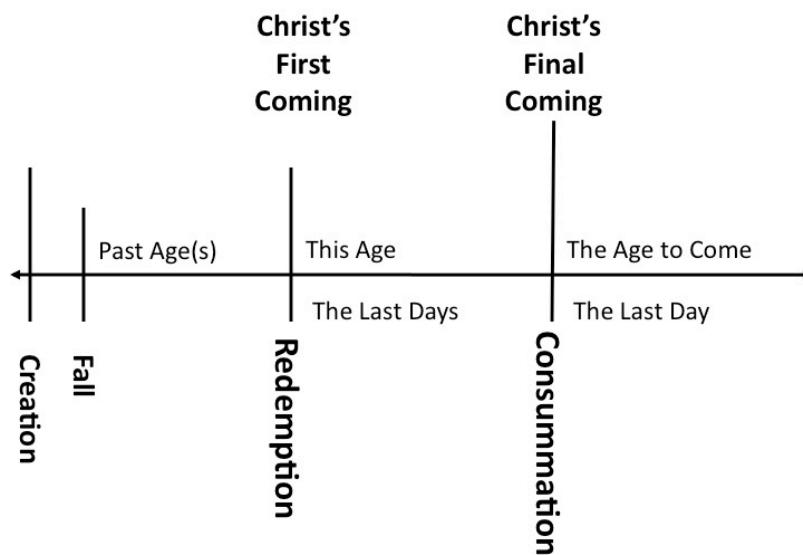


**Eschatology - The Doctrine of Last Things**  
**The Return of Christ - When and How?**

**Part 2 - The Nature and Timing of Christ's Return & How We Prepare**

1. Introduction - Review

- 1.1. The most important thing to understand about eschatology is that the dominant focus in NT eschatology is the distinction between the “now but not yet.” This phrase refers to the tension of what believers have already received by virtue of being “in Christ” and what yet awaits them at the consummation after the return of Christ.
- 1.2. The “now but the not yet” is seen in many NT verses, including those that contrast “this age” with “the age to come” and also those that contrast “the last days” with the “last day.” In the NT, there are only two eschatological ages - the age we presently live in and the final age of the consummation.
- 1.3. In the NT, it is clear that the “this age” and the “last days” were inaugurated with the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. We have been in the “last days” (and even the “last hour” according to 1 John 2:18) for 2,000 years now. So looking for signs that the “last days” are approaching is fruitless and unbiblical. We are already in the last days, and there are not two sets of last days - we are as in the last days as we can get.
- 1.4. Furthermore, in the NT, “that age” and the “last day” will be ushered in with the final return of Christ. Like everything else in Scripture, eschatology is radically Christ-centered, and to make anything or anyone else central in eschatology is to hopelessly depart from the central teaching of the NT on eschatology.
- 1.5. All other questions of eschatology - the millennium, understanding signs, etc. - must be understood in light of this clear, fundamental fact of two - and only two - ages, each of which are inaugurated by the coming of Christ.
- 1.6. This may be represented as in the following graphic:



## 2. The Nature of Christ's return

### 2.1. Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected - not gradual and expected

- 2.1.1. Matthew 24:36–44 “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>37</sup> As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; <sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>40</sup> Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. <sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. <sup>42</sup> “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. <sup>43</sup> But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup> So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”
- 2.1.2. Luke 17:26–30 “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. <sup>27</sup> People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. <sup>28</sup> “It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. <sup>29</sup> But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. <sup>30</sup> “It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.”
- 2.1.3. 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6 Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, <sup>2</sup> for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. <sup>4</sup> But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. <sup>5</sup> You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. <sup>6</sup> So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.
- 2.1.4. 2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.
- 2.1.5. Matthew 25:13 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”
- 2.1.6. Luke 12:40 You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

