

with which I would now disagree.

Personally I have been quite disgusted at the amount of heat that has been displayed by some who have attacked the so-called "pre-tribulation rapture." After all, it is only a question of knowing what God is going to do in relation to certain future events and we can be sure that He will do what He chooses, whatever we may think about it.

I wish that some other term could have been used, particularly since the words "pre-tribulation rapture" give some the impression that there is to be no tribulation until after the rapture. Jesus said, "In this world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33) There have been terrible tribulations in the history of the world and there may be more before the Lord comes. It is hard to imagine how a tribulation could be much worse than what Christians suffered in China with this present century and what many are now suffering in Russia. In Ethiopia and Uganda thousands of Christians have been tortured and killed. The real point is that we are not to know when the rapture will come and that nothing that could be properly recognized as "the great tribulation" will occur before the rapture.

To me the strongest consideration in this regard is the fact that in about a dozen cases the New Testament urges us to be ready for the Lord's return and assures us that it will come at a time that no one can predict. This seems to me to rule out any event that could properly be recognized as something that the Scripture predicts must occur before Jesus comes again. This thought of being constantly ready for His coming -- so much emphasized in the New Testament -- would be quite meaningless if we could know that the rapture would not occur until certain recognizable events would take place. When asked if I think the Lord will come next year I always reply that there is one thing of which I am absolutely certain that His coming is a year nearer than it was a year ago.

Involved arguments, many of them based on the Book of Revelation, have been advanced as to particular events that would precede the rapture and as to the length of the time that would follow. Such arguments have never greatly interested me. I feel that the evidence is very strong that there is to be a great outpouring of God's wrath upon the earth between the rapture and the coming of Christ with His saints to establish His kingdom, but