

"Both ... And" & "EITHER ... OR" Conundrums

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God's Word is replete with sound principles tied to logical fallacies. Mankind has discovered three (of many) helpful ones - common-sense errors simply summarized in these ways:

1. The fallacy of prematurely committing to (in a dogmatic way) one view as opposed to another.
Example: choosing between two *seemingly* opposing views (say V1 & V2) while failing to acknowledge both may be true at the same time when considered in a proper, holistic context ;
2. One should also **not** fail to acknowledge there may actually be **other** possible views (V3, V4, etc.), ones which differ from views V1 and V2, as this, too, can be faulty presumption leading to error.
Example: deciding between two conflicting Pre-millennial views (e.g., Is it "Pre-Trib" or "Pre-Wrath"?) without considering other biblical options: [Click Here](#) for one example ;

There are possibly other faulty judgments one could make, one of which we'd also like to include here:

3. The fallacy of choosing/embracing opposites in a context where both cannot be true at the same time – the error of contradiction. This could be exemplified in this way: Affirming both premises which are on the present *table of consideration* – namely, accepting both *God exists* (P1) and *God does not exist* (P2) are true at the same time. The accepting of both P1 and P2 would be an incorrect conclusion.

These fallacies are *principle errors* which raise their ugly heads at times.

So how does this relate to other pressing end-time matters? Great question!

We (at Endurance Ministries) have, on multiple occasions, made appeal for **balance** when it comes to accepting Bible Truths. These many articles and blogs are most often tied to the *both/and* principle.

It is possible multiple premises could be correct when the appeal is considered in a holistic, full-Counsel-of-God context. Here are some examples of our dealings with contemporary end-time issues in past presentations:

BOTH God's sovereignty AND man's freedom to choose

BOTH faith AND works (done in Christ)
(in relationship to *justification before God*)

BOTH GOD's Word AND written by mankind

BOTH God incarnate AND son of man

ALL of the preceding examples are easily reconciled and shine True in light of God's big-picture revelation masterpiece.

The second principle is also employed in many of our blogs and articles. While this principle is affirmed, we eventually take the next step and decide to reject various end-time positions, ones we doubt on the basis of good (biblical) reason(s). In this setting, we acknowledge the existence of various positions but we, due to Bible data, go on to question some of the un-evidenced or poorly evidenced views. (e.g., We discern *Preterit eschatology* to be clearly lacking ; we warn against the *it will all pan out in the end so don't concern yourself with end-time considerations* perspectives because they foster the denial of Bible exhortations - appeals toward the end of being ready, prepared, watchful.)

In THIS blog, we wish to affirm the reality of the 3rd sound principle – the matter of contradiction – that is, accepting two opposing views at the same time – details described in the *God exists* and *God does not exist* example above and outlined below in the context of one end-time consideration.

So let's move into yet another end-time matter ...

Please understand: the ***Pre-Wrath*** (end-time position #1 - P1) and the ***Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering*** (end-time position #2 - P2) have MUCH in common. In writing to our Pre-wrath friends over the years, we have made this absolutely clear.

BUT ...

On the matter of the timing of the final trumpet (I Corinthians 15:51, 52) rapture (John 14:1-3 ; I Thes. 4:13-18) gathering (Mt. 24:31 ; II Thes. 2:1) as outlined in Scripture, the two positions - namely, P1 & P2 – teach differently!

The Pre-Wrath view teaches the Church will NOT experience the Trumpet judgments (having been raptured prior to the beginning of the Trumpet blasts of Rev. 8 - 11) WHILE THE Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering view teaches the Church will go through the Trumpet period due to Bible data pertinent to the timing of our gathering.

The Pre-Wrath view teaches the Church will NOT be on earth during the Day of the Lord (having been raptured just before the 7th Seal is broken) WHILE THE Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering view teaches the Church will enter the early part of the Day of Christ/Day of the Lord BUT will be raptured from the earth **before** the Bowls of God's wrath are poured out upon the earth.

These differences place us in a context of an EITHER/OR choice. One cannot believe both views at the same time (and be correct) due to the different teachings concerning the TIMING of the rapture. It's one or the other ... or, if we also include the principle of the fallacy of the excluded middle, the truth could be found in yet another view.

Our point here: The Pre-Wrath view conflicts with the Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering view when it comes to just when the rapture of the Church takes place. The Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering view teaches differently than the Pre-Wrath view.

So how does one address this reality - the fact that we have two similar but also very different end-time views which we are especially highlighting in this blog - though many other end-time views exist?

(And, to you skeptics out there, we write: Yes, we have considered the other epistemic views tied to the big question, "How do we know?" or "**On what basis** do we go about addressing this question?" We acknowledge there does indeed exist other views than "the Bible says so" – we don't want to commit the fallacy of the excluded middle here either! – BUT, sincerely, we have found these views which reject special revelation from God to be lacking, VERY MUCH SO!)

Moving right along, how does one, who cares about this CRUCIAL topic, go about investigating the issue raised? (Sorry Andy Stanley! In your *Irresistible* book, Jesus Christ, through the **Word of God**, does indeed speak clearly on end-time matters, just as the Word speaks clearly concerning our origins, the flood, salvation and other essential doctrines of the faith. Andy, PLEASE submit to Psalm 119, II Timothy 3:16, 17 and many other passages addressing the truthfulness of the holy Word of God!)

