

How to talk about the rapture that didn't happen?

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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So, the rapture [didn't happen](#) over the weekend. [CCblogger](#) David Henson [argues](#) that "mockery and ridicule is the best way to respond to such theology because it is ridiculous." He then offers a roundup of funny church-sign messages real and imagined.

But Tiffany Stanley [is weary](#) of jokes at end-timers' (May 21-focused or [otherwise](#)) expense, calling the whole affair "a small story." I appreciate her uneasiness with the open mockery flying around the web. Still, I think Daniel Burke's [response](#) is the right one:

The Camping Crowd spent [hundreds of thousands on billboards](#) and paraded around [town squares nationwide](#), [telling one and all](#) that the Rapture was coming on May 21 (in part because of gains in gay rights) and that everyone outside their angelic band was going to hell. All on the word of an 89-year-old civil engineer with a Bible and an abacus.

In fact, a good case could be made that the May 21 stories should have been tougher. **A California woman** [tried to slit her daughters' throats](#) on Friday because she feared the Tribulation was coming. **A man killed himself in 1994** after [another of Camping's failed prophecies](#). **Bank accounts** [have been drained](#), **reputations ruined** and [families torn asunder](#). Point is, Camping's ideas have human costs, and thus deserve fair but incisive coverage.

What do you think?