

The cost of following Jesus is rising; it's becoming riskier to be an open Christian. But we will not buy our safety through silence. Silence isn't the answer, and fear isn't our guide. Pick up your cross, count the cost, and face it with joy.

1. Genesis shows us why the world went wrong, Gospels show us how God made it right, and Revelation shows us when God will make everything right forever.

- Genesis reveals the root of all evil.
- The Cross stands in the middle of history as the cure for sin.
- Revelation reveals the hope of the world.

The Second Coming of Jesus isn't a side issue for Christians; it's the climax of God's story and the hope of every believer.

2. The end times are not the end of the world, but the end of this present evil age.

- **This age** – the present fallen world order. Satan is the "god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4). Jesus described it as marked by marriage, persecution, and ongoing evil (Luke 20:34; Matt. 13:39–40).
- **The age to come** – the eternal order under God's rule, marked by resurrection, eternal life, and God's justice (Mark 10:30; Luke 20:35). It began with Jesus' first coming, when His ministry and miracles revealed the kingdom breaking into this age. Both ages overlap until His return.
- **The end times (last days)** – began with Christ's first coming and continue until His second. "In these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son" (Heb 1:2). On Pentecost, Peter declared Joel's prophecy of the last days was already being fulfilled (Acts 2:16–17).

3. The end times are about enduring, not escaping.

Then they will deliver you to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake... But he who endures to the end shall be saved." Matthew 24:9-13

- **Jesus spoke of the end times not as a hope of escape, but as a call to endure.**
- **Escaping is a new popular doctrine that wasn't held by the Church for over 1,800 years.**

In 1830, John Nelson Darby, an Anglo-Irish Bible teacher, popularized it, as did the Scofield Bible footnotes and, later, *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey.

- **The early Church's eschatology, as seen in figures like Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Augustine, typically expected believers to face tribulation, with Christ's return occurring afterward.**

The Didache (c.50–c.120) "Then shall appear the deceiver of the world [The Antichrist] ... Then shall the creation of mankind come to the fiery trial and many shall be offended and be lost, but they who endure in their faith shall be saved ... Then shall the world see the Lord coming on the clouds of Heaven." (16:4–8)

Epistle of Barnabas (c.80–c.100) "The final stumbling-block approaches ... Take heed, lest resting at our ease, as those who are called, we should fall asleep in our sins, and the wicked prince ... should thrust us away from the kingdom of the Lord." (4)

The Shepherd of Hermas (c.95–c.150) "[Blessed are] you who endure the Great Tribulation ... Those who continue steadfast, and are put through the fire, will be purified by means of it." (Vision 2:2; 4:3)

Justin Martyr (c.110–c.165) "He [Jesus Christ] shall come from heaven with glory, when the man of apostasy [Antichrist] ... shall venture to do unlawful deeds on the earth against us the Christians." (Dialogue with Trypho, CX)





Irenaeus (c.120–c.202) “And they [ten kings] shall lay Babylon waste ... put the Church to flight. ... This is the last contest of the righteous, in which, when they overcome they are crowned with incorruption.” (Against Heresies, V, 26, 29, 35)

Hippolytus (c.185–c.235) “...concerning the tribulation of persecution, referring to the 1,260 days during which the tyrant will reign. When the times are fulfilled, the Antichrist will appear and persecute the saints, after which we may expect the manifestation of the Lord from heaven.” (Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, On Daniel II, 50–67).

- **The same word Jesus used when He promised, ‘In this world you will have tribulation,’ (Jn 16:33) is the very word used for the great tribulation (Mt 24:21; Rev 2:22; 7:14). Trials now and trials to come are all under the same Jesus who has already overcome.**

- **The Bible talks about only one second coming of Jesus Christ, and it will be after the tribulation.**

The second coming is mentioned over 300 times in the NT. Paul refers to it at least 50 times. It is said to appear 8 times more than His first coming. Whole books (1 & 2 Thessalonians) and chapters (Matthew 24, Mark 13) are devoted to it. No one can conclude there are two comings without starting with that view.

- **Jesus came to save us from the eternal wrath of God revealed at the final judgment, not from a seven-year Tribulation experienced by a single generation.**

Paul’s word translated “wrath” in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 is the Greek *orgē*. In Revelation, it refers to the final judgment, not Tribulation (Rev. 6:16–17; 11:18; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15). Tribulation is not uniquely God’s wrath; He poured out wrath often (2 Chron. 34:21, 25; Lam. 2:4; Jer. 6:11; 7:20; 42:18; 44:6; Ezek. 20:8, 13, 21; 21:31) and it continues today (Rom. 1:18; 1 Thess. 2:16).

