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The Christian Worldview as Master Narrative: The End that is a Beginning

The Christian doctrine of eschatology provides the Christian worldview with its mature understanding of history.

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The reversal of the curse of sin originates in God's love and his sovereign determination to save sinners, and it is grounded in the cross and resurrection of Christ. The atonement of Jesus Christ accomplishes our salvation from sin. Nevertheless, the New Testament makes clear that we are awaiting the transformation of our bodies and the arrival of the Kingdom in fullness. Any honest reading of the New Testament leaves us knowing that our salvation is secure in Christ, but we await the final display of Christ's glory in the Kingdom's fullness.

In understanding the Kingdom, we benefit by considering the fact that the Kingdom is already here, inaugurated by Christ, but is not yet fully come. The "already/not yet" character of the Kingdom explains why, though sin is fully defeated, we still experience sin in our lives. Death was defeated at the cross, but we still taste death. The created order continues to cry out for redemption, and the venom of the serpent still stings.

The Christian doctrine of eschatology provides the Christian worldview with its mature understanding of history. Every worldview must provide an account of where history is headed and whether human history has any purpose at all. Christianity grounds the meaning of human existence in the fact that we are made in the image of God and the meaning of human history in the security of God's providential rule. Thus, the Christian worldview dignifies history and assures us that history is indeed meaningful. The Gospel of Christ is itself grounded in historical events – and so is the promise of things to come.

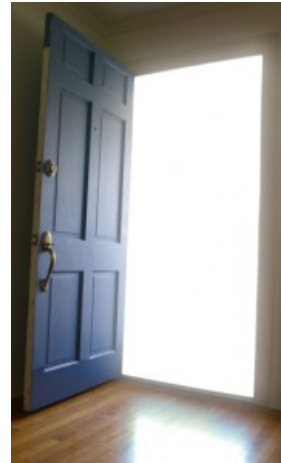
At the end of this age, Christ will return to bring his Kingdom in fullness. He will rule with perfect righteousness and will both judge the nations and vindicate his own cause. The unfolding events point to a conclusive final judgment at the end of history.

This final judgment is made necessary by the fact of human sin and the infinite reality of God's holiness. The Bible straightforwardly presents the assurance of a final judgment that will demonstrate the perfection of God and the glory of his justice. This final judgment will demonstrate God's mercy to those who are in Christ and God's wrath righteously poured out upon sin.

This judgment will be so perfect that, in the end, all must know that God alone is righteous and that his decrees are absolutely perfect. God's power will be demonstrated when all authorities are brought under submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, when every earthly kingdom yields, and when every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10).

The glory of the Garden of Eden will be surpassed by the glories of the New Heaven and the New Earth. The saints will rule with Christ as his vice-regents, and perfect peace will dawn in the messianic Kingdom.

Every single moment of human history cries out for judgment. Every sin and every sinner will be brought before the



throne of God, and full satisfaction will be made. The demands of divine justice will be fully met, and the mercy and grace of God will be fully demonstrated. The great dividing line that runs through humanity will be the one that separates those who are in Christ and those who are not.

The backdrop of eternity puts the span of a human life into perspective. Our time on earth is short, but eternity dignifies time even as it reminds us of our finitude. The concluding movement of the biblical narrative reminds us that we are to yearn for eternity and for the glory that is to come.

On this Day of Judgment, all human attempts at justice will be shown to fall far short of authentic justice. On this day, God's perfect justice will indeed flood like a mighty river. The destiny of the unrepentant sinner is eternal punishment. But God's justice is also restorative, and those who are in Christ will come to know the absolute satisfaction, peace, wholeness, and restoration that Christ promises. Every eye will be dry, and every tear will be wiped away (Rev. 7:17; 21:4).

The reversal of the curse and the end of history serve to ground Christians in this age within the secure purposes and the sovereign power of God. The Christian worldview rejects all human utopianisms, all claims of lasting earthly glory, and all denials of the meaningfulness of history and human experience.

In other words, the conclusion of the Christian master narrative reminds believers that we are not to seek ultimate fulfillment in this life. Instead, we are to follow Christ in obedience and give the totality of our lives to the things that will bring glory to God in the midst of this fallen world. We will refrain from optimism grounded in humanity and will rest in the hope that is ours in Christ. We will suffer illness, injury, persecution, and death—but we know ourselves to be completely safe within the purposes of God. And so we wait. And so we pray, “Even so, Lord, come quickly.”

I am always glad to hear from readers. Write me at mail@albertmohler.com. Follow regular updates on Twitter at www.twitter.com/AlbertMohler.

For background reading, see:

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “[The Glory of God and the Life of the Mind](#),” Friday, November 12, 2010.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “[The Knowledge of the Self-Revealing God: Starting Point for the Christian Worldview](#),” Friday, December 3, 2010.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “[The Christian Worldview as Master Narrative: Creation](#),” Wednesday, December 15, 2010.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “[The Christian Worldview as Master Narrative: Sin and its Consequences](#),” Friday, January 7, 2011.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “[The Christian Worldview as Master Narrative: Redemption Accomplished](#),” Monday, January 10, 2011.

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