

Tribulation Central

When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed...2 Thessalonians 1:1-8

Thomas Ice (Hired Gun)!

by Dave MacPherson

<http://tribulationcentral.com/pdf/guest/mc-ivc.pdf>

Yes, hypocrisy! Hypocrisy tied to pretrib rapture leaders as well as to the pretrib rapture view. (You can't believe how many "pretribbers" have told me over the years that they either have doubts about pretrib or don't even believe it---but they promote it anyway!)

Pretrib icon C. I. Scofield could be hypocritically double-minded. In a 1921 letter to his daughter Abigail, who had a financial need while then living in San Luis Obispo, California, he advised her to pray to a Catholic saint: "...why don't you seek the special intercession of the San Luis in whose name-town you live?" (This entire letter is in Joseph Canfield's classic work *The Incredible Scofield and His Book* published by Ross House Books.) But a dozen years earlier in his Scofield Bible (p. 1346) he had begun predicting a future reign of "apostate Christendom, headed up under the Papacy"!

Many evangelicals are still unaware that during the 1980's Hal Lindsey proudly announced that two of his daughters, Robin and Jenny, were then enrolled at Gonzaga University, a Jesuit Catholic school. (The Jesuits were originally Catholicism's arm to terroristically infiltrate and destroy the growing Protestant Reformation.) But years earlier Lindsey's *There's A New World Coming* (pp. 58, 103) stated, and continues to state, that the "dominant church" of the "Middle Ages" which "bound the people to image-worship, superstition, and priest craft" is the "prostituted form of Christianity" that will eventually become "the Antichrist of Rome"!

I still have a letter I received dated Nov. 14, 1971 and signed by a William T. Bruner. Here's the eye-catching part: "I was brought up to be a strong Pre-Tribulationist. In fact I never even thought that the other view was worth inquiring into. When Dr. Bob Jones called me to teach in the Bob Jones College one of the first questions he asked me was, whether I held to this view, and of course I said Yes. But while I was professor of Greek New Testament at the Bob Jones University, 1949-1955, one of my colleagues, Robert Besancon, happened to ask me if I had ever read anything on the Post-Trib side. I had to confess that I never had. He recommended two little books by Horner. I read them and was truly astonished to find that the Post-Trib view is the

simpler, more Scriptural, and more reasonable of the two. So I am now a Post-Tribulationist.

Very interestingly, though, there was at that time on the BJU faculty a great scholar, Dr. Charles Brokenshire, who could teach 25 languages and every subject in the School of Religion. But he was a Post-Tribulationist. Dr. Jones considered him worth more than any other faculty member, perhaps worth more than all of us put together. During the school year 1954-55 Dr. Brokenshire died. After he died Dr. Jones went before his faculty meeting and announced that from that time on he would be true to his old-time promise to the Christians of America that he would strongly emphasize the Pre-Tribulation doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ and that he wanted all his teachers in the School of Religion to stand in favor of that doctrine!"

Well, it's apparent that the first Dr. Bob had been playing the role of hypocrite! (Dr. Roland Rasmussen, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Canoga Park, California, can verify the late Dr. Bruner's letter. As a BJU prof then, Rasmussen was at the same faculty meeting.)

Several years ago my wife and I found ourselves chatting on the BJU campus with one of its best-known profs. We were astounded when he admitted that even though that school publicly promotes pretrib, professors can privately hold to differing rapture views as long as they retain at least a premill outlook!

The year 1973 found me handing out posttrib literature on a Kansas City sidewalk to delegates going into the annual conference of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. It was easy for them to react by saying bluntly "We're pretrib!" and just as easy for me to say just as bluntly "Not only is pretrib not in the Bible, but it isn't in even your GARBC statement of faith!" After I widely aired their hypocrisy, they added pretrib wording to their official statement during a following conference so that their doctrine could finally begin practicing what the GARBC "doctors" had long been preaching! A Dec. 31, 1983 letter written on Southeastern College of the Assemblies of God stationery by one of their profs, J. Bashford Bishop, contained these shocks: "Thanks for the book. [I had given him my 1983 book *The Great Rapture Hoax*.] I'll do what I can to circulate your book through our Assemblies of God [who], as you know, are opposed to Post-tribism. Make a point of getting acquainted with Joseph Flower, our General Secy. at headquarters in Springfield. He and I were schoolmates and both of us were Post-trib then and ever since. He would be glad to discuss with you the subject----a real man of God."

