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U.S.

Preacher Who Got Date of Apocalypse Wrong Tries Again, Says He Was Off by Five Months

Published May 23, 2011 | Associated Press

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March 23, 2011: Harold [Camping](#) speaks during a taping of his show "Open Forum" in Oakland, Calif. Camping says his prophecy that the world would end was off by five months because Judgment Day actually will come on Oct. 21.

OAKLAND, Calif. -- California preacher Harold Camping said Monday his prophecy that the world would end was off by five months because Judgment Day actually will come on Oct. 21.

Camping, who predicted that 200 million Christians would be taken to heaven Saturday before the Earth was destroyed, said he felt so terrible when his doomsday prediction did not come true that he left home and took refuge in a motel with his wife. His independent ministry, Family Radio International, spent millions -- some of it from donations made by followers -- on more

than 5,000 billboards and 20 RVs plastered with the Judgment Day message.

But Camping said that he's now realized the apocalypse will come five months after May 21, the original date he predicted. He had earlier said Oct. 21 was when the globe would be consumed by a fireball.

Saturday was "an invisible judgment day" in which a [spiritual](#) judgment took place, he said. But the timing and the structure is the same as it has always been, he said.

"We've always said May 21 was the day, but we didn't understand altogether the spiritual meaning," he said. "May 21 is the day that Christ came and put the world under judgment."

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It's not the first time the independent Christian radio host has been forced to explain when his prediction didn't come to pass. He also predicted the Apocalypse would come in 1994, but said it didn't happen then because of a mathematical error.

Rather than give his normal daily broadcast on Monday, Camping made a special statement before the press at the Oakland headquarters of the media empire that has broadcast his message. His show, "Open [Forum](#)," has for months headlined his doomsday message via the group's radio stations, TV channels, satellite broadcasts and website.

When the Rapture didn't arrive Saturday, crestfallen followers began turning their attention to more earthly concerns.

Jeff Hopkins had figured the gas money he spent driving back and forth from Long Island to New York City would be worth it, as long as people could see the ominous sign atop his car warning that the End of the World was nigh.

"I've been mocked and scoffed and cursed at and I've been through a lot with this lighted sign on top of my car," said Hopkins, 52, a former television producer who [lives in](#) Great River, NY. "I was doing what I've been instructed to do through the Bible, but now I've been stymied. It's like getting slapped in the face."

Camping said Family Radio would never tell anyone what they should do with their possessions.

"That is between them and God," he said.

But he said he wouldn't give away all his possessions ahead of Oct 21.

"I still have to live in a house, I still have to drive a car," he said. "What would be the value of that? If it is Judgment Day why would I give it away?"

Apocalyptic thinking has always been part of American religious life and [popular culture](#). Teachings about the end of the world vary dramatically -- even within faith traditions -- about how they will occur.

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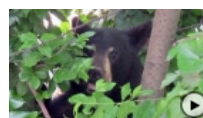
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Still, the overwhelming majority of Christians reject the idea that the exact date or time of Jesus' return can be predicted.

Tim LaHaye, co-author of the best-selling "Left Behind" novels about the end times, recently called Camping's prediction "not only bizarre but 100 percent wrong!" He cited the Bible verse Matthew 24:36, "but about that day or hour no one knows" except God.

"While it may be in the near future, many signs of our times certainly indicate so, but anyone who thinks they 'know' the day and the hour is flat out wrong," LaHaye wrote on his website, leftbehind.com.

In 2009, the nonprofit Family Radio reported in IRS filings that it received \$18.3 million in donations, and had assets of more than \$104 million, including \$34 million in stocks or other publicly traded securities.

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The 'Rapture' DID come - and now the world will end on OCTOBER 21 instead: Preacher breaks his silence on 'interesting' weekend with bizarre new theory

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

Last updated at 2:40 AM on 24th May 2011

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- **Harold Camping, 89, takes to radio to claim that God did not want us to suffer for five months - instead he will make everything happen at once**

The preacher who predicted the end of the world has taken to the airwaves to reveal why we are all still here.

