

Doctrine of the Last Things

Jeremy Bell
1 Cor. 15:51-58
October 23, 2022

I. Death and the Intermediate State

“Death entered God’s good creation as a result of Adam’s sin, and now all people are subject to God’s curse of death. Yet believers have no need to fear, because Christ has conquered death and delivered us from its dominion.” -- Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith

“The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” -- Romans 6:23

“Although our bodies return to dust for a time, death for the Christian has become a doorway to paradise, where our souls enter immediately into God’s presence, to behold and enjoy our Savior and to rest from our labors.” -- Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith

“So we are of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” -- 2 Corinthians 5:6-8

II. Christ’s Return and the Resurrection

“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven: This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11

“And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” -- Luke 21:27

“The Lord reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity...He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.” -- Psalm 96:10,13

“Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” -- Philippians 2:9-11

“The Savior’s second advent will be personal and physical, visible and triumphant. Jesus comes to end history, to raise the dead and judge the world, to impart to God’s children their final glory, and to usher in a reconstructed universe.” -- JI Packer, Concise Theology

16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words. -- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

“When the dead in Christ are raised, their imperishable bodies will be redeemed and made like Christ’s imperishable, glorious, powerful, spiritual body. Those in Christ who are alive shall likewise be changed, and thus will all God’s glorified people forever bear the image of their Savior.” -- Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith

“Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.” -- Philippians 3:20-21

III. Judgment and Consummation

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. -- 2 Corinthians 5:10

“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” -- John 3:36

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.” -- Ephesians 5:6

“Those saved by Christ, whose names are written in the book of life, will be welcomed into the joy of their Master and richly rewarded for every good work done in His name. God’s glorified people will inherit the kingdom from which all sin, sorrow, suffering, and death will be banished. Christ as king will set all of creation free from its bondage to corruption, making new the heavens and earth and establishing His eternal rule in His consummated kingdom. Surrounded by unimaginable beauty, we will enjoy unhindered communion with our triune God, beholding Him, serving Him, worshipping Him, and reigning with Him forever and ever. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” -- Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith

They are happy in being delivered from all sorrow or occasion of it: God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. They have formerly had their sorrows, and shed many tears, both upon the account of sin and afflictions; but God Himself, with His own gentle and gracious hand, will wipe those tears away, and they shall return no more forever... In this He deals with them as a tender father who finds His beloved child in tears, He comforts him, He wipes his eyes, and turns his sorrow into rejoicing. This should moderate the Christian’s sorrow in his present state, and support him under all the troubles of it; for those that sow in tears shall reap in joy; and those that now go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing. -- Matthew Henry

...And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the

Lamb. 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. -- Revelation 21:21-27

Questions for Discussion/Application

- Consider taking time, before the discussion, for each person to silently read for themselves [section 13 of the Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith](#). This should take about 10 minutes.
- In reading the Statement of Faith, is there anything that immediately stands out to you or encourages you that you want to share with the group?
- Do your thoughts often turn towards heaven? When you think of heaven, how do you feel? What do you most look forward to?
- Do you have any fears when you think of life after death and intermediate state? If so, what are they?
- Read through the scriptures and quotes under point #1 ("Death and the Intermediate State") out loud as a group. How do these verses and quotes encourage you and strengthen you?
- Read through the scriptures and quotes under point #2 ("Christ's Return and the Resurrection") out loud as a group. How do these verses and quotes encourage you and strengthen you?
- Read through the scriptures and quotes under point #3 ("Judgment and Consummation") out loud as a group. How do these verses and quotes encourage you and strengthen you?
- Take time to pray and ask God by His Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with the hope of heaven and to live in light of eternity as well.