Systematic Theology
Part 7: Doctrine of the Future
Chapter 54: The Return of Christ: When and How?

When and how will Christ return? Could he come back at any hour?

Introduction & Review
Note: The primary textbook for the structure of this series is Wayne Grudem’s Systematic Theology. The primary text for the substance of this series is the Bible.

Grudem: What is systematic theology? Systematic theology is any study that answers the question, “What does the ______ Bible teach us today?” about any given topic.

Explanation and Scriptural Basis
Grudem: The study of future events is often called “______________.” . . . The study of eschatology, then, is the study of “the _____ things.”

A. Grudem: A _________, personal, visible, ________ return of Christ
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; 22:20

B. Grudem: We should eagerly ______ for Christ’s return
Revelation 22:20; Titus 2:12-13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Corinthians 16:22

C. Grudem: We do not ______ when Christ will return

E. Grudem: There is disagreement over the ____________ of future events

F. Grudem: Could Christ come back at _____ time?

   1. Grudem: Verses predicting a sudden and unexpected coming of Christ
2. Grudem: Signs that precede Christ’s return
   a. Grudem: The preaching of the gospel to all nations. Mark 13:10; Matthew 24:14
   f. Grudem: The salvation of Israel. Romans 11:12, 25-26
3. Grudem: Possible solutions
   View 1: Grudem: Christ could ______ come at any time. Grudem: The signs are given so that, when we see them, they will ______________ our expectation of Christ’s return. Luke 21:28; Mark 13:5-6, 21
   View 2: Grudem: Christ indeed ______ come at any time
      Reconciliation view 1: Grudem: (1) The New Testament talks about ______ distinct returns of Christ or two second comings of Christ
      Reconciliation view 2: Grudem: (2) All the signs have been ____________, and therefore Christ in fact could return at any moment
      Reconciliation view 3 (Grudem’s view): Grudem: (3) It is unlikely but __________ that the signs have already been fulfilled

Scripture Memory Passage: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18
15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Hymn: “Lo! He Comes, With Clouds Descending” (Wesley and Cennick)
Systematic Theology
Part 7: Doctrine of the Future
Chapter 55: The Millennium

What is the millennium? When does it occur? Will Christians go through the Great Tribulation?

Scripture Memory Passage Review: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

Explanation and Scriptural Basis
Grudem: The word *millennium* means “one thousand ________.” Revelation 20:1-10

A. Grudem: Explanation of the three major views

1. Grudem: __millennialism
   Grudem: Revelation 20:1–10 describes the __________ church age

2. Grudem: _____millennialism
   Grudem: Christ will return ________ the millennium
   Grudem: Postmillennialism is . . . very optimistic about the power of the ________ to change lives and bring about much good in the world.

3. Grudem: ____millennialism
   a. Grudem: Classic or ____________ ____millennialism
      Grudem: Christ will come back ________ the millennium
   b. Grudem: ____tribulational ____millennialism (or dispensational premillennialism)
      Grudem: Christ will return not only before the millennium . . . but also it will occur ________ the great tribulation

B. Grudem: A consideration of the arguments for amillennialism
C. Grudem: A consideration of the arguments for postmillennialism

D. Grudem: A consideration of the arguments for premillennialism

E. Grudem: The time of the great ________________ *Matthew 24:21*

1. Grudem: The entire period of the tribulation will be a time of the outpouring of God’s wrath on all the earth. Therefore it would not be appropriate for Christians to be on the earth at that time.

2. Grudem: Revelation 3:10 . . . indicates that the church will be taken out of the world before that hour of trial comes.

3. Grudem: If Christ returns after the tribulation and defeats all his enemies, then where will the unbelievers come from who are necessary to populate the millennial kingdom?

4. Grudem: This view makes it possible to believe that Christ could come at any moment (his coming before the tribulation) and yet that many signs must be fulfilled before he comes (his coming after the tribulation, when the signs will be fulfilled).

Implications (discussed by Grudem in his Sunday school lessons on this topic)

1. Jesus is ________ back

2. ___________ will end

3. ____________ is worth it

4. Believers disagree on the ____________

Scripture Memory Passage: Revelation 20:4-6

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Hymn: “Jesus Shall Reign Where’er the Sun” (Isaac Watts, 1719)
Systematic Theology
Part 7: Doctrine of the Future
Chapter 56: The Final Judgment and Eternal Punishment

Who will be judged? What is hell?

Scripture Memory Passage Review: Revelation 20:4-6

Explanation and Scriptural Basis

A. Grudem: The ______ of final judgment


2. Grudem: Will there be more than one judgment? Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10


C. Grudem: The __________ of final judgment

1. Grudem: Jesus Christ will be the judge. 2 Timothy 4:1; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Matthew 25:31-33


3. Grudem: Believers will be judged. Romans 14:10, 12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 2:6-11; Revelation 20:12, 15; Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:24; Romans 8:1; Revelation 11:18; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Luke 19:17, 19
5. Grudem: We will help in the work of judgment. 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Revelation 20:4; Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14

D. Grudem: ____________ of final judgment

E. Grudem: Justice of God in the final judgment
1 Peter 1:17; Romans 2:11; Colossians 3:25; Romans 3:19; Revelation 19:1-2

F. Grudem: Moral application of the final judgment

1. Grudem: The doctrine of final judgment satisfies our __________ sense of a need for justice in the world. Colossians 3:25; Revelation 20:12; Malachi 3:16

2. Grudem: The doctrine of final judgment enables us to forgive others __________. Romans 12:19; 1 Peter 2:22-23; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60

3. Grudem: The doctrine of the final judgment provides a motive for __________ living. Matthew 6:20; Romans 3:18; 2 Peter 3:3-4; 1 Peter 4:4-5

4. Grudem: The doctrine of final judgment provides a great motive for __________. Ezekiel 33:11; 2 Peter 3:9

G. Grudem: Hell

Scripture Memory Passage: Revelation 20:11-13
11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Hymn: “O Quickly Come, Dread Judge of All” (Lawrence Tuttiett, 1854)
Systematic Theology
Part 7: Doctrine of the Future
Chapter 57: The New Heavens and New Earth

What is heaven? Is it a place? How will the earth be renewed? What will it be like to live in the new heavens and new earth?