Harold Camping, 89, said he was 'astounded' when May 21 came and went without the Rapture.

But he is already examining new theories... including the possibility that God, being merciful, did not want mankind to suffer for five months, and so will end the world all at once on October 21 instead.

He also claimed that God did visit Earth on May 21 - but that he did so 'spiritually'.



Light relief: A man stands outside an atheist rapture party on Saturday in Tacoma, Washington



Gone to ground: The wife of preacher Harold Camping has told a member of the church board that her husband is at home and not making any plans to explain his error of judgement

Speaking on Family Radio tonight, he said: 'Last weekend became a very interesting weekend because May 21 came and has gone and all the dire predictions that have been talked about did not come to pass.

'I can tell you when May 21 came and went it was a very difficult time for me – a very difficult time. I was truly wondering what is going on. In my mind I went back through all of the promises God had made. What in the world was happening? I really was praying and praying: "Lord, what happened" because all through this I'd been astounded how God opened door after door.

'It was marvellous how everything was going until May 21 came. I stayed away from home for one night because the pressure from that phone ringing and people knocking on my door for an interview was more than I could stand. So my wife and I went to a motel and spent the night there.'

He continued: 'We were convinced that on May 21 God would return here in a very physical way by bringing a great earthquake and ushering in the final five months of the day of judgement and the fact is when we look at it spiritually, we find he did come.

'We've already been talking about the end of the world being October 21 2011 but we have not emphasised that because the beginning of it was the fact that we'd see all these things happening (over the five months).'

He explained by saying he'd received a letter from a 'listener' who offered a very interesting theory he wanted to read.

He quoted: 'The great earthquake and rapture and the universe melting in fervent heat will be happening on the last day – October 21 2011.'

'It's all going to happen on the last day.

'The great earthquake didn't happen on May 21 because no-one will be able to survive it for more than a few days or let alone five months to suffer God's wrath because everything will be levelled and destroyed after that earthquake and there will be no food or water to keep everyone alive.



Disillusioned: Robert Fitzpatrick, who spent his \$140,000 life savings on ads to spread the word of the Rapture, believed that it would happen at 6pm on May 21, but unfortunately for him it didn't

Camping continued: 'The Bible tells us that Christ has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. God is a very compassionate God and while the law of God demands that there has to be punishment it does not mean God is going to punish, and punish, and punish, and punish.'

He went on to explain that the first part of the end of the world began on May 21 1988 – and at that that time 'God brought his judgement on all the church congregations'.

'In May 21 1988 Christ left the churches and installed Satan there – so God actually enlisted Satan who was the enemy in the churches,' he said.

'Everything in God's plan fits a very structured way - it's all very structured. On September 7 1994 when I said there was a high likelihood it was judgement day, it was true - there was judgement. It was salvation in a wonderful day. Since May 21 1988 virtually no-one could be saved in the entire world.

'On September 7 God brought even more judgement on the churches because in the world where God's judgement had begun, God lifted that judgement and allowed people to be saved outside of the churches – leaving the churches under the judgement.

'On May 21 2011 at that time again judgement and salvation is in view. The fact is on May 21 1988 judgement came upon the churches. On September 7 1994 the judgement continued on the churches, but in the world God lifted that and salvation began again outside the churches.

'On May 21 2011 we didn't feel or see any difference in the world but we know from the Bible that God brought judgement day to bear on the whole world – and it will continue right up until October 21 2011 when the whole world will be destroyed.

'We're not going to be passing any more tracts or put up any more billboards or advertising in any way about judgement day – that's all done. The world has been warned – we did our little share and boy, did the media pick it up. Now the world has been told that it's under judgement.

'The finish five months from now – we're not changing the date, we're just learning we have to look at this more spiritually. The Bible clearly teaches on October 21 that the world will be destroyed, but it will be very quick. When you study the Bible, you're always learning. We had all of our dates correct.

'But God had not opened our eyes yet to the fact that May 21 was a spiritual coming – not a physical coming. Our task is done. We didn't understand the spiritual meaning of May 21.'

