**Thursday, July 05, 2007**

**The Rapture Theory, by John Nelson Darby**

A short history of the Rapture in simple terms.

In case you were scared that you might be one of those paranoid Christians who don’t “know that you know that you know that you know.”

Part 1: The Reformation.

It all started way back,(cue swivelly flashback screen) when a few men by the name of Martin Luther, John Calvin, Zwingly got ticked off at the Catholic Church for its corruption and decided that the Catholic Church was the anti-Christ predicted in Daniel and Revelation.

The Catholic Church got together in a big meeting called the Council of Trent in the mid 1500’s to explore and counter the claims being made against the Church that pretty much equated the Catholic Church with the Devil. From this “counter-reformation” at the Council of Trent came the teachings of a Jesuit priest named Fransisco Ribera. He came up with a method of interpretation called “futurism.” Cool name huh?

According to his interpretation, the prophesies in Daniel and Revelation did not apply to the whole of Church history but applied only to the final 7 years. Therefore, the properties of the anti-Christ didn’t apply to the Catholic Church, but rather to a single powerful, evil person who would appear and rule in those final years. The Catholic Church did not fully embrace this interpretation but didn’t say it wasn’t so either because it was a quick way to get them off the hook.

The Reformers thought this was pretty cool as it was scarier to preach from the pulpit so they dropped the Anti-Christ charges on the Catholic Church and picked up where Ribera left off developing “futurism” filling the pews with fresh, antichrist-fearing folks.

Enter John Nelson Darby, a 19th century Irish lawyer turned Anglican preacher. He came up with, IN THE 19th CENTURY(!!!!) an interpretation called “dispensationalism” where he incorporated Ribera’s futuristism views.

Thus Darby became “the father of the rapture doctrine.” (You could say old Tim LaHeyell owes Darby’s fam some Royalties.) Darby authored the theory that Jesus would return secretly (second coming) to rapture his true followers, leaving everyone else behind at the mercy of the antichrist for the next 7 years and on his “third” coming on the clouds, he would destroy the antichrist and save those that had seen the light during the seven-year tribulation and establish his kingdom here on earth.

Enter Cyrus Scofield. He later published a Bible with explanatory notes in which he incorporated Darby’s views on the rapture. It is by far still the most popular Bible sold today.

Where does that leave the soul who is fearful of being left behind?

I feel that you should know three things and feel better.

1. The way that the rapture is taught today is a theory invented by a man. It does not mean that it will happen that way. It might not.
2. No man knows the day or the hour. Period.
3. John 3:16, believe it.

Sleep better. The End.