



SESSION 4

BASIC DOCTRINES 2: THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)

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BASIC DOCTRINES 2

SESSION 4: THE DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS

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The study of future events is often called “eschatology,” from the Greek word ἔσχατος which means “last.” The study of eschatology, then, is the study of “the last things.”¹

General/Collective Eschatology - Events of the end time concerning the total universe or the entire human race. They anticipate the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, when all things will be subject to him (1 Corinthians 15:25; Philippians 3:21). Resurrection, judgment, and transformation of the world will occur (Revelation 21:1).²

Individual Eschatology - study of the future in terms of events relating to individual persons such as death, judgment (Matthew 25:31–46), and resurrection (Philippians 3:21).³

I. The Return of Christ⁴

- A. It is Definite, Personal, Visible and Physical (Matthew 24:44; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:10; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7; Revelation 22:20, etc.)
- B. It is Triumphant and Glorious (Matthew 24:30, 25:31–46; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27; 1 Thessalonians 4:16)
- C. It is Sudden and Unexpected (Matthew 24:44, 25:8–10, 13; Mark 13:32–37, Luke 12:40; Philippians 3:20)

II. Implications of the Return of Christ

(Mark 13:34–37, Revelation 22:20; Titus 2:12–13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Corinthians 16:22, etc.)⁵

- A. Believers should eagerly long for Christ’s Return
- B. History will not simply run its course, but under the guidance of God will come to a consummation. His purpose will be fulfilled in the end.

¹ Wayne Grudem, **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY An Introduction to Bible Doctrine**. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA.

² Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, Westminster John Knox Press

³ Ibid

⁴ Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids Michigan

⁵ Ibid

- C. Believers should watch for and work in anticipation of the sure return of the Lord.
- D. It is the Believer's Great Comfort, Hope and incentive to consistent victorious living.

III. The Resurrection of the Dead

A. What Death Is

1. Physical Death is inescapable (Ecclesiastes 3:1–2; Hebrews 9:27)
2. Death Is the Final Outcome of Living in a Fallen World (1 Corinthians 15:26, 54–55)⁶
3. Our Experience of Death Completes Our Union With Christ. (Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 2:21, 4:13; Philippians 3:10–11)⁷
4. The Souls of Believers Go Immediately Into God's Presence (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, Luke 23:43, Hebrews 12:23)⁸

B. What Resurrection Is

***Glorification** happens 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.⁹*

(1 Corinthians 15:12–58, 1 Thessalonians 4:14–17; John 5:28–29; 6:39–40, 44, 54; Philippians 3:20–21)

1. **A Work of the Triune God** (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:12–14, Colossians 1:18, Revelation 1:5, 1 Peter 1:3–9)¹⁰
2. **Imperishable Body** (Philippians 3:20–21, 1 Corinthians 15:42–44, 49–50; 1 John 3:2; Matthew 13:43, Daniel 12:3)¹¹

⁶ Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Wayne Grudem, **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY An Introduction to Bible Doctrine.**

¹⁰ Millard Erickson, Christian Theology, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids Michigan

¹¹ Ibid

3. Resurrected believers will have new bodies that will be **suitable for inhabiting** the “new heavens and a new earth” (2 Peter 3:13).¹²

C. Implications¹³

1. Our Obedience to God Is More Important Than Preserving Our Own Lives (Acts 20:24, 21:13; 2 Corinthians 11:23-27, 2 Timothy 4:6–7, Revelation 2:10, 12:11, etc.)¹⁴
2. We view our own death not with fear but with joy at the prospect of going to be with Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21–23; Revelation 14:13; Romans 8:38–39; Psalm 23:4, Hebrews 2:15)
3. Our earthly bodies will be transformed into something far better. The imperfections which we now know will disappear. Our everlasting bodies will know no pain, illness or death.
4. Our future bodies have all the excellent qualities God created us to have and the living proof of the wisdom of God in making a material creation (Genesis 1:31).
5. Provides the greatest encouragement, confidence and comfort to the Believer. (1 Thessalonians 4:18)

IV. The Final Judgment and Eternal Punishment

A. The Nature of the Final Judgment¹⁵

1. Justice of God in the Final Judgment (2 Peter 3:9; Romans 1:18–20)
2. Jesus Christ Will Be the Judge. (Matthew 25:31–33, Hebrews 12:23, John 5:22,27, Acts 10:42, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 2 Timothy 4:1)

¹² Wayne Grudem, **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY An Introduction to Bible Doctrine**.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids Michigan

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3. Believers Will Help in the Work of Judgment (1 Corinthians 6:2–3; Revelation 3:21; 20:4)
 4. Unbelievers & Angels Will Be Judged (John 5:29, Matthew 25:32, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Hebrews 9:27, 2 Peter 2:4)
 5. Believers Will Be evaluated and bestowed various degrees of reward (2 Corinthians 5:10)

B. **Eternal Punishment in Hell**¹⁶

1. Hell is a place of eternal conscious punishment for the wicked. (Revelation 20:14-15)
2. Hell is a place of everlasting torment and suffering (Matthew 13:50; Mark 9:48; Revelation 20:10)

IV. **The New Heavens and New Earth (New Creation)**¹⁷

Heaven is the place where God most fully makes known his presence to bless. The greatest manifestation of God's presence to bless is seen in heaven, where he makes his glory known, and where angels, other heavenly creatures, and redeemed saints all worship him. (Isaiah 66:1, Matthew 6:9, 1 Peter 3:22, etc.)¹⁸

1. Believers Will Live Eternally With God in New Heavens and a New Earth (2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1–4)
2. The Physical Creation Will Be Renewed and We Will Continue to Exist and Act in It. (2 Peter 3:13, Romans 8:19–21, Revelation 21:1)
3. The New Creation Will Be a Place of Great Beauty and Abundance and Joy in the Presence of God (Revelation 21-22:5)

¹⁶ Wayne Grudem, **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Wayne Grudem, **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**

VI. Implications of the Final Judgment, Eternal Punishment and the New Creation¹⁹

- A. Satisfies Our Inward Sense of a Need for Justice in the World. (Colossians 3:25, Revelation 20:12)
- B. Provides a great motive for evangelism (Ezekiel 33:11, 2 Peter 3:9)
- C. A foundation for Righteous Living and a reason to act according to God's will and purposes (2 Peter 3:11, 14)
- D. A time is coming when justice will be dispensed. Evil will be punished and faith and faithfulness rewarded. (2 Peter 3:3–7, 1 Peter 4:4–5)
- E. Provides a Great Motivation for Storing Up Treasures in Heaven Rather Than on Earth (Matthew 6:19–21)

¹⁹ Millard Erickson, Christian Theology