Some listeners of Family Radio have quit their jobs and sold their possessions - but Camping said the radio station never told people to do that.

The hour of the apocalypse came quietly and went the same way - leaving those who believed that Saturday would mark the world's end baffled.



ProfBrianCox Brian Cox

I think we should all pretend the **#rapture** is happening so that when Harold Camping gets left behind later today he'll be livid

8 hours ago

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stephenfry Stephen Fry

Marvellous news! **#rapture** doesn't mean end of world: apparently all the planet's imbeciles disappear in one go **#dreamcometrue**

4 hours ago

Top Tweet



kjhealy Kieran Healy

I guess on Sunday when the **#Rapture** people feel really upset, we can't console them by saying "Cheer up, it's not the end of the world".

Celebrities astro-physicist Professor Brian Cox and TV presenter Stephen Fry joined in the comments over the Rapture and Harold Camping

Believers had spent months warning the world of the pending cataclysm. Some had given away earthly belongings. Others took long journeys to be with loved ones. And there were those who drained their savings accounts.

But as 6pm came and went around the world and nothing happened, they were forced to confront reality.

'I don't understand why nothing has happened,' baffled believer Robert Fitzpatrick said as he gazed at his watch in New York's Times Square just after 6pm

'I did what I had to do. I did what the Bible said.'

The 60-year-old retired transport worker bought \$140,000 worth of advertising to help spread Camping's message of doom.

But last night he faced jeers from the Times Square crowd.

'How can you still stand there? How can you still do that?' one crowd member asked.

'I obviously haven't understood it properly, because we're still here,' Mr Fitzpatrick admitted.

He was not the only one.

All were responding to the May 21 doomsday message by Harold Camping, an 89-year-old retired civil engineer who has built a multi-million-dollar Christian media empire that publicises his apocalyptic prediction.

Camping, who lives a few miles from his radio station, was not home late morning Saturday.

Late in the evening the Associated Press tried once more to reach him, but no one answered his front door. He has not yet been heard from today

Camping, a civil engineer who once ran his own construction business, had planned to spend the day with his wife in Alameda, in northern California, and watch doomsday unfold on television.

'I'll probably try to be very near a TV or a radio or something,' he said.

'I'll be interested in what's happening on the other side of the world as this begins.'

'I had some scepticism but I was trying to push the scepticism away because I believe in God,' said Keith Bauer.



Doomed? A bus passes down a road in Manila, the Philippines, today under a sign proclaiming today would be the end of the world. According to believers, 'the Bible guarantees it' - but it looks like they're wrong

He hopped in his minivan in Maryland and drove his family 3,000 miles to California for the Rapture.

He started his day in the bright morning sun outside Camping's gated Oakland headquarters of Family Radio International.

'I was hoping for it because I think heaven would be a lot better than this earth,' said Mr Bauer, a tractor-trailer driver.

THE NO-POCALYPSE: WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED

Although the earthquake that was supposed to signal the end of the world failed to appear, the planet wasn't without its normal and sometimes devastating disturbances on Saturday. Among them:

- A tornado killed one person and damaged at least 20 homes in Kansas,
- A 6.1-magnitude quake struck 600 miles off New Zealand with no reports of injury,
- A much smaller quake, 3.6, was felt by many people Saturday evening in the San Francisco Bay area,
- Iceland's most active volcano started erupting.

He began the voyage west last week, figuring that if he 'worked last week, I wouldn't have gotten paid anyway, if the Rapture did happen.'

According to Camping, the destruction was likely to have begun its worldwide march as it became 6 pm in the various time zones.

He had been projecting the apocalyptic prediction for years far and wide via broadcasts and websites.

Many followers said the delay was a further test from God to persevere in their faith.

'When you say something and it doesn't happen, your pride is what's hurt,' said Family Radio's special projects coordinator Michael Garcia, who spent Saturday morning praying and drinking two last cups of coffee with his wife at home in Alameda.

'But who needs pride? God said he resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.'

One of Camping's followers who must be truly disappointed is Michael Garcia.

