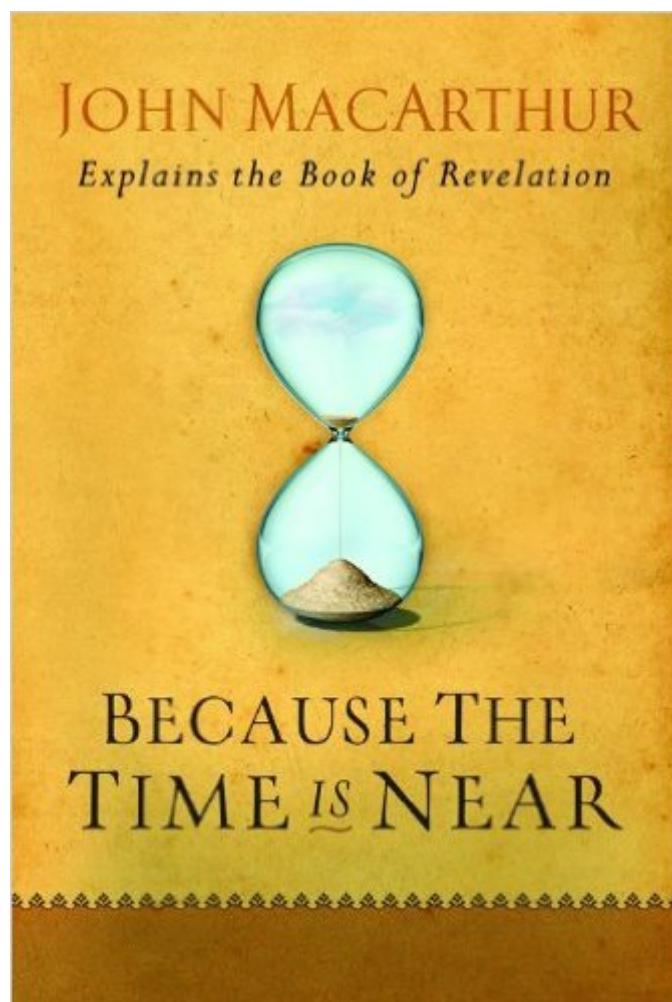


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Because The Time Is Near: John MacArthur Explains The Book Of Revelation



Synopsis

"The end of the world is coming." From roadside signs to science fiction films, this slogan underscores our society's nervous fascination with the future. Whether it's a giant asteroid, a worldwide plague, or some other global catastrophe, the end of the world is a terrifying prospect "at least for those who have no idea what it will be like. For Christians, however, the end of the world should be anything but dreadful. In fact, it should be something we look forward to. Why? Because God has told us how the world will end. And He has assured us that the end of this age will mark the beginning of a new, glorious one in which we will serve and worship Him in sinless perfection. Our eternal hope, as believers, is intimately tied to the end of this world. All of this is laid out in the book of Revelation. Not only is Revelation the inspired Word of God, it is also the only New Testament book that includes a promised spiritual blessing for those who study and apply its message. As such, it is an essential part of every Christian's devotional life. Those who ignore Revelation deprive themselves of a rich treasure of divine truth, and the promised blessings that come from understanding that truth. Join John MacArthur as he explains the book of Revelation in a way that is both doctrinally precise and intensely practical.

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Customer Reviews

This book is an abridged version of Dr. MacArthur's two-volume Revelation commentary. In this book, he takes a verse-by-verse exegetical walkthrough of the book of Revelation using the consistent contextual-literal hermeneutic one would expect from Dr. MacArthur. (Perhaps a more

