the penalty of death,' but you fail to deliver the warning, they will die in their sins. And I will hold you responsible for their deaths.