After spending months travelling the country to put up Judgement Day billboards and hand out Bible tracts, he planned to spend Friday evening with his family at home in Alameda, near the Christian media empire's Oakland headquarters.

'We know the end will begin in New Zealand and will follow the sun and roll on from there,' said Garcia, a 39-year-old father of six. 'That's why God raised up all the technology and the satellites so everyone can see it happen at the same time.'

The Internet was alive with discussion, humorous or not, about the end of the world and its apparent failure to occur on cue.



Gone: People all over the world marked the end of the no-pocalypse with a series of pictures of signs and piles of clothes, poking fun at radio minister Harold Camping who has advertised the rapture with billboards and a media campaign

Many tweets declared Camping's prediction a dud or shared, tongue-in-cheek, their relief at not having to do weekend chores or take a shower.

The top trends on Twitter at midday included, at number one, 'endofworldconfessions', followed by 'myraptureplaylist'.

About a dozen people in a partying mood were also outside Family Radio International, creating a carnival-like atmosphere as they strolled in a variety of costumes that portrayed monks, Jesus Christ and other figures.

'Am I relieved? Yeah. I've got a lot going on,' Peter Erwin, a student from Oakland, said, with a hint of sarcasm. 'Trying to get specific about the end of the world is crazy.'

Revelers counted down the seconds before the anticipated hour, and people began dancing to music as the clock struck 6 pm.

Some released shoe-shaped helium balloons into the sky in an apparent reference to the Rapture.

Camping has preached that some 200 million people would be saved, and that those left behind would die in a series of scourges visiting Earth until the globe is consumed by a fireball on October 21.

Family Radio International's message has been broadcast in 61 languages. He has said that his earlier apocalyptic prediction in 1994 didn't come true because of a mathematical error.

'I'm not embarrassed about it. It was just the fact that it was premature,' he told The Associated Press last month. But this time, he said, 'there is ... no possibility that it will not happen'.

As Saturday drew nearer, followers reported that donations grew, allowing Family Radio to spend millions on more than 5,000 billboards and 20 RVs plastered with the doomsday message.

In 2009, the nonprofit reported in IRS filings that it received \$18.3million in donations, and had assets of more than \$104million, including \$34million in stocks or other publicly traded securities.

Marie Exley, who helped put up apocalypse-themed billboards in Israel, Jordan and Lebanon, said the money allowed the nonprofit to reach as many souls as possible.



Abroad church: Filipino-American Joel Abalos, 48, spreads the word of Family Radio on the streets of Manila

CAMPING'S FINAL ADDRESS NOT BROADCAST AFTER SERVERS FAIL

The U.S. preacher who predicted the world would end on Saturday was unable to broadcast his 'final' address – reportedly because of an overloaded computer server.

Harold Camping was expected to deliver his last words to followers as the 6pm Domsday deadline approached in America.

But it is claimed so many people tried to tune in to the 89-year-old's remarks that the computer servers used to broadcast his Christian Family Radio online crashed.

Instead devotionals and life advice unrelated to the apocalypse were broadcast as his prediction passed without incident.

There was no sign at the weekend of the former engineer, who raised a false alarm about the apocalypse for the second time.

The Oakland, California, base of his network was closed, with a sign in the door that read: 'This Office is Closed. Sorry we missed you!'

Camping had claimed in 1994 that the world would come to an end but when it didn't, he dismissed his mistake as a mathematical miscalculation. He claimed his latest prediction was based on calculations from Bible verses.

She said she and her husband, mother and brother read the Bible and stayed close to the television news on Friday night awaiting word of an earthquake in the southern hemisphere.

When that did not happen, she said fellow believers began reaching out to reassure one another of their faith.

She said she and her husband, mother and brother read the Bible and stayed close to the television news on Friday night awaiting word of an earthquake in the southern hemisphere. When that did not happen, she said fellow believers began reaching out to reassure one another of their faith.

