

Evangelist says Rapture date was off by five months

by [Adelle M. Banks](#)

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(RNS) Radio evangelist Harold Camping, who predicted the Rapture would occur on May 21, now says his calculations were off by five months.

The 89-year-old president of the Family Radio network in Oakland, Calif., said life on Earth will continue until October 21.

"At that time the whole world will be destroyed," Camping said Monday (May 24) in a broadcast and news conference. "God had not opened our eyes yet to the fact that May 21 was a spiritual coming, whereas we had thought that it was a physical coming. But he has come. He has come in a sense that he now has the world under judgment."

Camping, who erroneously predicted Jesus' return in 1994, had expected Jesus to return on Saturday, sending some 200 million righteous souls to heaven and leaving the rest of humanity to suffer months of tribulation until Oct. 21.

Pressed by reporters, he acknowledged his misinterpretation of the May date.

"If people want me to apologize, I can apologize," he said.

But he said any error of interpretation did not bother him.

"I'm not a genius," he said. "I pray all the time for wisdom."

His predictions had prompted some supporters to give up their jobs and donate their savings accounts to his ministry, but they also gave atheists an excuse to hold parties when his prediction did not come true.

Prior to May 21, his ministry's website ran warnings that that date was "Judgment Day" and quoted from the biblical book of Ezekiel: "blow the trumpet ... warn the people."

By Tuesday, it carried a picture of the globe with the verse from the Gospel of Mark: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel unto every creature."