Back on point ... Allow me to restate the question: How does one go about investigating end-time matters?

You guessed it: Back to the BIBLE to see what it actually says!

It is the Word of God that serves as believers' authority for faith and practice, NOT opinions of man – and surely not Andy Stanley's opinions,* opinions which include fallacious appeals found in his chapter, "The Bible Says." This actually even includes *interpretation* opinions! Extra-biblical teaching is not always correct, on all topical fronts - this includes end-time claims.

By way of what has become an important end-time example, read carefully the September/October, 2018 edition of *Zion's Fire* – specifically, the article titled, "Silence in Heaven Before God Goes to War." Note the extra-biblical interpretations as to the identity of the *Saints* of Rev. 7:9. Here is one of the Pre-Wrath teachings with which we take exception:

After appealing to an event taking place after the Rev. 7:9 context (by quoting Revelation 8:3-5) – an event later than the rapture which, as they teach, occurs just before the 7th Seal (see the Rev. 8:3-5 quotation ... By the way, why not quote the full paragraph of Rev. 8:1-6?) – the authors of this article go on to make these claims: (I quote the entire paragraph on page 11 so as to set our concern in context.)

"The prayers of the 'saints' refer to the prayers of the great multitude in Heaven (Revelation 7:9). Following the breaking of the sixth seal, they were raptured and glorified, and are now serving God in His Temple (Revelation 7:14-15)."

Did you catch the added interpretations?

The *explicit* data of Scripture (of Rev. 7) does **not** teach this "great multitude" is a group of raptured saints as the Rosenthals would have us believe. Instead, the **actual** Word of God states, "... These are the ones who **come out of the great tribulation** ..." (Rev. 7:14 ; emphasis ours). That's what the passage states anyway. Please read the entire section of Revelation 7:9-17 in the context of Revelation chapters 6 - 8! Let's not add potentially incorrect interpretations,** ones that are not stated in the text, especially when there are other differing views appealing to the actual data of the texts under consideration.

In light of the full Counsel of God, the teaching position of the *Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering* view proposes this: The ones coming out of the great tribulation are martyred saints – the very ones killed during the period of the war against the saints. This period of time includes the great tribulation period of Mt. 24:15ff.

And when it comes to holistic end-time viewpoints ...

Let's (may we) consider the interpretive options such that we do not rule out – dogmatically, when we don't have grounds to do so – viable understandings. And may we take a further step:

May we seek to discern which of the *multiple competing end-time hypotheses* is MOST biblical in light of the full and explicit Counsel of God's Word. Church: **WE CAN DO THIS!**

* See Andy Stanley's recent book, *Irresistible: Reclaiming the New that Jesus Unleashed for the World*. (2018 ; Zondervan)

This is insightful ...

** The Pre-Wrath folks may respond to this concern by saying something to the effect: "But yes, the 'raptured Saints' are the ones who come out of the tribulation." BUT please recall, according to Mt. 24, the tribulation **comes to an end**, THEN the heavenly signs blaze (vs. 29), THEN the Sign of the Son of Man occurs (vs. 30), THEN the rapture gathering of the Church occurs (vs. 31 ; cf. Mark 13:27).

Our POINT:

According to Mt. 24:29-31, the tribulation is **closed** at the time when the heavenly signs, the Son-of-Man sign and yes, the rapture occurs. These facts conflict with the *Zion's Fire* quote above (from page 11). The Pre-Wrath teaching that the Church is raptured (i.e., taken out of the tribulation) during the great tribulation period is in conflict with the full Counsel of God's precious

Word. May we discern Pre-Wrath (future) responses to this fair concern in the months and years ahead.

And, if they choose to respond to this valid difficulty, please note the "on-what-basis" their answers are given. We believe their answers may be based on their (faulty) understanding that the "great tribulation period" takes place when they say it does – in the early part of the second half of Daniel's 70th Week. But is this possible in light of all that takes place once the tribulation is closed? We need to bring more thorough Bible definitions of "tribulation" when addressing this matter. This will be yet another blog, Lord willing, in 2019. Perhaps we should title this future blog, *The Failing Evidential Walls of the Pre-Wrath Position*. What do you think?

IF we allow SCRIPTURE to be our authority for building our end-time perspective, the Pre-Wrath position is found to be problematic, in multiple respects. Yes, the Pre-Wrath has a huge problem when it comes to this concern we've defined above. Are we, God's elect, gathered together **after** the tribulation as outlined in the explicit data of Mt. 24:29-31? Indeed we are! **In light of this explicit revelation data, the Pre-Wrath teaching that the Saints of Rev. 7:9 are 'raptured Saints'** -- which is not taught in the passage (NB: the phrase "raptured saints" is not found in this Rev. 7 passage nor is the rapture gathering event seen explicitly stated in Rev. 6!) -- **would conflict with the black-and-white data of Rev. 7:14 and Mt. 24!** The Word teaches the "**great multitude**" comes out of **the great tribulation**, NOT the raptured saints. **THINK ON THIS**, for it does indeed expose additional weaknesses of the Pre-Wrath position.

Lord willing, more on this growingly important matter will be coming these next few years.