- 2.1.7. 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10 All this is evidence that God’s judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. <sup>6</sup> God is just: **He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you** <sup>7</sup> and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. **This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.** <sup>8</sup> He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> **They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power** <sup>10</sup> **on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed.** This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.
- 2.2. Christ’s return will be clearly evident to everyone - not secretive or known by only a few
- 2.2.1. Luke 17:23–24 Men will tell you, ‘There he is!’ or ‘Here he is!’ Do not go running off after them. <sup>24</sup> For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other.”
- 2.2.2. 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10 All this is evidence that God’s judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. <sup>6</sup> God is just: **He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you** <sup>7</sup> and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. **This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.** <sup>8</sup> He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> **They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power** <sup>10</sup> **on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed.** This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.
- 2.2.3. Revelation 1:7 Look, he is coming with the clouds, and **every eye will see him**, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.
- 2.2.4. Furthermore, remember that Christ’s return ushers in the last day, the age to come. The differences of that age are so stark when compared to this age that no one could miss it. For more information on this, see the tables in Part 1 of the discussion on this chapter.
- 2.3. Christ’s return will be physical and visible - not spiritual and invisible
- 2.3.1. Acts 1:11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? **This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.**”
- 2.3.2. John 14:1–3 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I am going there to prepare a place for you.** <sup>3</sup> **And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.**”

- 2.3.3. Matthew 26:64 “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: **In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.**”
- 2.3.4. 1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But **we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.**
3. Christians are called to eagerly expect and prepare for the return of Christ
- 3.1. Philippians 3:20–21 But our citizenship is in heaven. And **we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,**<sup>21</sup> who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.
- 3.2. 1 John 3:2–3 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that **when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.**<sup>3</sup> **Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself,** just as he is pure.
- 3.3. 1 Corinthians 1:7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift **as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.**
- 3.4. Romans 8:23–25 Not only so, but **we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.**<sup>24</sup> **For in this hope we were saved.** But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?<sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.
- 3.5. 2 Corinthians 5:1–5 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.<sup>2</sup> **Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling,**<sup>3</sup> because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.<sup>4</sup> **For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.**<sup>5</sup> Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.
- 3.6. 1 Thessalonians 1:8–10 The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia — your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,<sup>9</sup> for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,<sup>10</sup> and **to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead** — Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.
- 3.7. 2 Timothy 4:8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and **not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.**

- 3.8. Titus 2:11–14 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> **while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,** <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.
- 3.9. 2 Peter 3:10–14 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. <sup>11</sup> Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup> as **you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.** That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup> **But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,** the home of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> So then, dear friends, **since you are looking forward to this,** make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.
- 3.10. 1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord — a curse be on him. **Come, O Lord!**
- 3.11. Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
4. Eagerly expecting and looking forward to the return of Christ does not mean looking for signs and speculating about the dates, but rather looking forward to the completion of God’s work and living holy lives now as we serve God and reach out to others with the Good News.
- 4.1. The New Testament does not tell us to follow signs, but to always be ready. If we were following signs, only the people of the time right before the return of Christ could really be ready - all others would not need to be since the return could not happen yet. But the NT actually discourages looking for signs, and does not associate our desire and preparation for the return of Christ with the fulfillment of signs.
- 4.1.1. Jesus did not consider looking for and seeking miraculous signs as an indication of faith, but rather of unbelief
- 4.1.1.1. Matthew 12:38–42 Then **some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him,** “Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.” <sup>39</sup> He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. <sup>41</sup> **The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.** <sup>42</sup> The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for **she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here.**