Scripture Memory Passage Review: Revelation 20:11-13

Explanation and Scriptural Basis

A. Grudem: We will live eternally with God in new heavens ______ a new earth

Matthew 25:34; Revelation 22:3; Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-3

Grudem: There will be a __________ of heaven and earth in this new creation, and there we will live in the presence of God.

1. Grudem: What is heaven?
   Isaiah 66:1; Matthew 6:9; 1 Peter 3:22. Grudem: Heaven is the place where God most fully makes known his presence to bless.


3. Grudem: The physical creation will be __________ and we will continue to exist and act in it. 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1; Romans 8:19-21; Hebrews 1:11-12; 12:26-27; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 20:11; 21:1; Genesis 1:31

5. Grudem: The new creation will not be “timeless” but will include an unending succession of moments. Revelation 21:24-26; 22:2

B. Grudem: The doctrine of the new creation provides a great motivation for storing up treasures in _______ rather than earth. 2 Peter 3:11-13; Matthew 6:19-21

C. Grudem: The new creation will be a place of great beauty and abundance and joy in the presence of _______. Revelation 21:2, 4, 6, 11, 18-21, 27; 22:5
Revelation 21:3-4, 23; 22:3-4; Psalm 16:11; 27:4; 73:25-26; 4:8; Revelation 21-22

Scripture Memory Passage: Revelation 21:3-4
3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Hymn: “The Sands of Time Are Sinking” (Anne R. Cousin, 1857)
The sands of time are sinking, the dawn of heaven breaks,
The summer morn I’ve sighed for, the fair sweet morn awakes;
Dark, dark hath been the midnight, but dayspring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel’s land.

The king there in his beauty without a veil is seen;
It were a well-spent journey though sev’n deaths lay between:
The Lamb with his fair army doth on Mount Zion stand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel’s land.

O Christ, he is the fountain, the deep sweet well of love!
The streams on earth I’ve tasted, more deep I’ll drink above:
There to an ocean fullness his mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel’s land.

The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear bridegroom’s face;
I will not gaze at glory, but on my King of grace;
Not at the crown he giveth, but on his pierced hand:
The lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel’s land.
Systematic Theology: 
A Brief Review of What We Learned

Why did we do this? Where did we go? What did we learn?

Scripture Memory Passage Review: Revelation 21:3-4

A. Review of the beginning

1. Where did we start? Week 1: An introduction to systematic theology (February 16, 2014)
   Grudem: Systematic theology is any study that answers the question, “What does the ________ Bible teach us today?” about any given ________.

2. Why did we, as a class, study systematic theology?
   • To fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)
   • To confront _____ in our lives
   • Grudem: To be able to make better decisions later on _____ questions of doctrine that may arise

3. Why did we pick this systematic theology book?
   It is based on the Bible. It is clearly written. It has a lot of ________________ to life
   Grudem: It is inevitable that someone studying a systematic theology text or taking a course in systematic theology for the first time will have many of his or her own personal beliefs challenged or modified, refined or enriched.

B. What did we as a class learn?

1. Part 1: The doctrine of the Word of God
   Key text: 2 Timothy 3:16. Takeaway: the Bible is our basis for understanding God. Stay ________ to the text!

2. Part 2: The doctrine of God
   Key text: Revelation 5:11-12. Takeaway: do not make analogies for the Trinity—nothing in the universe is like them. ________ it!
3. **Part 3: The doctrine of man**
   Key text: *Genesis 1:26-27*. Takeaway: open-handed and closed-fisted issues exist. _______ them and behave accordingly!

4. **Part 4: The doctrines of Christ & the Holy Spirit**
   Key text: *1 Corinthians 15:20-23*. Takeaway: imitate the work and active nature of Jesus & the Holy Spirit. _______ them!

5. **Part 5: The doctrine of the application of redemption**
   Key text: *Galatians 2:20*. Takeaway: the Trinity works together for man’s salvation—& God desires me. Praise _____!

6. **Part 6: The doctrine of the church**
   Key text: *Ephesians 4:11-13*. Takeaway: the church is a complex organism devised and sustained by God. Treat her ___________!

7. **Part 7: The doctrine of the future**
   Key text: *Revelation 21:3-4*. Takeaway: God will demonstrate His goodness through ending this age. Look ___________!

C. **What did Jim learn?**

1. **The deepness of God and His Word**
   Romans 11:33

2. And __ or
   1 Corinthians 12:12

3. **Theology helps me live right now**
   Psalm 119:105

4. **God is ___ active**
   Genesis 1:2; Revelation 21:23

5. **I was reminded**
   Nehemiah 8:5-8.

6. **The priority of desiring _____ over desiring information _______ God**
   Psalm 37:4