We'd been doing research there in Springfield, Missouri that winter and soon enjoyed two hour-long chats with Flower, the No. 2 AG leader. Secretaries outside his open office door could easily hear everything discussed. I asked how he could hold to a non-approved rapture view. He replied that AG ministers are required to uphold pretrib but privately can believe any other rapture view. When I remarked that such a rule

encourages hypocrisy, Flower sheepishly agreed. Incidentally, those chats took place several years before any of the hypocrisy-filled scandals having to do with Bakker and Swaggart, two AG ministers!

What you've just read is a tiny fraction of the gigantic amount of pretrib dishonesty uncovered by my decades-long research. To get your money's worth, get my 300-page book *The Rapture Plot* via armageddonbooks.com¹ or by phoning (800) 967-7345.

It's been hard to keep up with Thomas Ice's huge bulk. For many years, as the No. 1 defender of what Kenneth Gentry in 1992 described as "knee-jerk, 1950s era dispensationalism," Ice has been feverishly producing a heavy volume of pretrib-salvaging rewrites (of articles by himself and others) at machine gun (or better yet, Tommy Gun) speed. Although I've shared some input on some of his output (see my internet piece "Deceiving, And Being Deceived"), it's time to cover the rest of his territory.

In 1989 in *House Divided's* foreword, Gary North wrote: "We are still waiting for Professor John Hannah, a competent and talented church historian [at Dallas Seminary], to go into print and show from original source documents that MacPherson's thesis is nothing but a sham. Strangely, he has decided to remain silent." Perhaps feeling that he could answer my research better than Dr. Hannah could, Rev. Ice (then pastoring a tiny Bible church that shared a small building with a Texas saloon!) quickly pulled a 1989 paper out of his holster entitled "The Origin of the Pretrib Rapture."

In it Ice had quotes from five eminent writers that he said "were not convinced of the Mac-theory" (his term for my findings): Sandeen (1970), Weber (1979), Reiter (1984), Bruce (1975), and Bell (1967). But Ice knew that Sandeen and Bell wrote before my printed research existed, that Reiter's quote merely summarized Ian Rennie's tentative reaction, that Bruce's undocumented statement that pretrib was "in the air in the 1820s and 1830s" was hardly a scientific conclusion, and that none of the five included quotes from Margaret Macdonald, Edward Irving, John Darby, or their contemporaries----and Ice has knowingly and repeatedly aired these misleading quotes since then! (My readers already know that Ice's 1989 reproduction of Macdonald's 1830 revelation account sloppily left out 48 words----the same 48 words that Tim LaHaye left out when he plagiarized Ice's version in 1992! If mechanics or lawyers or doctors were as careless as Ice, folks would quickly get rid of them!)

Ice seems to love quoting aberrational and unorthodox writers as well as unscholarly ones. In his 1989 paper he quoted Ernest Sandeen's 1970 book *The Roots of Fundamentalism* which claimed that Darby "was convinced about the [pretrib] doctrine as early as 1827." His sources were two Darby letters dated 1863 ("Christ coming to receive us to Himself") and 1855 (containing the same thought). (Here Sandeen proved nothing; before 1830 Christians had always used such phrases while expecting a second advent that was "for" the church as well as "with" the church.)

¹ <http://www.armageddonbooks.com/rapture.html>

Sandeen also wrote that Irving and his followers never taught anything "resembling the secret rapture." Not only does my Plot book (pp. 73-80) generously disprove his assertion, but in the Winter, 1974 Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society eminent evangelical J. Barton Payne, when reviewing my first book, stated: "MacPherson has once and for all overthrown Ernest Sandeen's assertions that the Irvingites never 'advocated any doctrine resembling the secret rapture'...MacPherson has definitely confirmed conclusions of George Ladd, Robert Gundry, and the present reviewer that such connections [between "Darby" and "Irving's church"] did exist...."

And why has Ice covered up Sandeen's apostasy? The preface in the 1978 Baker Book House reprint of Sandeen's Roots describes him as "a theological liberal" denying "the historicity of the resurrection."

