

A FILM BY BRENT MILLER JR

BEFORE THE WRATH



Discussion Guide

OVERVIEW

Trailer - <https://youtu.be/qdeWmg10OFc>

Bible scholars continue to debate the timing of the Rapture, but why is such a mysterious event prophesied to happen in the first place? Is there a deeper understanding surrounding this occurrence that we've lost over the millennia that those living in the first-century clearly understood?

Regardless of your end-times views, BEFORE THE WRATH will captivate believers and non-believers alike; revealing new depths of theological understanding regarding what Jesus revealed to the ancient Galileans about the end of the world in ways you could never have imagined. Narrated by Kevin Sorbo (God's Not Dead).

Watch the #1 Documentary Film on Amazon now. Go to [BeforeTheWrath.com](https://www.BeforeTheWrath.com) to learn more.

HOW TO USE THIS READING PLAN

The end of the world has fascinated people for centuries. Some have gone so far as to develop a formula that they believe provides the very day in which Armageddon will occur. Of course, these dates have all come and passed without the predicted ending of mankind as we know it. While the Bible is very clear that no one knows the day or time of Christ's return, except God himself, there is ample prophecy that helps us understand the end times. In fact, nearly one-third of all Scripture is dedicated to prophecy, yet at any given time on a Sunday morning only 2% of pastors are preaching on prophecy. This discrepancy in teaching on prophecy has created a culture of biblically illiterate Christians, particularly on the subject of biblical prophecy.

This BEYOND THE WRATH Discussion Guide has been created to provide an onramp into greater discussions about biblical prophecy and the rapture. This can be used by Pastors, Small Groups, Men's or Women's Groups, Collegiate, and Student Ministry leaders who want to deepen their groups understanding of prophecy and the return of Christ. When used together, this film and the Discussion Guide can provide an important series theological conversations.

BEFORE THE WRATH can be viewed digitally or on DVD. Visit BeforeTheWrath.com and find the best way for your groups to watch the movie. Then invite your ministry, small group, and friends to view BEFORE THE WRATH together and begin the Discussion Guide afterwards.

God has much to say about the last days. Make sure you take the time to listen to the full counsel of Scripture. To ignore prophecy is to close your eyes and ears to what God values and that which is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. We pray this Guide will shine a light on an important subject that has been allowed to grow dim over the years. May these conversations reignite hope for believers and prepare the world for what's coming.

DAY 1: Consider the Things that are Eternal

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:19, Psalm 103:13-14, Colossians 3:1-2, 1 Peter 1:3-5

Movie Clip 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGkGYrjNHG4&feature=youtu.be>

Devotional:

Whether it's a pandemic, stock market crash, war, job loss, or any other situation or event that disrupts our lives, perspective is paramount to not being crushed by the weight of the moment. Scripture reminds us over and over that we are not independent creatures but are totally and completely reliant on the God who took a handful of dust and breathed life into man and who will ultimately call us home when our mortal bodies fail in this world.

Because of our frailty and utter dependence on our Heavenly Father, it is essential for us to keep our eyes focused on the things of heaven. When we begin to look around us, we lose perspective and lose our connection to the Creator. In much the same way that Peter began to sink into the sea when he took his eyes off Christ, when we begin to place more attention on the temporal things around, rather than the eternal things of God, we will inevitably begin sinking into a pit of hopelessness and despair. The things around us, the stuff of this earth, will not last or satisfy, no matter how much we try to gather.

As we consider all this, along with our own frailty and propensity to become bogged down with the distractions of this life, let us lift our eyes and direct our focus to the hope that Christ has secured for us in his death, burial, and resurrection. One day, we will possess a body, not of dust, but resurrected like our Savior's.

Talk It Over:

1. What does being taken from dust reveal about our nature?
2. Why do you think it's important to "set your hearts on things above"? When have you focused your attention on things below? What was the outcome?
3. How does looking towards Christ's return provide us with a "living hope" (see 1 Peter 1:3-5)? What is our inheritance that will never perish, spoil, or fade (v. 4)?

DAY 2: Asking the Wrong Questions

SCRIPTURE: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2, Luke 12:40, Acts 1:7-8

Movie Clip 2: <https://youtu.be/bqSsK9Ye8Yc>

Devotional:

If you want to grab the world's attention, just make a prediction about the apocalypse. Those who have attempted to put a date to the Day of Judgement continue to make headlines and seize the attention of many. One of the more highly publicized predictions came from radio host Harold Camping, who gained national notoriety by warning that the Rapture and judgement day would occur on May 21, 2011. Of course, the Rapture didn't happen on that day. Still, doomsday prognosticators from Nostradomas to interpreters of the Mayan calendar have all attempted to name the day in which Jesus will return to the earth. But in the midst of all the wrangling over the date of his return, are we missing the more important question of why he is returning?

The return of Christ and the resurrection of believers are part of God's redemptive plan to restore what was lost when Adam and Eve committed the first sin in the garden. These events make it possible for mankind to be in a sinless relationship with Him. So, while we will never know the specific date of the rapture, we do know it plays a significant role in the redemptive process God has established.