She said: 'Some people were saying it was going to be an earthquake at that specific time in New Zealand and be a rolling judgement, but God is keeping us in our place and saying you may know the day but you don't know the hour. The day is not over, it's just the morning, and we have to endure until the end.'

As 6pm approached in California, some 100 people gathered outside Family Radio International headquarters in Oakland, although it appeared none of the believers of the prophecy were among them.

Camping's radio stations, TV channels, satellite broadcasts and website are controlled from a modest building sandwiched between an auto shop and a palm reader's business.

After the 6pm deadline, the airwaves of the Christian Family radio were silent and has been airing recorded church music, devotionals and life advice unrelated to the apocalypse throughout today.

The station's website typically allows you to listen live, but the feature has been having problems today, likely due to server overload.

Christian leaders from across the spectrum widely dismissed the prophecy, and members of a local church concerned followers could slip into a deep depression come Sunday were part of the crowd outside Family Radio International.

They held signs declaring Camping a false prophet as motorists drove by.

His prediction has been dismissed as 'flat-out wrong' by one leading Christian author, who has accused Camping of abusing the current climate of fear rendered by natural disasters to make money.

'Nobody knows the exact day when these things are going to happen,' Steve Wohlberg, who has written more than two dozen books about the End of Days, told the New York Daily News.

'They're looking at all of these disasters and everything that's going on in the planet, and this is creating a climate of deep interest in Biblical prophecy.

'In my mind, Harold Camping has quite an account to render with God when judgment day comes.'

HOW THE INTERNET VIRALS GREETED OUR 'SURVIVAL'

As the 6pm deadline passed without Armageddon being unleashed, a tidal wave of doomsday jokes and pictures flooded the internet.

Around the world, web surfers posted surreal pictures of clothes looking as though their previous human occupant had miraculously vanished.

One creative soul even offered their own view on how the Rapture was in fact prevented, showing wrestler 'Macho Man' Randy Savage, who died on Friday, elbow-dropping Jesus in heaven in order to prevent the end of the world.



© Rob Sheridan

Together for all eternity: A couple - clearly pure of heart - leave their worldly possessions behind for the hereafter, in a cute photobomb posted on the net by Rob Sheridan



© Delos Johnson

Dad was there a minute ago: Another spoof viral shows a confused labrador who's owner has apparently vanished



© Delos Johnson

Gone: This man appears to have vanished while mowing his lawn



Hero: Professional wrestler 'Macho Man' Randy Savage, who died on Friday, is spoofed to have elbowed Jesus in order to prevent the Rapture

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Radio host says Rapture actually coming in October

By Associated Press

Published 09:50 p.m., Monday, May 23, 2011

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OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) - California preacher [Harold Camping](#) said Monday his prophecy that the world would end was off by five months because Judgment Day actually will come on Oct. 21.

Camping, who predicted that 200 million Christians would be taken to heaven Saturday before the Earth was destroyed, said he felt so terrible when his doomsday prediction did not come true that he left home and took refuge in a motel with his wife. His independent ministry, Family Radio International, spent millions - some of it from donations made by followers - on more than 5,000 billboards and 20 RVs plastered with the Judgment Day message.

But Camping said that he's now realized the apocalypse will come five months after May 21, the original date he predicted. He had earlier said Oct. 21 was when the globe would be consumed by a fireball.

Saturday was "an invisible judgment day" in which a spiritual judgment took place, he said. But the timing and the structure is the same as it has always been, he said.

"We've always said May 21 was the day, but we didn't understand altogether the spiritual meaning," he said. "May 21 is the day that Christ came and put the world under judgment."

It's not the first time the independent Christian radio host has been forced to explain when his prediction didn't come to pass. He also predicted the Apocalypse would come in 1994, but said it didn't happen then because of a mathematical error.

Rather than give his normal daily broadcast on Monday, Camping made a special statement before the press at the Oakland headquarters of the media empire that has broadcast his message. His show, "Open Forum," has for months headlined his doomsday message via the group's radio stations, TV channels, satellite broadcasts and website.

