

Class 3: Personal Eschatology

Review from Class 2 on the Millennium

Last week, we looked at four different views of the eschatological timeline for the millennium and Christ's return. We evaluated each and presented the *amillennial* view as the most satisfactory explanation of the biblical texts.

Before we move on from *general eschatology* to *personal eschatology*, let's consider the **common ground** that each of the millennial views shares. There are some differences of timing and emphasis, but each of the views share belief in the following:

15 Aspects of the Hope All Christians Share

1. The coming of Christ's kingdom...
2. Literal interpretation...
3. Physical return...
4. Millennium...
5. Apostasy and tribulation...
6. Antichrist...
7. Armageddon...
8. Rescue and rapture...
9. Resurrection...
10. Imminent return...
11. A place for Jews...
12. Judgment of the living and the dead...
13. Satan and his allies defeated...
14. New heaven and earth...
15. Shared rule...

Bryan Chapell, *Are We Living in the Last Days? Four Views of the Hope We Share about Revelation and Christ's Return* (Baker, 2024), 194–196.

What is personal eschatology?

- **personal eschatology** – The study of future events that will happen to individuals, such as death, the intermediate state, and glorification.¹

¹ The definitions are from the glossary in *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem.

Class 3: Personal Eschatology

Death

- **death** – The termination of life brought about by the entrance of sin into the world. (For the Christian, death brings us into the presence of God because of Christ's payment of the penalty for our sins.)

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Other Passages for reference

- Gen 2:17
- Gen 3:19
- Rom 5:12
- 1 Thess 1:10
- Rom 8:1
- Rev 2:10
- Phil 3:10
- 1 Cor 15:24-26
- Heb 2:14-15
- John 11:35
- Acts 8:2
- Psalm 116:15

Death is not in any way a punishment for sin but simply is something God brings us through in order to make us more like Christ. Understanding that fact should be a great encouragement to us. It should take away from us the fear of death that haunts the minds of unbelievers (cf. Heb. 2:15). Nevertheless, although God will bring good to us through the process of death, we must still remember that ultimately death is not natural; it is an enemy, something that Christ will finally destroy (1 Cor. 15:26).²

His burial, moreover, did not merely serve to prove that Jesus was really dead, but also to remove the terrors of the grave for the redeemed and to sanctify the grave for them.³

² Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, Second Edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020), 1000.

³ L. Berkhof, **Systematic Theology** (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing co., 1938), 340.

Class 3: Personal Eschatology

The Intermediate State

- **intermediate state** – The condition or mode of being of a person between the time of one's death and the time that Christ returns to give believers new resurrection bodies.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

v. 14 – “God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.”

v. 16 – “... And the dead in Christ will rise first.”

Other Passages for reference

- Rev 20:4-6
- Rev 6:9-11
- Rev 7:9-10
- 2 Cor 5:8
- Luke 23:43
- Philippians 1:21-24
- Hebrews 12:23
- Psalm 139:8
- Psalm 23:6
- Psalm 16:10-11
- Heb 12:1

Glorification

- **glorification** – The final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

v. 16 – “the dead in Christ will rise first”

v. 17 – “so we will always be with the Lord”

Other Passages for reference

Rom 8:17, 23, 24, 30

John 5:28-29

1 Cor 15:51-58

Class 3: Personal Eschatology

Now	Then
perishable	Imperishable
dishonor	glory
weakness	power
natural	Spiritual
Dust	Heaven
First man Adam	Last Adam

What Now?

Considering the reality of our future glory with Christ, how should we live now, and what should we anticipate?

- 2 Thess 3:5; 2 Thess 3:10-12; 1 Thess 5:23-24

Eschatology and Evangelism

- What do you believe happens when you die?
- Do you feel like you'd go to heaven or hell? Why?
- Use a brief summary of some of the 10 commandments to show that we are all deserving of Hell.
- Does that concern you?
- Can I share with you what the Bible says about how you can know you'll go to heaven?

Resources:

Chapell, Bryan. *Are We Living in the Last Days? Four Views of the Hope We Share about Revelation and Christ's Return*. Baker, 2024.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020.

Hoekema, Anthony A. *The Bible and the Future*. Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994.

McLeod, John. "The Resurrection Body" (sermon on 1 Corinthians 15:35-58) on Aug 20, 2023. <https://cornerstoneapex.org/messages/the-resurrection-body>

Trinity Confession of Faith, Chapters 34-35
<https://cornerstoneapex.org/about-us/confession-of-faith>