- **Scripture consistently shows that God doesn’t always remove His people from trials; He often preserves them through them.**

- Noah was preserved during the flood (Gen. 6:8). God didn’t rapture him—He gave instructions and protected him through it, not from it.
- Lot was relocated before judgment, not removed from earth (Gen. 19:22).
- Israel remained in Egypt during plagues, but God distinguished them (Exod. 8:23; 9:4; 11:7). The pattern is preservation within judgment, not exemption from it.
- Rahab was protected in the midst of Jericho (see Joshua 2:18). Rahab wasn’t removed from Jericho—she was protected within it as the city fell.
- Three Hebrew boys were protected in the fire (see Daniel 3:17–18). God didn’t keep them from the fire—He walked with them in it (Daniel 3:25). The furnace burned others but could not touch them.

- **The “church” in the book of Revelation is not mentioned, but saints are.**

Revelation 13:7 grants authority over every tribe, tongue, and nation. These saints are believers living through tribulation, not only converts. The term “saints” is consistently used for Christians (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:1).

- **The most faithful reading of Revelation 3:10 is not physical removal but divine preservation in the midst of suffering.**

Nowhere does the Bible say the churches in Revelation represent church ages or that Philadelphia was raptured from trouble. The original audience was a persecuted church in Asia Minor. No church has ever been raptured from persecution. ‘Kept from’ in John 17:15 shows disciples are



preserved in the world, not removed. John's usage in both Gospel and Revelation shows consistency: protection within a hostile environment, not extraction.

- **The Marriage Supper of the Lamb will be taking place after the great tribulation.**

Jewish people expected the Messianic banquet (Is 25:6–8) at the consummation of God's Kingdom (Luke 14:15). No text says we eat with Christ during the Tribulation. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb occurs as Jesus returns to judge the earth (Rev 19:7, 11–16). Announcements of what "has come" can precede events (Rev 14:7, 15), but the context shows it does not precede the Tribulation. It follows Babylon's fall (Rev 19:1–4) and contrasts with God's great supper where His enemies are judged.

- **The first resurrection happens right before the thousand-year reign of Christ, not before the tribulation.**

I saw the souls of those beheaded for Jesus, who had not worshiped the beast. They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years, blessed and holy, with no power over the second death, and served as priests of God and Christ. Revelation 20:4–6

4. The end times are about conquering, not cowardice.

In the end times, there will be three kinds of people: the compromising, the cowardly, and the conquering.

- The Greek word for "tribulation" (thlipsis) in John 16:33 is also used for the "great tribulation" (thlipsis megalē) in Matthew 24:21, Revelation 2:22, and 7:14—showing continuity between everyday afflictions and the climactic distress before Christ's return.
- All seven churches in Revelation were called to **overcome**: Ephesus (2:7), Smyrna (2:11), Pergamum (2:17), Thyatira (2:26), Sardis (3:5), Philadelphia (3:12), and Laodicea (3:21) and just as Jesus overcame, He calls us to do the same.
- **Conquer** hardship (Mt 24:6-7), hate (Mt 24:9), fear of death (Mt 24:9), offense & bitterness (Mt 24:10), deception (Mt 24:11), and complacency (Mt 24:12).

Fear is the enemy's weapon to muzzle truth. If Satan cannot destroy the gospel, he will try to silence the messenger. The blood of martyrs has always been the Church's seed. From the first apostles to faithful believers throughout history, persecution spread the message further.

- Matthew was slain by the sword in Ethiopia.
- Mark was dragged through the streets of Alexandria until he died.
- Luke was hanged in Greece.
- Peter was crucified upside down in Rome.
- Paul was beheaded under Nero's orders.
- Andrew, bound to a cross, preached until his final breath.

5. The end times involve the whole world, but the epicenter is Israel, not the West.

Jewish eschatology teaches that history moves toward God's redemption of Israel and the world, rooted in the prophets. It speaks of the return of the Jewish people, the Messiah from David's line, a final battle, and the Temple's rebuilding, leading to the Messianic Age of peace, justice, and God's knowledge, followed by resurrection and the eternal world. The emphasis is on living faithfully now and trusting God to fulfill His promises.

The Bible presents the great tribulation as **Israel-centered**: the Antichrist's rise, the great battle, and the nations' war target **Jerusalem and the Jewish people**. The church shares in tribulation, but the final clash centers on Israel, not the West.



Revelation contains about **400 Old Testament allusions**, more than any other New Testament book (Hebrews has just over 100).

- Prophetic texts place climactic struggles in Israel, especially Jerusalem: Zechariah 12–14, Ezekiel 38–39, and Daniel 9–12 envision nations gathering against Israel.
- In Matthew 24, Jesus speaks of “those in Judea” fleeing and tribulation centered there.
- The “man of lawlessness” (2 Thess. 2) and the “little horn” (Daniel 7–9) relate to the Temple’s desecration, showing a Jerusalem-centered stage.
- While the beast’s war targets saints worldwide, imagery returns to Zion—holy city trampled, nations at Armageddon.
- Biblical eschatology focuses on Israel, not Western nations, with global effects but Jerusalem as the epicenter.

The Old Testament foundation for the Great Tribulation appears in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, with Isaiah describing it as birth pains before Christ’s return, resurrection, and world redemption.

6. The end times are about the expectation of Jesus’ coming, not the fear of the coming Antichrist.

Events before Christ’s return are like birth pains: sudden, growing, and closer together (Mt 24:7–8; Luke 21:10–11; 1 Thess 5:3).