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Family Radio President Harold Camping is seen at his home in Alameda, California on May 22, 2011

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Harold Camping unapologetic, spins new doomsday date

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May 23, 2011 10:29 PM EDT

An unrepentant Harold Camping took to the airwaves Monday night reasserting his beliefs in the end of the world, saying that judgment did come down on Saturday, and gave yet another prediction for the end of the world.

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"We don't always hit the nail on the head the first time," Camping says. "All I am
is a humble teacher. I search the Bible. I search the Bible," he says.

The preacher said not only was he correct this time, but correct in the past as
well.

"Actually there are four days that are very crucial at this point in time. We have
talked about all four of these days in the past and we are not making any
changes in these four days except for in the emphasis...The first part the end of
the world began on May 21, 1988," he asserted.

Camping continues going over dates he deems important in church history. The
next year he points out is 1994, which is the year he had previously predicted
would bring the world's end.

"It is true, there was judgment in a terrible way and there was salvation in a
wonderful way. The salvation came because in the previous 2,300
days...virtually no one could be saved in the entire world. We didn't even know
how bad it was. Family Radio was broadcasting in those days and we had no
idea what was really going," he says.

Camping clarifies that this "judgment" in 1994 was "spiritual, not physical," and
says Jesus Christ did not arrive on Earth.

Originally Camping had said that the when May 21 came around, there would
be massive earthquakes and believers would be raptured. The ones who were
left would suffer great calamities until October 21.

He reasserted that date.

"It won't be a five-month terrible difficulty...that we have learned," said Camping. Instead, he says, the
world will end quickly on Oct. 21 without any build up.

Speaking on his Open forum radio show from
[California](#), Camping, who publically predicted the end of
the world was to come this past Saturday, defended his
claims despite the events not happening.

"The timing, the structures, the proofs, none of that has
changed at all," Camping said. Reiterating his
numerology he used to determine the date, he says
judgment day did come, but "it was spiritual."

"On May 21 this last weekend...God again brought
Judgment on the world...We didn't feel any difference,"
he says, "but we know that God brought Judgment" on
the world. "The whole world is under Judgment."

The spiritual judgment contradicts his widely publicized
claims that rolling earthquakes were to hit the world
beginning at 6pm on Saturday. When asked about the
contradiction, Camping continued to defend himself.

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BREAKING NEWS: Harold

The tone of Camping's response and the answers he gave closely matched readers predictions from a weekend IBTimes poll.

The survey of 20,000 people asking what would be Camping's most likely response now that the earth is still here.

The majority, 54 percent, believe that Camping will unrepentantly claim a calculation error and form a new Domsday date.

Roughly 19 percent of respondents said that Camping would "claim God had mercy on mankind and spared the earth", while almost 16 percent believe he will claim that the rapture did happen, but just in an invisible way.

Just 8 percent predicted camping would say he was flat out wrong and apologize.

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Camping will give public statement tomorrow



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Domsday Preacher's Family Radio Valued at \$72m

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NATIONAL / WORLD NEWS 10:16 p.m. Monday, May 23, 2011

Text size:

Radio host says Rapture actually coming in October

[ShareThis](#)[Print](#)[E-mail](#)By GARANCE BURKE
The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — California preacher Harold Camping said Monday his prophecy that the world would end was off by five months because Judgment Day actually will come on Oct. 21.



FILE - In a Dec. 12, 2002 file photo, Harold Camping speaks while holding the Bible during his live television broadcast, in San Leandro, Calif. Camping, the Christian radio host who predicted the world would end over the weekend said Monday, May 23, 2011 that he's ready to talk about why the apocalypse didn't arrive. Camping, who previously said there was no possibility the Rapture would not occur at 6 p.m. Saturday, says he'll make a full statement in a broadcast through his Oakland-based Family Radio International. (AP Photo, File)

Camping, who predicted that 200 million Christians would be taken to heaven Saturday before the Earth was destroyed, said he felt so terrible when his doomsday prediction did not come true that he left home and took refuge in a motel with his wife. His independent ministry, Family Radio International, spent millions — some of it from donations made by followers — on more than 5,000 billboards and 20 RVs plastered with the Judgment Day message.

