

Who Comes First, Could Be Very Important!

by Bob Faulkner

Knowing who comes first is crucial for understanding the integrity of God's Word, responding to false teachers, and being ready for the Lord's return.

Duration: 16:37

Scripture: Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Antichrist"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages the audience to explore various resources for spiritual growth, including books, articles, and videos available on Sermon Audio, YouTube, and his own website. He emphasizes the importance of subscribing to his channels and engaging with the content. The speaker also invites the audience to ask questions and suggest topics for study, providing his email address for communication. The sermon concludes with a reading of a poem by John Milton, expressing praise and anticipation for the coming of the Lord.

Transcript

The Lord will come, and not be slow. His footsteps cannot err. Before Him righteousness shall go, His royal harbinger.

Mercy and truth that long were missed, now joyfully are met. Sweet peace and righteousness have kissed, and hand in hand are set. The nations all whom thou hast made shall come, and all shall frame to bow them low before Thee, Lord, and glorify Thy name.

Truth from the earth, like to a flower, shall bud and blossom then, and justice from her heavenly bower look down on mortal men. Welcome back to the house, to Hackberry House, a daily podcast devoted to the Word of God and the persecuted church. I'm Bob, a servant of the Lord from northern Illinois, and I've read to you from John Milton's poem, back in 1648 he wrote that.

In keeping with the topic of our day, we'll finish this poem at the end of the broadcast. We were studying last time about the lie that was circulating from the Thessalonian church, and Paul's response to it. Then I shared with you the fact that clearly tells us the order of events of the last days.

Today, we start discussing why all of this is so important. Actually, I can think of several ways to explain the importance of knowing who comes first. First, you've got the integrity of God's Word.

Either we can depend on apostolic statements or we can't. While everyone grants up front that some statements of these men are clouded and difficult, we know that many others are not. And this is one of the unclouded ones.

The coming of Christ will not come until a general falling away that sets the stage for the semi-final world ruler, the Antichrist. Now, it's in there. Let's just believe it.

It's there. Secondly, a reason why this is so important is what I will call the Thessalonian syndrome. In a word, that syndrome is panic.

Many Christians will be entering blindly into the Antichrist era and finally realize several months or years in that Jesus has not come. What if there are false teachers then, as in Paul's day, who explained to you what was explained to them? You didn't make it. Jesus already came.

You missed the big event of all times. Next time, he's coming in judgment. What if that is you? Won't you be asking a lot of questions and fear and anxiety? Won't it be comforting to know that it was not true at all, that Jesus never promised a secret coming? The book of 2 Thessalonians will be a treasure to you then.

I hope it is to you now. And thirdly, what I will call the restricted pastor. Pastors are being told by their higher-ups not to mention the post-tribulation rapture.

I know it for a fact. They must think this teaching is important, though in a negative sense. No, really, the bylaws of a major evangelical group that I know of officially frowns on any of its pastors talking about the possibility of anything or anyone showing up on the scene before Jesus does.

Here's their reasoning. Number one, the coming of Jesus, they say, is imminent. They have defined that word, imminent, and their definition demands that nothing can come before this imminency is fulfilled.

Secondly, teaching about a tribulation brings confusion to the saints, not to mention division. And thirdly, teaching about some events coming before Jesus lulls people's minds into complacency. Well, I get a little uneasy when I read things like this.

Imminency, I think I understand. We'll talk about it later. But the fact that a doctrine could confuse is now grounds for it to be excluded.

Could it be confusing because this particular group has reached a wrong conclusion to begin with, as in, don't confuse me with the facts? And then there's the final salvo, that people like myself and the host of believers through biblical and church history who simply believed the clear word about a second, not a third, coming. These people are lulling the rest of the church to sleep by suggesting that a worldwide catastrophe and the most evil man of all time will come before Jesus appears. Where did that come from? It is true that wicked servants will play and sleep and stall until the last minute and then serve Jesus on the day before they think he's going to arrive.

Are they suggesting that those who do not believe in imminency are wicked servants? What should be said of the pastor who believes that a pre-tribulation rapture is wrong, yet he wants to stay in that denomination as a pastor? Perhaps he has no strong feelings about it and lets it go. Perhaps he truly wants to talk about it but decides to obey, either for obedience's sake or for a lesser motive. If he knowingly misleads the people of God in the name of obedience, what's to be said of him? This doctrine must be very important to be under the censure of otherwise godly men.

We need to get it right. Fourthly, I would say about the last days. Everyone keeps telling us we're in the last days.

Well, according to Joel and Peter, we've been there since Pentecost. Agreed. John would say we've been in the last hour since the first century.

But suppose we really are in the last of the last days. Isn't it time the church have a major discussion about this and correct the popular new doctrines of the last hundred years? Restore the church to its serious looking for of Christ and those events just before his coming? In line with scripture, not in line with Tim LaHaye. Fifthly, I would say it's all important.

