

The End Times

Disciple copy — Pleasant Springs Church, Discipleship School

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

The full four-lesson series: ps-church.com/discipleship/end-times

Our posture, before anything else. Pleasant Springs does not teach the pretribulational Rapture — **and honours brothers and sisters who do.** Many of them love Jesus better than we do. *"In the essentials, unity. In the non-essentials, liberty. In all things, charity."*

1 • The story most of us were told

Believers vanish in a split second. Seven years of tribulation. Then Jesus returns publicly.

It reached us through the **Scofield Reference Bible** (_____), Dallas Theological Seminary, Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, and the _____ novels.

It *feels* like just what the Bible teaches. **It is not.**

2 • Where the doctrine came from

The pretribulational Rapture appears in the **1830s**, through an Irish preacher named _____ .

 **Careful:** new is not the same as wrong. But when a doctrine is presented as what every Christian has always seen, and nobody saw it for _____ hundred years — that is worth knowing.

1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 (ESV) — "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a **cry of command**, with the **voice of an archangel**, and with the **sound of the trumpet** of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, 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."

Two things to notice:

a) A cry, an archangel, a trumpet. Whatever this is, it is the _____ event in the New Testament. A *secret* rapture it is not.

b) The word for "**meet**." In ordinary Greek of Paul's day, when a king approached a city the citizens went _____ to meet him — and then escorted him back _____.

► **They go out to meet him, and they come _____ with him.**

Matthew 24:27 (ESV) — "For as the **lightning** comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

Acts 1:11 (ESV) — "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come **in the same way as you saw him go into heaven**."

"In the same way" — _____, bodily, in person.

3 • What we do not do with dates

Matthew 24:36 (ESV) — "But concerning that day and hour **no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."

⚠️ We do not set dates and we do not identify current events with prophecy — because it has been done in every generation for two thousand years and has been wrong _____ .

4 • Reading Revelation like its first readers

► **Revelation is** _____ .

Revelation 1:9 (ESV) — "I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called **Patmos** on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus."

A real man · a real island · _____ **real congregations** · a real Roman persecution · a literary form (Jewish apocalyptic) his readers recognised at speed.

⚠️ **We are not its original audience, and our century is not its principal subject.**

Revelation 1:3 (ESV) — "Blessed is the one who **reads aloud** the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who **hear**, and who **keep** what is written in it, for the time is near."

The four ways Christians have read it:

_____ · _____ · _____ · _____

⚠️ Which of the four is the **newest**? _____

5 • The millennium, Israel and the Church

The three millennial views — you will meet all three:

View	The thousand years
A _____	is the present age; no future earthly reign
Post _____	the gospel gradually wins; Christ returns at the <i>end</i> of a golden age
Pre _____	Christ returns _____ the thousand years and reigns bodily

⚠ **The distinction people miss:** *historic* premillennialism is **not** _____ premillennialism. Only the second requires a secret Rapture and two separate programmes.

Where Pleasant Springs stands, plainly:

- On Revelation 20 — **historic** _____ **millennialism**. Christ returns bodily and reigns over a renewed creation.
- On Israel and the Church — a **covenantal** reading. We are **not** _____, and we are **not** strict supersessionists.

Romans 11:25–26 (ESV) — "...a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way **all Israel will be saved...**"

Paul's picture is an _____ — Gentiles grafted in, and warned in the same breath not to become _____ toward the branches that were there first.

► **The Church is not a parenthesis and not a replacement. Two chapters of _____ story.**

6 • The good news — which is the whole point

A Christian hope cannot live on negations.

► **The shape of biblical hope is not _____ . It is _____**

.

The story that began in a _____ ends in a _____ -

_____ .

Revelation 21:1, 3–4 (ESV) — "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.'"

Notice the direction of travel. We are not evacuated upward. He comes

_____ .

Titus 2:13 (ESV) — "waiting for our **blessed hope**, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

Our blessed hope is not an escape. It is a _____ , appearing.

7 • What it changes on Monday

Your work in the world — if God remakes this creation rather than discarding it, then the garden, the marriage, the school and the town are _____

_____ .

Bad news — the promise was never that you would be taken out before it got hard. It is that he is _____, and that he _____.

People who disagree — this is the *non-essentials, liberty* column.

1 Thessalonians 4:18 (ESV) — "Therefore **encourage one another** with these words."

► **If your end-times teaching leaves people _____ rather than encouraged, something has gone wrong with it.**

Three things to remember

1. The Rapture story is **1830s**, not apostolic — and its key passage is the _____ event in the New Testament.
2. Revelation is _____ to seven real churches. Read it with them.
3. Hope is _____, not evacuation. He comes _____.

Closing prayer

Father, you have not told us the day or the hour, and you have told us enough. Thank you that our hope is not escape but your own appearing — that you are not finished with your world but are coming to remake it and live in it with us. Keep us from fear, keep us from date-setting, and keep us gentle with brothers and sisters who read these things differently. Make us people who are found working when you come. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Take it further — the full series

Lesson	What it covers
1 The Rapture and the Parousia	Where the doctrine came from, and what the Greek actually says
2 The Book of Revelation	Author, audience, genre, and the four interpretive approaches
3 The Millennium, Israel and the Church	Three millennial views, four frameworks, Revelation 20
4 A Biblical Theology of the End	The positive, hopeful, Christ-centred shape of it all

ps-church.com/discipleship/end-times — every lesson states each view fairly and names our own commitments plainly.

My notes

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