- 4.1.1.2. Matthew 16:1–4 **The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven.** <sup>2</sup> He replied, “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ <sup>3</sup> and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. <sup>4</sup> **A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.**” Jesus then left them and went away.
- 4.1.1.3. Luke 11:27–32 As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.” <sup>28</sup> He replied, “**Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.**” <sup>29</sup> As the crowds increased, Jesus said, “**This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.** <sup>30</sup> For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. <sup>31</sup> The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here. <sup>32</sup> **The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.**
- 4.1.2. Most of the “signs” thought of as preceding the return of Christ actually refer to the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD rather than some distant future.
- 4.1.2.1. Mark 13:1–4 As he was leaving **the temple**, one of his disciples said to him, “**Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!**” <sup>2</sup> “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “**Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.**” <sup>3</sup> As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, <sup>4</sup> “Tell us, **when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?**”
- 4.1.2.2. Luke 21:5–8 Some of his disciples were remarking about how the **temple** was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, <sup>6</sup> “As for what you see here, **the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down.**” <sup>7</sup> “Teacher,” they asked, “when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?”

- 4.1.2.2.1. Note that in both Mark and Luke it is quite clear that the signs refer to the destruction of the Temple. The only topic under discussion is the destruction of the Temple, and the signs given (earthquakes, false Christ's, wars and rumors of war, fearful events, great signs from heaven, persecution, heavenly bodies shaken, Jerusalem surrounded, possible flight on the Sabbath, etc.) all refer to this one topic - when the Temple will be destroyed. There is no mention in the question about the second coming of Christ and the end of the world.
- 4.1.2.2.2. This destruction - with a fulfillment of these signs - occurred in the war from 66-70 AD.
- 4.1.2.3. The reason that these signs have become associated with the return of Christ is mainly because of Matthew's Gospel, and because of a few words Jesus makes late in His answer.
  - 4.1.2.3.1. Matthew 23:37–24:3 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. <sup>38</sup> Look, your house is left to you desolate. <sup>39</sup> For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” <sup>24:1</sup> Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. <sup>2</sup> “Do you see all these things?” he asked. “I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.” <sup>3</sup> As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”
  - 4.1.2.3.2. Notice that Matthew adds the words “of your coming and the end of the age” to the words regarding the destruction of the Temple. But it is important to remember that these words are not in Mark or Luke, and so they must be interpreted in Matthew with the parallels in Mark and Luke in mind.

- 4.1.2.3.3. Also notice how Matthew gives the extra data of the words regarding the house (temple) being left desolate in Matthew 23:37-39. He is reinforcing to us that the main focus is on the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple - not the end of the world. The primary reference in the Olivet Discourse is to the end of the Jewish world - the destruction of the Temple and the dispersion from the promised land in 70 AD - not to the end of the world as a whole. Any reference to the end of the world is secondary and largely by inference. The primary information given - and where we should place our focus - is on the destruction of the Temple. This miraculous prophecy was fulfilled in 70 AD.
- 4.1.2.3.4. Further, it is likely that Jesus does make a connection between the disciples question about the destruction of the Temple and the end of the world. Matthew makes this explicit in Matthew 24:3 - “when will this” (the destruction of the Temple) “happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age.” Mark and Luke do not do this, but Jesus seems to turn to this type of issue in Mark 13:36-27 “At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup> And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.” But notice this is done late in the answer - AFTER the signs related to the destruction of the Temple have been given. The same thing is done in Matthew. The end of the world does not appear to be directly in view until Matthew 24:36 “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”
- 4.1.2.3.5. This is also why Jesus specifically states that “this generation will not pass away until all of these things have been fulfilled” (see Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:32). And it is only after stating that all of these things will be fulfilled in this generation that Jesus turns to “that day” - the end of the world - to state that no one knows when it will happen (see Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32).



4.1.2.3.6. Finally, notice that when Jesus finally does turn to “that day” - the end of the world - what is discussed are not unmistakable signs, but rather that life goes on as normal. We read in Matthew 24:36–42 “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.<sup>37</sup> As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.<sup>38</sup> For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark;<sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.<sup>40</sup> Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.<sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.<sup>42</sup> “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.” Thus, it seems that rather than clear apocalyptic signs, life will be proceeding as normal just prior to Christ’s return.

