

WHY ARE WE STILL HERE?!
(DID WE MISS THE RAPTURE?)



TEXT: *1 Thess. 5:1-11 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*

(For a list of times before Christ's return see 2 Tim.3:1-7)

THESIS: To set forth sound biblical reasons why the Lord tarries His coming.

INTRO.: A. We have all seen the billboards, bumper stickers, flyers, and pamphlets and heard the announcements that May 21, 2011 was the "day of judgment" and **the Rapture of the Church**. But that was just "*the church of Harold Camping*," a demented old **false prophet** who has missed the date for the third time! (Just like the J.W.'s). Then came **Chuck Smith (another false prophet)**, founder of Calvary Chapel, who predicted 1981 in a watch night service the Rapture would occur that night!...



B. However, it does present a legitimate question: **WHY ARE WE STILL HERE?** after over 2000 years since the prophesy of His return was made by our Savior. Are the "scoffers" in 2 Peter right when they sneeringly ask "*Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*"? **NO, THEY ARE WRONG! LET ME GIVE YOU FOUR REASONS WHY WE ARE STILL HERE...**

I. BECAUSE OF FALSE PROPHETS!

A. Jesus Warned of Them:

Matthew 24:23-24 *Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

ILLUS.: Camping and his crowd can be scripturally identified as false prophets and if Jesus would come any day, it wouldn't be the day he and his cronies predicted! I wonder how disappointed they are now!? The tragedy is that after two other misfires, people continued to believe! I haven't seen any new billboards, etc. today! The people who had his bumper stickers on their vehicles, have peeled them off!

B. Paul, Peter & John Warned of Them: Mt. 24:23,24

1. Text: 5:2 (Read)

2 Peter 3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

2. Revelation 2,3,4 "**Come up hither...**" then nothing is mentioned of the church for the next 19 chapters (The Tribulation)!

II. BECAUSE OF BIBLE IGNORANCE!

A. Not Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: (Dispensationally)

1. Camping taught that the Church age was over and we are living in the Tribulation!
2. Believers know that the Tribulation is not for them! **v.9**

B. Not Heeding the Warnings of the Word of Truth: (**See text**)

1. True believers can discern the times and seasons and are content to know we are living in the last days before Christ returns, but cannot know the exact time.

Matthew 25:13 *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*

2. The times and seasons are clear and warnings for us are given clearly as to what to watch for; 19 specific things in **2 Tim. 3:1-5**
3. A general apostasy in the church:

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first...*

III. BECAUSE OF GOD'S LONGSUFFERING:

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

A. He is Merciful:

1. He could simply end things NOW and send all unbelievers to hell!
2. He chooses rather to tarry His coming to give everyone the best possible chance to be saved

B. He is Wise:

1. Your unsaved friends and loved ones eternity hang in the balance

ILLUS.: No one will be able to say that God cut them off prematurely and that they are in hell because they had not chance! He died for their sin and for their sins!

2. His foreknowledge allows Him the opportunity to know who will come to Him & when

IV. BECAUSE OF GOD'S PERFECT PLAN!

A. He Has a Plan for Every Man:

1. His plan for every unsaved person is for them to trust in His shed blood

John 3:17-18 *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

2. His plan for the believer is to **walk** with Him, **obey** Him, **love** Him & **serve** Him

B. He Has a Plan for YOU!

2 Corinthians 6:2 *...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

CONCL.: **WE ARE STILL HERE** because of False Prophets, Bible Ignorance, God's Longsuffering and His Perfect Plan! Come to Him NOW and be in heaven forever!

WE ARE STILL HERE TO **"GET THE BRIDE"** FOR GOD'S SON!

