

Chapter Eleven

Some Observations Pertaining to Eschatology

1. Among evangelical, orthodox Christians, there is no such thing as a universal eschatology--a single view or system of the events of the last days. Christ's Second Coming, the Resurrection, the Judgment, the New Heavens and New Earth, and Heaven and Hell are revealed truths. But with regard to the precise nature of each of these events or states, and a scheme of the relationships between them, there is no universal agreement among Christians.
2. Therefore we need to recognize that all of our eschatological views and systems are theological constructs. As such, they are capable of misconstruction, either through poor exegesis, alien hermeneutics, unsound reasoning, theological preconception, or psychological bias. This is true whether we are speaking of Millennial views or of Tribulational views.
3. The Central revealed truth of eschatology is the Second Coming of Christ. Although Scripture is quite clear on the *certainty* of Christ's return, it is not at all clear on the *time* of His return.
4. Scripture speaks of Christ's return as both *imminent* and *delayed*. Consequently there is the tension between the "perhaps very soon" and the "perhaps not for a long time."
5. We need somehow to retain both concepts, the concept of *imminency* and the concept of *delay*, in our theological constructs.

Of course, *death* is always imminent for every human being. But we are not speaking of an *individual* departure from this present life to remain with the Lord for a time in a *disembodied* state; rather we are speaking of a *collective* departure from this present life to be with the Lord forever in new, *transformed bodies*.

If we lose imminency altogether, we not only fail to do justice to the Scriptures that emphasize readiness in view of the uncertainty and incalculability of the time of Christ's return; we also undermine our motivation to be ready for a final accounting of the things that we have done in this life. That is, although imminency is not necessary to motivate