

THE WHOLE BIBLE: 2 Thessalonians – 2 Timothy

COLOSSIANS

- written in response to false teachers in Colossian church
- false teaching was combination of pagan and Jewish beliefs
- taking Colossian believers away from the centrality of Christ

The gospel is: the supremacy of Christ over all things

Colossians 1:15-20

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Jesus is the head of *creation* and *new creation*

- what was lost in Fall (creation), restored in Redemption (new creation)
- creation: “image of God,” “firstborn of all creation”
- new creation: “the beginning,” “firstborn from the dead”

2 THESSALONIANS

- written in response to questions and confusion about Second Coming

Theology of Second Coming of Christ

- OT vision of the Messiah: redeem Israel and rule the nations

Psalms 2:7-9

⁷ I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. ⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

But Jesus of Nazareth came as a suffering servant on a Roman cross

- thus, Pharisees scoffed, and disciples were confused and discouraged
- prophetic horizon: OT envisioned *a single coming*
- but the surprise of the NT: the Messiah will come in two stages

Between the ages: a theology of hope

- Christ has come, but not in fullness | “already but not yet”
- eschatology is about a hopeful waiting for the return of Christ

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

⁷ When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels

⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, ¹⁰ when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

- 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus
- written to pastors about the organization and care of the local church
- broadly applicable to all Christians

1 TIMOTHY

- written to Timothy, pastoring in Ephesus (Acts 16:1-4)
- purpose of letter:

1 Timothy 3:14-15

¹⁴ I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, ¹⁵ if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

1 Timothy 4:11-16

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

2 TIMOTHY

- last letter by Paul before his death | written from prison
- written to encourage Timothy in the face of suffering
- ministry is suffering – “share in suffering for the gospel” (1:8)

2 Timothy 4:1-8

¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. ⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up 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 loved his appearing.

Notes

Introduction to Colossians

- written in response to false teachers in Colossian church
- not sure of what false teaching was | listening half conversation
- false teaching was combination of pagan and Jewish beliefs
- taking Colossian believers away from the centrality of Christ

The gospel is the supremacy of Christ over all things

- Paul wants the Colossian believers to hold fast to the Head – Christ
- when we meditate on Christ, everything else comes into focus

Creation (v. 15-17) | New Creation (v. 18-20)

Colossians 1:15-17

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

“He is the image of the invisible God”

- Second Commandment – “no graven images of God”
 - not because God is invisible
 - but man is prohibited from imaging God on his own
 - for God will provide the perfect image: Jesus of Nazareth

“firstborn of all creation”

- Jesus is not a created being
- metaphor of preeminence | first-born sons were most important
- Christ is supreme over all creation

“all things were created through him and for him”

- Jesus is the creator of all things (beginning)
- all creation is for Jesus (end)
 - creation exists for glory of Christ

Colossians 1:18-20

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Idea of “new creation”

- v. 18 – “he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead”
- gospel is not just saving souls from hell, but a *new world*
- redemption of Christ is to reclaim and recover what was lost
- not just forgiveness of sins | but restoration of whole world

“he is the head of the body, the church”

- resurrected world is not individual persons, but a redeemed people

“through him to reconcile to himself all things”

- at the heart of the gospel is reconciliation
- and essence of new world to come is restoration of broken relationships
 - vertical (God and man)
 - horizontal (broken friendships, families, racial injustice)
- only through the cross – “making peace by the blood of his cross”

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

- written in response to questions and confusion about Second Coming
- some thought already happened | deceased believers missed

Theology of Second Coming of Christ

- OT vision of the Messiah: redeem Israel and rule the nations

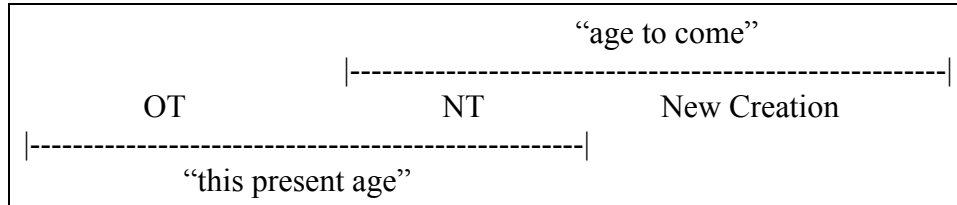
Psalm 2:7-9 ⁷ I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. ⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”

Cataclysmic event

- this heroic warrior will vanquish enemies of Israel
- end of poverty, disease, death | blind will see, lame will walk
- sins will be forgiven | captives will be set free

But Jesus of Nazareth came as a suffering servant on a Roman cross

- expectation was for a Jewish Alexander the Great
- thus, Pharisees scoffed, and disciples were confused and discouraged
- prophetic horizon: OT envisioned *a single coming*
- but the surprise of the NT: the Messiah will come in two stages



Between the ages: a theology of hope

- Christ has come, but not in fullness | “already but not yet”
- eschatology is about a hopeful waiting for the return of Christ

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 ⁷ When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, ¹⁰ when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed.

“Revealed” is ἀποκάλυψις (apocalypse)

- “with his mighty angels” – angelic army
- “flaming fire” – theophany
- Christ will come in vengeance in 2nd coming | mercy in 1st coming

John 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

- “obey the gospel” – not just believe, but obey
- “eternal destruction” – doctrine of hell | paradoxical statement – “worm does not die and fire is not quenched”
- “away from presence of the Lord” – hell is absence of Jesus’ love
- “glorified in his saints” – glory of his coming tied up in his people
- “marveled at” – this is end of all history, worship of Lamb

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1 Timothy 3:14-15 ¹⁴ I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, ¹⁵ if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

“in the household of God”

- “household” is οἶκος – household family, extended family
- Christian life is not solitary existence, but inside of a family

1 Timothy 4:11-16

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

- “your youth” – probably early to mid-30s
- “an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” – description of the Christian life; applies to all believers
- “devote yourself to public reading of Scripture, exhortation, teaching” – “exhortation” is παράκλησις – come alongside, admonition, appeal – “teaching” is διδασκαλία – teaching, doctrinal instruction
- “keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching” – self-examination b/c prone to wander
- “persist in this” – persevere, endure in the face of adversity

2 TIMOTHY

- last letter by Paul before his death | written in prison
- written to encourage Timothy in the face of suffering
- ministry is suffering – “share in suffering for the gospel” (1:8)
- suffering demonstrates authenticity of message
- powerful delivery | to love people is to suffer

2 Timothy 4:1-8

¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up 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 loved his appearing.

- “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season”
 - good times and bad times | when people eager, not eager
- “reprove” is ἐλέγχω – show someone their fault, criticize
- “rebuke” is ἐπιτιμάω – warn of consequences
- “exhort” is παρακαλέω – encourage, speak truth, make an appeal
- “with complete patience and teaching” – manner of appeal
- “for time is coming when people not endure sound teaching”
 - human beings naturally hate rebuke and correction
- “sober-minded” – don’t be swayed too much by emotions, problems
- “endure suffering” – ministry is full of suffering and hardship
- “do work of an evangelist” – bring people to Christ
- “poured out as a drink offering” – life is expended for Christ

- “fought the good fight, finished race, kept faith”
 - Christian life is a “fight” and a “race”
 - arduous, full of difficulty, requiring discipline and training
 - not: “coasted through Christian life” or “slacked and got by”
- “crown of righteousness” – there is a reward awaiting us
 - “well done, good and faithful servant”
 - LOTR, hobbits honored at Aragorn’s coronation