"The Word of God does not teach that the Blessed Hope of the Church is a hope of deliverance from persecution. The coming of Christ is described as the Blessed Hope in Titus 2:13 'Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ'. . . The Blessed Hope is the glorious epiphany (appearing) of Our Lord Himself, which occurs at the end of the Great Tribulation."

"To insist that the Blessed Hope must be escape from the Great Tribulation is to place the emphasis where the Scripture does not place it; it is in fact to impose an interpretation upon the Scripture in place of what the Word of God actually says. The Word of God everywhere assures us that in this age we are to expect tribulation and persecution. The last great persecution of Antichrist will indeed be worse and more fearful than anything the world has ever seen; but when we contemplate the history of martyrdom, why should we ask deliverance from what millions have already suffered? When we read in the books of the Maccabees of the tortures inflicted upon the Jews who were faithful to the teaching of the Law by the manifestation of antichrist in the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes; when we recall the thousands of Christians who fell in torture and death and did it gladly in the name of Christ at the hands of the manifestation of the spirit of antichrist in the Roman emperors; when we are reminded of the Inquisition with its rack and wheel and flame; when we remember from our own generation the liquidation of several millions of Jews by a modern antichrist, and even more recently the martyrdom of tens of thousands of Korean Christians, what kind of faith does the Church of today exemplify and what sort of a gospel is it which we proclaim if we insist that God must deliver us from the hands of the last manifestation of antichrist at the end of the age?"

"There is one very sobering question which weighs heavily upon the writer's heart, and he would ask his readers to share it. Many of God's people are being assured today that the Rapture will take place before the Tribulation and that the Church will not experience those terrible days."

"Suppose that suddenly the people of God find themselves engulfed in a horrible persecution at the hands of the Antichrist when they had been assured repeatedly on the authority of the Word of God that this experience would never befall them. What will be the result? We leave it to the reader's imagination."


George Ladd (1911-1982) was a Baptist minister and professor of New Testament exegesis and theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. He was one of the more notable modern proponents of Historic Premillennialism. He argued for this position in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, IVP 1977.