appropriate label for "contextual-literal" would be the "historical-grammatical context" - that is, "How would the original audience have understood the passage at face value?") This is a great read for the layperson interested in understanding the events foretold by the Holy Spirit through the apostle John in the book of Revelation, as well as for those interested in how a consistent hermeneutic interprets the book of Revelation. It is also highly recommended for those curious how pre-millennialists interpret Revelation and understand the events of the end times to unfold, as MacArthur's writing is clear, concise, and yet respectful toward brethren of other millennial mindsets while clearly laying out verse by verse what the Scripture says. As Christian theologians of every millennial leaning tend to agree (including those who ascribe to post-millennial or a-millennial points of view), using a consistent hermeneutic through all of Scripture will lead one to a pre-millennial point of view. Given MacArthur's conviction for a consistent approach to the interpretation of Scripture, you will find his perspective is very much pre-millennial (as opposed to post-millennial, a-millennial, preterist, etc). Yet when it comes to the most difficult passages to interpret, he avoids making the rash presuppositions and outlandish interpretations that one would find characteristic of the 'Left Behind' crowd. (Perhaps it is irony then that Tim LaHaye provides one of the supporting quotes on the back cover.) I find this one of the most attractive things about the book: I could give this book to anyone with an interest in Revelation with the confidence that the content will educate them on the basics, encourage them to study further, and effect a greater love for the Word of God. As with his other books, it is written in an easy-to-read style (and typeface) that packs a lot of content yet doesn't tire the mind (or the eyes). His average book seems to come in around 200-250 pages; this one is slightly longer at 338 pages, but thankfully so as the subject matter warrants every page. At no time did it seem overly verbose for the sake of length - a couple times I would have appreciated even more depth (though for that one can purchase the full-length, two-volume commentary).

Revelation is a tough book to understand, but this book had some great insight and it really helped to show the broad context of revelation within the rest of the Bible. MacArthur also has a good way of dealing with passages that are interpreted different ways (or controversial), he explains that one may interpret the passage as such and such but there is more evidence for a certain interpretation and he explains the evidence. Finally, his exegetical insight is great; such as the order of the letters to the churches is in the order a messenger would travel to those cities on the postal route of the day. This book is highly recommended for anyone studying the Bible.

For those who haven't taken the time to study the book of Revelation because it's strange, extremely confusing and has a lot of unusual and unnerving things going on in it, here is the book to get you started. And as an extra bonus, Revelation comes with a promised blessing from God for those who read the words of this prophesy, hear and take to heart what is written. Now there is a powerful promise. MacArthur's book titled "Because The Time Is Near" is very clear and easy to read. After an Introduction, he has divided it into three parts: Part 1 - "The Things Which You Have Seen"; Part 2 - "The Things Which Are"; Part 3 - "The Things Which Will Take Place After This." MacArthur also includes End Notes, followed by a list of additional resources that can be used for studying Revelation, and the book closes with an extensive Subject Index. Each chapter has a short introduction, followed by the scripture text or portion of a text being studied, and an explanation of what is happening in the text, as well as some definitions of terms, and historical background information. Though others may, I don't really consider MacArthur's book a commentary on Revelation, but more a verse-by-verse introductory study. There are a number of good, in-depth commentaries on Revelation (Robert Thomas, Leon Morris, and John Walvoord to name just a few) for those who want to follow up MacArthur's book with a deeper study of this amazing prophesy. There is no doubt that John MacArthur and this book have their critics. Some pan it because it isn't scholarly enough. Again, that's one reason I think this book is well-suited for the first-time and intermediate students of Revelation. Others simply have a difference of theological position with MacArthur. For example, the Mid-Tribulation, Post-Tribulation, and Covenant Theology (also referred to as the Partial-Preterism or Full-Preterism) groups. Frankly, I think all the squabbling over the Tribulation is nonsense. Ultimately, God has His eschatological plan finely tuned and ready for revealing exactly as He has determined it to be, whether or not it corresponds with any of our personal eschatological positions. In short, Jesus will come for His Church exactly when it's time to come; He will return in clouds and great glory and judge the nations exactly as it is written in Revelation. Our responsibility is to keep ourselves pure and undefiled, keep preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ according to scripture, and be ready to go! We have plenty to do, and arguing over the Last Days events only, in my opinion, makes accomplishing those worthwhile endeavors all that much more difficult. Most consider MacArthur an excellent pastor-teacher, who is very solid in his hermeneutics and theology. Some just seem to enjoy disagreeing with him, and often do so in a very disagreeable fashion (pun intended). I recommend MacArthur's book, "Because The Time Is Near," not because I'm one of his fans or feel I must defend him, but because I have read the book and found it a worthwhile study, regardless of one's own eschatological position. It's interesting, informative, and in my view, very sound theologically; but it's not flawless.

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