Concerning Miss Macdonald, Ice well knew during the 1980's that several of my books had been emphasizing her main point: that part of the church [partial rapturism] would be raptured before the revealing of Antichrist. So in his April-June, 1990 Bibliotheca Sacra article analyzing her revelation he carefully covered up her emphasis by quoting up to line 55 in her account, deliberately skipping over lines 58-63 (her main point), and then continuing his quotation of her while starting again at line 72! (See my internet article entitled "Deceiving, And Being Deceived" and observe Ice's perfidious manipulation of Pseudo-Ephraem and other equally vacuous claims.)

One un-scholar that Ice leans on is Frank Marotta who, like R. A. Huebner, is an aging, obscurantistic, pretrib-defending member of the Darbyist Brethren. (Huebner is the person Walvoord leaned on heavily in the 1970's when opposing me even though Huebner never attended seminary, college, or even Bible school!) Like Huebner's, Marotta's writing has numerous copying errors when quoting others! Both Marotta and Ice, echoing fellow un-scholar John Bray, continue to promote an 18th century pastor, Morgan Edwards, as a pretrib.

Both know that they have to twist or cover up Edwards' historicism (the belief that the tribulation has long been occurring during the church age) in order to pass Edwards off as a futurist pretrib. Marotta's 1995 booklet on Edwards was aware that Edwards viewed the Turkish Ottoman Empire (which was then already four centuries old) as Rev. 13's second beast while also seeing a future aspect of that empire. So what did Marotta do? He did what any unscrupulous pretrib promoter would do. He covered up the past aspect of that empire that Edwards noted and discussed only the future aspect that Edwards also saw!

Ice knew that Marotta's brief, one-sided discussion of that empire was potentially dangerous because researchers could easily be drawn to it and then discover Marotta's brazen twisting of facts. So when Ice reproduced Marotta's comments in his Jan.-Feb., 1996 Pre-Trib Perspectives under the title "Dave MacPherson's The Rapture Plot: Weighed and Found Wanting," Ice played it safe and deleted Marotta's entire empire section!

Marotta and Ice have drawn support for their anti-Macdonald crusade from even Columba G. Flegg, an ecumenical Greek Orthodox priest in England whose work

'Gathered Under Apostles' (Oxford Univ. Press, 1992) dishonestly portrays pretrib development among those in the early Irvingite orbit. Although he admits (p. 423) that Irvingism taught a "translation before the great tribulation," his anti-Macdonald bias shows as early as pp. 4-5 where he mentions my 1975 book *The Incredible Cover-up* and adds: "The conclusions reached in this work and the rationale behind them are hardly convincing."

On p. 45 Flegg discusses John Cardale's account in the Dec., 1830 issue of the Irvingite journal *The Morning Watch* of his visit to a Port Glasgow prayer meeting. A woman present that Cardale identified as Macdonald prophesied that "the coming of the Lord" would deliver the church from future earthly "judgments"---a coming interpreted as pretrib by Irvingite observers of Macdonald who returned to London and soon echoed her distinctive teaching in the same journal. Two pages later Cardale again identified Macdonald as the same prophetess. But Flegg's readers are kept in the dark concerning her because although he does include her prophecy, he describes her as merely "one of the women present"! (Similarly, Darby's 1853 book, when plagiarizing the details Cardale had published of the same meeting, at least acknowledged Macdonald as the prophetess even though he carefully omitted the escapist coming that she prophesied. Even though Darby and Flegg have covered up different aspects of that meeting, the effect has been the same!)

In *Pre-Trib Perspectives* (Feb., 2002) Ice told of the "discovery" of another pretrib teacher in the early 1300's in Italy that has great (I'm sarcastic here) documentation. The culprit was a Brother Dolcino, but unfortunately his writings don't exist! Long after his death an anonymous writer wrote a secondhand history of Dolcino's writings which declare no time length for Antichrist's reign which follows Dolcino and his followers being "transferred to Paradise," after which reign Dolcino will become the pope! Ice also knows that this "discovery" was edited several times between the 1300's and the 1900's! If this "doctrine" came from anything other than too much wine drinking, the anonymous history doesn't say. Obviously this "discovery" died with Dolcino.

This is just a taste of the massive fantasy and dishonesty in pretrib circles. The whole sordid story is documented in my 300-page book *The Rapture Plot* (see armageddonbooks.com² or call 800-967-7345).

As an American, Ice believes in majority rule. But when it comes to rapture views, maybe he and other pretrib desperados can explain why they don't follow the only rapture view held by the majority (easily 99 percent by even Ice's standards) of Christians before 1830!

² <http://www.armageddonbooks.com/rapture.html>