4.1.3. Many of the “signs” that a lot of Christians are looking to see “literally” fulfilled are not to be read in such a manner - and never were read that way in the Scripture itself. This is especially true of “signs in the heavens.”

4.1.3.1. For example, we read in Matthew 24:29 “Immediately after the distress of those days “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.”” Notice that the NIV has put the words about the sun being darkened and such in quotes. This is because Jesus is referring to Isaiah 13:10. He is thus saying that these signs will be like the signs that occurred when Isaiah 13:10 was fulfilled. And Isaiah 13 was fulfilled long ago - when Babylon fell. And we have no indication that when Babylon fell the sun was *literally* darkened, or that the moon *literally* did not give its light, or that the stars *literally* fell from the sky. Dr. Grudem - and others - try to avoid this obvious fact by saying that Isaiah 13 :10 has not yet been fulfilled, but there is no reason to state this. The prophecy is about Babylon (see Isaiah 13:1), the other prophecies about nations in this section of Isaiah were all fulfilled in the Ancient Near East, and we know the other actions described against Babylon in Isaiah 13 happened long ago. The only reason to say Isaiah 13:10 was not fulfilled is because we want to read these signs in a manner that Isaiah (and the other biblical writers) did not intend.

- 4.1.3.2. For another example, see Acts 2:16–21 “No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: <sup>17</sup> ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. <sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. <sup>20</sup> The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. <sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’” Notice Peter says the Joel text is fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. This includes heavenly signs - which were not *literally* fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Again, many evangelicals will say that the heavenly signs were not fulfilled on Pentecost. But this means that verses 16-18 were fulfilled, and verse 21 is fulfilled, but somehow - with no clue in the text - verses 19-20 are pushed thousands of years into the future. The only reason to do this is an a priori decision that these signs must be *literally* fulfilled - when we know prophecies were not intended to be read this way, and the NT does not read the OT prophecies that way.
- 4.1.3.3. Thus, these signs in the heavens function as they did in Isaiah 10 and Joel 2 - these are world shaking events. Everything is changing. Did stars literally fall from heaven, and was the sun literally darkened? No. But were the signs fulfilled? Yes - exactly as they were intended in these apocalyptic texts.
- 4.1.4. All of this means the idea of Christians gauging the times by looking at signs, by reading prophetic texts in one hand and the newspaper in the other is foolhardy, counterproductive, and against what Jesus was actually commanding us to do. Ultimately, looking for such literal signs is unbelief - not faith.
- 4.2. Christian do not look forward to the arrival of certain signs, but rather to the ultimate completion of God’s promises regarding a new heavens and a new earth.
- 4.2.1. 2 Peter 3:10–14 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. <sup>11</sup> Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup> as **you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.** That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup> **But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.** <sup>14</sup> So then, dear friends, **since you are looking forward to this,** make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

- 4.2.2. Romans 8:23–25 Not only so, but **we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.** <sup>24</sup> **For in this hope we were saved.** But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.
- 4.2.3. Titus 2:11–14 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> **while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,** <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.
- 4.2.4. Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
- 4.3. As we eagerly await the return of Christ to heal this fractured, broken creation, our call is not to be looking for signs, but to live holy lives, be about God’s work, and to proclaim the Gospel to everyone we can.
- 4.3.1.1. 1 John 3:1–3 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup> Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> **Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.**
- 4.3.1.2. 2 Peter 3:10–14 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. <sup>11</sup> Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup> as **you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.** That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup> **But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.** <sup>14</sup> So then, dear friends, **since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.**

- 4.3.1.3. Romans 13:11–14 And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup> The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. <sup>13</sup> Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. <sup>14</sup> Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.
- 4.3.1.4. Matthew 24:45–51 “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? <sup>46</sup> It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. <sup>47</sup> I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. <sup>48</sup> But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ <sup>49</sup> and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. <sup>50</sup> The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. <sup>51</sup> He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
- 4.3.1.5. Matthew 28:18–20 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
- 4.3.1.6. 1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.