

1. The Second Advent of Christ:

- a. Has the time been set for Jesus' return? **Acts 17:30-31** "...God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."
- b. What are some signs of the end?
 - i. **Matthew 24:5** "...many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many." [For example: Charles Manson; Jim Jones; David Koresh (Wikipedia)]
 - ii. ⁶ "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars." ["...it's estimated that there are around 60-110 armed conflicts happening at any given time" (Today's Armed Conflicts).]
 - iii. ⁷ "...in various places there will be famines and earthquakes." ["Approximately 55 earthquakes occur worldwide each day, which translates to around 20,000 earthquakes per year" (NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory).]
 - iv. ⁹ "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name." ["Open Doors' 2024 World Watch List revealed that over 365 million Christians worldwide experience high levels of persecution or discrimination" (Open Doors US).]
 - v. ¹⁰ "...many will fall away..."
 1. In the Western world there has been a steady decline of Christians, especially among young people. "A recent survey conducted by the Barna Group, ...found that less than 1 percent of the young adult population in the United States has a biblical worldview.
 2. The Barna Group defined a biblical worldview as belief in the following:
 - a. absolute moral truth exists
 - b. the Bible is completely inerrant
 - c. Satan is a real being, not symbolic
 - d. a person cannot earn his way into the kingdom of God though good works
 - e. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth
 - f. God is the supreme Creator of the heavens and the earth and reigns over the whole universe today" (<https://www.gotquestions.org/falling-away.html>).
- c. What is the purpose of the end time signs? "The purpose of the signs is not to lead Christian believers to determine the hour of the Lord's coming, but to incite them to perpetual watchfulness" (JT Mueller, 621).
- d. Will everyone see Jesus at the same time? **Revelation 1:7** "BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him..." // How is that possible? As Jesus is returning, He will raise all people from the dead (**1Cor. 15**, page 5).

- e. What is the white throne judgment? **Revelation 20:11-13** “Then I saw a great white throne and [Jesus] [Matt. 25:31; John 5:26-27] who sat upon it... And I saw the dead, the great and the small [everyone], standing before the throne, and **books** were opened; and **another book** was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged [evaluated] from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.” // Think about the scene of the sheep and the goats in **Matthew 25:31-46**. From TLSB:
- i. *dead, great and small*. This presupposes a bodily resurrection of all people, including those who rejected Christ.
 - ii. *books*. Records of human conduct.
 - iii. *the book of life*. The book that lists all who have received Christ and God’s gracious gifts of salvation.
 - iv. *according to what they had done*. The righteous do not earn salvation by their works, but their good works were recorded so that they might now be rewarded by the One who was at work in the saints (Phil. 1:6; 1Th 2:13), causing them to produce good fruit.
- f. What is the rewards ceremony? It’s the bema seat judgment. This judgment applies *only to those who believe in Jesus*. This judgment is like a judge in an ancient Olympic-type game; he watches the contest; then he determines the winner and gives the reward.
- i. Regarding believers **who lived for Jesus** by **denying** themselves and **acting** for the eternal benefit of others, *Jesus will reward them!*
 - ii. Regarding believers **who lived for themselves** by **not** denying themselves, and **not** acting for the eternal benefit of others, *they will lose their reward.*
- g. What are some key passages on the topic of rewards?
- i. The OT speaks about the coming rewards: **Isaiah 62:11** ... “Lo, your salvation comes; Behold His reward is with Him...”
 - ii. When will the rewards be given? When Jesus returns: **Revelation 11:18** “...the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time to reward* Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name...”
 - iii. All believers must appear before the bema seat: **2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment [βήματος] seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed [rewarded] for his deeds in the body [while living on earth], according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”
 - iv. Which works will be rewarded? *The ones that pass the test of fire!* **1 Corinthians 3:12-15** “Now if any man builds on the foundation [that is, on Jesus Christ] with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man’s work will become evident; for the day [the day of Jesus’ return] will show it because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built on it [Jesus Christ] remains, he will receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” // “When you build into others spiritually, no one may even notice or care—but God cares!”¹

¹ John Burke, *Imagine Heaven* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2015), 258.