Why make a big deal of this particular teaching? Because it's a particular teaching. I think it's a truism that many folks who don't want to talk about biblical doctrines of lesser importance will often fill their days and their free time gaining knowledge about the news and the world of sports and automobiles and houses and recipes. I've always contended that the least important teaching of scripture, and this is far from the least, but the very least important teaching of scripture is far superior to any ball game that was ever played, any series of sports statistics that was ever compiled.

Why shouldn't we want to get it all right? Since God took sixteen hundred years to bring us this wonderful book that we used to carry around, but granted this teaching is not a slam dunk because of one verse. This verse is the foundation, but what is to be built upon it? That's my question. It moves me on into the next section.

I'm giving you a section of a little booklet that I wrote called, Who Comes First, Christ or Antichrist? All of this is available. It is free on Sermon Audio in various portions. I take that back.

This one isn't. I'm putting it on Sermon Audio right now, so I'm giving it to you, but if you want the whole book lit, and it's a very small one for a very, very small price, you could go to Amazon.com and I'll talk to you about that in a minute too. Let's talk about the watch passages in the Bible.

Matthew 24 is key to our understanding of who comes when. Remember the questions of the disciples, when will you come? When will the world end? Jesus goes into a long description, not about signs of the end, but signs that are not the end. Read it carefully, so they won't be confused.

And then at the end of that discussion comes a couple of very clear signals. First, the gospel will be preached in all the world, and then even more specific, the abomination of desolation described by Daniel and Paul will occur in Jerusalem. People living in the region will flee.

Pandemonium everywhere. For three and a half long years, unprecedented trouble on earth. And then it says in Matthew 24, immediately after the tribulation, Jesus will come.

Now, after all I have said, have you figured out the exact day and the hour? No. Neither had the disciples, neither will the people living in that time. According to Jesus' words in verse 36, of that day and that hour no one knows.

And we could also interpret that to mean of this period of time that I'm talking about, nobody knows when that's been. And for generations, hundreds and hundreds of years, we thought we were there, but nobody really knew that we had entered into that time. And I'm not going to say that we have yet, though it surely seems like it.

It has surely seemed like it to many people of many generations. Do you see how he goes from clear sign to general time though in just a few verses? Hidden in the talk of a great tribulation and an abomination that desolates, hidden is the teaching of the Antichrist. Jesus says here in so many words, Antichrist must come first.

We know he's the big man in the tribulation time. So Antichrist must come first, then me. After all of this horrendous trouble, the words of Jesus addressed to those remaining believers, and they do remain, is still the solemn command to watch.

Do you get it? Even those people who will know some things that we know because they've been recorded in Scripture all this time, those people are told to watch. Our Father knew that scanning the skies for at least 2,000 years would be fruitless. But in that day, he says, watch.

When you get that far in history, any day, Jesus is going to come. Be ready when he comes. The doctrine of any day, theologically known as imminence in our day and sworn to, and you better believe it or you're out, as it's being defined today, I mean.

It's been transferred to us in this pre-tribulation time, and perhaps wrongly. But let's examine some more watch passages. I find the next occurrence in Matthew's next chapter, chapter 25.

It follows a parable about ten virgins. There's a sense in which this can be applied to any age, any believer, but you'll note that chapter 25 begins with the word then. Then? When? In this time period of which we speak.

Satan in the form of his Antichrist wreaking havoc. The Jerusalem temple inhabited by a man of sin. Unspeakable horrors everywhere.

Then. And yet in some corners of the earth in that day, normal life is trying to surface. As we remember, after 9-11, the call back to normalcy was immediate.

People will live. They'll survive. They keep trying to believe that all is and will be.

Well, I have to stop right there today. We're going to talk about more of the watch passages and move on to the question of what are we looking for? What are we looking for? I want to remind you about 25 books that are out there. I want you to go to Sermon Audio and look up my blog that says, Books by Bob.

Look up a blog, Books by Bob, and there you'll find the whole list and how you can get each one. Simpler than even going to Amazon. I've got hundreds of articles on ezine.com, a lot of stuff on YouTube, slash the Professor English.

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I want to thank you for tuning in. I hope to talk with you again soon. Blessings on you, and let me finish that song, which I won't sing.

I don't want to offend too many people. Let me finish the reading of the song by John Milton, a poem he wrote in 1648. Surely, to such as do him fear, salvation is at hand, and glory shall ere long appear to dwell within our land.

Thee will I praise, O Lord my God, Thee honor and adore with my whole heart, and blaze abroad Thy name forevermore. Rise, God, judge thou the earth in might, this wicked earth redress, for Thou art He who shall by right the nations all possess. For great Thou art, and wonders great, by Thy strong hand are done.

Thou in Thine everlasting seat remainest God alone.

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