

Position Paper  
United Pentecostal Church International  
Weldon Spring, Missouri  
[www.upci.org](http://www.upci.org)

## **THE COMING OF THE LORD**

*Adopted by the General Board in 2005*

In this increasingly post-denominational world, there is decreasing emphasis on doctrinal teaching. In such a climate, mention of the coming of the Lord is often absent from songs, teaching, and preaching. Even in the Oneness Pentecostal church, there has sometimes been a de-emphasis on this important doctrine, leading to apathy and in some cases acceptance of erroneous teaching. One false teaching, generally termed preterism, alleges that the coming of the Lord was fulfilled in the first century. Preterists teach that most if not all of the scriptural prophecies of the coming of the Lord addressed judgment upon the Jews, which culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

While the UPCI allows diversity in views regarding the timing of the coming of the Lord, particularly with reference to the Tribulation, the expectation of the soon return of the Lord is integral to our identity as a movement. In fact, the modern Pentecostal movement was reborn at the beginning of the twentieth century, out of the anticipation that the Lord wanted to prepare His bride for His soon return. We believe that when the New Testament speaks of the “soon” return of the Lord, it gives the promise to assure the church of its future hope. Paul expressed this anticipation, for although he expected martyrdom, he promised that a crown was not merely waiting for him alone but for all those who love His appearing. (See II Timothy 4:8.)

We reject preterist notions that the prophecies of Revelation 4–19 were fulfilled prior to A.D. 70, that Satan is bound, and that we are now living during the thousand years described in Revelation 20. As Oneness Pentecostals, we believe New Testament prophecies of the return of Christ are literal, still to be fulfilled. Further, while Israel has been blinded in part, there will come a time when they will be grafted in again (Romans 11:17–26). We look forward to a time when the church will reign with Christ in the Millennium, a time when Christ will reign supreme and will restore peace on the earth.

The early church universally believed the prophecies of Revelation and the promise of the return of Christ to be future and not past. It was the medieval church that formally did away with a futurist reading of the Book of Revelation and taught that the church was living in the Millennium. As Oneness Pentecostals, we reject any new “revelation” which suggests that the consistent teaching of the ancient and modern Oneness Pentecostal church is in error and that the medieval teaching is in fact correct. We are looking for the catching away of the saints, the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth, the establishing of Christ’s millennial kingdom, and ultimately the institution of the new heaven, the new earth, and the New Jerusalem.