Don’t fear the contractions of tribulation; they are only the labor before the birth of His second coming.

The Bible speaks of the spirit and person of the Antichrist; history shows figures with similar traits. “Antichrist” appears 7 times, only in John’s Epistles; he opposes Christ, not necessarily an atheist.

Facts about Antichrist:

- **He will claim to be God.** 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 warns that the man of sin, the son of perdition, will oppose God, exalt himself above all, and sit in the temple, claiming to be God. His aim is to have people worship him.
- **He will blaspheme God.** Revelation 13:6 says he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, His name, tabernacle, and those in heaven. Antichrist will openly blaspheme God.
- **He will display miraculous powers.** Revelation 13:13 says he performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven. With technology, media and live streams may gather crowds who could be deceived by his “power.”
- **The Antichrist will come back to life.** Revelation 13:14-12 says he deceives the earth, causing people to make an image of the beast who was wounded and lived. His miraculous healing will lead many to worship him as a messiah.
- **The Antichrist will rule in full authority.** Revelation 13:5-7 says he was given a mouth to blaspheme and authority over every tribe, tongue, and nation for 3 ½ years. The Antichrist will control the world, but those who resist and refuse his mark will be persecuted and killed.
- **The Antichrist will control the world’s economy.** Revelation 13:16-17 says, “He causes all, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their hand or forehead, and no one may buy or sell except with it.” What seemed impossible 2,000 years ago is now increasingly possible with technology, computer chips, and a global system preparing for a one-world government.
- **The Antichrist desecrates God’s temple.** Matthew 24:15 refers to the Antichrist as the “abomination of desolation.” Daniel 12:11 warned Israel and future generations to flee when they see it standing in the holy place. Jesus adds in Matthew 24:21 that this will bring great tribulation, unlike anything before. This strong warning shows that everyone will know the Antichrist has arrived.
- **The Antichrist will attempt to destroy Israel.** Satan and his kingdom seek to destroy Israel. The devil has always hated the Jewish nation, which is why anti-Semitism has appeared throughout



history. Many speculate the Antichrist will bring temporary peace in the Middle East and be accepted as a messiah, but only Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will bring true lasting peace.

- **The Antichrist will cause the Earth's armies to fight against Christ.** Revelation 19:19 says, "And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army." The world will unite under the Antichrist to fight Christ and His army.
- **Final destiny of the Antichrist is in the lake of fire.** Revelation 19:20 says the beast and false prophet were captured and thrown into the lake of fire with brimstone.

The Book of Revelation is about Jesus, not the Beast!

Revelation is full of sharp contrasts; it often presents truth in pairs of opposites. These highlight the cosmic battle between God's kingdom and Satan's counterfeit.

- **Lamb vs. Beast.** Christ as the slain Lamb (Rev. 5:6) vs. the Beast from the sea/earth (Rev. 13).
- **Bride vs. Harlot.** The Bride (New Jerusalem, faithful Church, Rev. 21:2) vs. the Great Prostitute (Babylon, Rev. 17–18).
- **Jerusalem vs. Babylon.** Holy City (Rev. 21:10–27) vs. Fallen Babylon (Rev. 18).
- **Seal of God vs. Mark of the Beast.** God's servants sealed (Rev. 7:3; 14:1) vs. the beast's mark on forehead/hand (Rev. 13:16–17).
- **Worship of the Creator vs. Worship of the Beast.** True worship (Rev. 4–5) vs. idolatrous worship (Rev. 13:4, 8).
- **The Woman Clothed with the Sun vs. The Scarlet Woman.** Pure woman (Rev. 12) vs. corrupted woman (Rev. 17).
- **Life vs. Death.** Book of Life (Rev. 20:15; 21:27) vs. Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:14–15).
- **True Prophet vs. False Prophet.** Jesus and His witnesses (Rev. 11; 19:10) vs. Beast's false prophet (Rev. 13:11–15).
- **Throne of God vs. Throne of Satan.** Heavenly throne (Rev. 4:2; 22:1) vs. Satan's throne (Rev. 2:13; 13:2).
- **New Heaven & Earth vs. Old Earth Passing Away.** Creation renewed (Rev. 21:1) vs. old creation destroyed (Rev. 20:11).
- **Overcomers vs. Cowards/Unfaithful.** Those who conquer (Rev. 2–3; 21:7) vs. the cowardly, unbelieving (Rev. 21:8).
- **The River of Life vs. The Lake of Fire.** Life flowing from God's throne (Rev. 22:1–2) vs. eternal death (Rev. 20:14–15).

Mark of the Beast: The seal of the Lamb (Rev. 7:1–8; 14:1) identifies and protects those already loyal to Him through union with the Lamb. In contrast, the devil duplicates this with the mark of the beast (Rev. 13:16–18), tied to worship and allegiance, not just technology. Whether or not it involves a chip, the mark shows devotion to the beast, just as the seal shows those who belong to Christ.