But Camping said that he's now realized the apocalypse will come five months after May 21, the original date he predicted. He had earlier said Oct. 21 was when the globe would be consumed by a fireball.

Saturday was "an invisible judgment day" in which a spiritual judgment took place, he said. But the timing and the structure is the same as it has always been, he said.

"We've always said May 21 was the day, but we didn't understand altogether the spiritual meaning," he said. "May 21 is the day that Christ came and put the world under judgment."

It's not the first time the independent Christian radio host has been forced to explain when his prediction didn't come to pass. He also predicted the Apocalypse would come in 1994, but said it didn't happen then because of a mathematical error.

Rather than give his normal daily broadcast on Monday, Camping made a special statement before the press at the Oakland headquarters of the media empire that has broadcast his message. His show, "Open Forum," has for months headlined his doomsday message via the group's radio stations, TV channels, satellite broadcasts and website.

When the Rapture didn't arrive Saturday, crestfallen followers began turning their attention to more earthly concerns.

Jeff Hopkins had figured the gas money he spent driving back and forth from Long Island to New York City would be worth it, as long as people could see the ominous sign atop his car warning that the End of the World was nigh.

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In this photo from Sunday, May 22, 2011, Christian radio host Harold Camping speaks outside of his home in Alameda, Calif. The Christian radio host who predicted the world would end over the weekend said Monday he's ready to talk about why the apocalypse didn't arrive. Harold Camping declined to immediately comment to The Associated Press but said he'll make a full statement in a broadcast through his Oakland-based Family Radio International. (AP Photo/Sprinkle Lab, Brandon Tauszik) MAGS OUT; NO SALES; NO ARCHIVE



In this photo from May 8, 2011, Christian radio host Harold Camping prepares for Open Forum, a live talk-telephone program broadcast daily on radio and TV, inside the Family Radio compound, in Oakland, Calif. The Christian radio host who predicted the world would end over the weekend said Monday he's ready to talk about why the apocalypse didn't arrive. Harold Camping declined to immediately comment to The Associated Press but said he'll make a full statement in a broadcast through his Oakland-based Family Radio International. (AP Photo/Sprinkle Lab, Brandon Tauszik) MAGS OUT NO ARCHIVE

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May 23, 2011 10:16 PM EDT

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"I've been mocked and scoffed and cursed at and I've been through a lot with this lighted sign on top of my car," said Hopkins, 52, a former television producer who lives in Great River, NY. "I was doing what I've been instructed to do through the Bible, but now I've been stymied. It's like getting slapped in the face."

Camping said Family Radio would never tell anyone what they should do with their possessions.

"That is between them and God," he said.

But he said he wouldn't give away all his possessions ahead of Oct 21.

"I still have to live in a house, I still have to drive a car," he said. "What would be the value of that? If it is Judgment Day why would I give it away?"

Apocalyptic thinking has always been part of American religious life and popular culture. Teachings about the end of the world vary dramatically — even within faith traditions — about how they will occur.

Still, the overwhelming majority of Christians reject the idea that the exact date or time of Jesus' return can be predicted.

Tim LaHaye, co-author of the best-selling "Left Behind" novels about the end times, recently called Camping's prediction "not only bizarre but 100 percent wrong!" He cited the Bible verse Matthew 24:36, "but about that day or hour no one knows" except God.

"While it may be in the near future, many signs of our times certainly indicate so, but anyone who thinks they 'know' the day and the hour is flat out wrong," LaHaye wrote on his website, [leftbehind.com](#).

In 2009, the nonprofit Family Radio reported in IRS filings that it received \$18.3 million in donations, and had assets of more than \$104 million, including \$34 million in stocks or other publicly traded securities.

Associated Press writer Tom Breen in Raleigh, N.C., and Videographer Ted Shaffrey and AP Religion Writer Rachel Zoll in New York, contributed to this report.

Garance Burke can be followed on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/garanceburke>.

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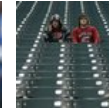
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