Talk It Over:

1. Why do you think people get so caught up in knowing "when" Jesus will return rather than "why" he will return? What are the implications in each of these questions?
2. How does not knowing the time or day of Christ's return create an attitude of expectancy for living out your faith every day? What does it mean to "be ready" (Luke 12:40)?
3. What does Jesus' return mean for believers? For unbelievers?

DAY 3: What's the Point of Prophecy?

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 46:9-10, Micah 5:2, Acts 2:6-21

Movie Clip 3: <https://youtu.be/XG0cWcUkzX0>

Devotional:

Can we prove God exists? There are a number of sources that provide overwhelming proof of the existence of God. Archaeological discoveries, anthropological findings, scientific evidence, and even philosophical arguments all point to proof that the God of the universe is real and living. But there is another major indicator we have that provides undeniable evidence to validate the presence of God – fulfilled prophecy.

The Bible reveals numerous prophecies from God that were written hundreds of years before they came to pass. These events and claims have already occurred and can be documented in history, both from a biblical and secular standpoint. There are still other prophecies recorded in Scripture that have yet to come to pass but which contain incredible details about events that will happen in the future.

Approximately one third of the Bible contains prophecy, so it's clear God has an extremely high view of prophecy. Yet despite this, there are fewer and fewer churches today preaching on biblical prophecy. With a decline in teaching from the pulpit, there are a continuously growing number of believers who are illiterate around the subject of prophecy. With different kinds of media available to us like never before, projects like BEFORE THE WRATH can bring these subjects to light and have a profound impact on showing how biblical prophecy can benefit us today.

Talk It Over:

1. What role does prophecy play in providing proof that God exists? How familiar are you with the prophecies found in Scripture?
2. Why do you think pastors are becoming more hesitant to preach on biblical prophecy? What are the implications of this?
3. How does knowing evidence that proves God exists encourage you in your faith? How does it encourage you to share your faith with others?

DAY 4: Belief or Faith?

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 25:1-13, James 2:18-20, 2 Corinthians 5:17

Movie Clip 4: <https://youtu.be/mqSdGfdeAa0>

Devotional:

There are a vast number of people who say with complete confidence that they 'believe' in God. Many of these same people are equally convinced that a simple head knowledge is all that is needed to guarantee the forgiveness of their sins and entry into Heaven. James clearly declares this is not to be the case. Yet, the bigger question that lingers is this: is a simple 'head knowledge' the same as the 'faith' spoken of in Scripture or is there more to faith than just mental awareness?

To have 'belief' can be nothing more than a passive mental acceptance, which has no influence in the way you live your life. This was the case for the five foolish bridesmaids. To simply say 'I believe in God' means very little if it doesn't carry the weight of coming from the depths of your heart. Many people say they 'believe' in God, but have never experienced the powerful change that comes from a transformed life of true repentance. Scripture even shows us that demons believe and tremble.

Belief in and of itself will never transform a person. On the other hand, when someone puts their faith in Christ with a sincere heart, their life cannot help but reveal that they are a new creation. True faith in God reveals itself in every aspect of your life: your actions, your thoughts, and your priorities – things that would never be affected by simply believing in something. Once you experience a saving relationship with the Creator of the universe, it will reveal itself through a radical readjustment of your entire worldview.

Talk It Over:

1. How does faith lead to a transformed life, when belief doesn't? Would you say you live more by faith or by belief? Explain.
2. Consider the parable of the Ten Bridesmaids in Matthew 25, what two key points did Jesus want his listeners to know about his future return?
3. How does it make you feel to know the door to the kingdom will be closed to some? What difference does this reality make in your life?

DAY 5: The Key to Understanding the Rapture

SCRIPTURE: John 14:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, Revelation 1:3

Movie Clip 5: <https://youtu.be/SMwBfbWuXqw>

Devotional:

Weddings are among the most exciting events of our lives! Weddings point to love, hope, faith, new beginnings, and of all the beautiful things in this life, not just for the couple being married but for all of us. Yet even in the midst of all the excitement, the couple must gather and compose themselves, so they are able to adequately handle the planning and preparation not just for the ceremony itself, but also for the countless details that lead up to the ceremony.

But unlike today's modern wedding, the 1st century Galilean wedding ceremony had very different customs, traditions, and rituals. In order for us to better understand the words and parables of Jesus, we must first understand the culture He was in. All of the disciples of Jesus were from Galilee. And, when it came to weddings, the Galileans' traditions were distinct from the rest of Israel. Learning more about these wedding customs from Jesus' time can dramatically help us understand what the Bible has to say about the return of Christ and the rapture of the church.

Talk It Over:

1. What are some of the similarities between a Galilean wedding ceremony and the rapture? How does this shape your view of the end times?
2. How does understanding the nuances of a Galilean wedding provide insight and clarity on the return of Christ? What do you know now that you didn't realize before this Discussion Guide?
3. What will you do to better prepare for Christ's return?