

*Paul's view of the End Times as "already but not yet" leads to an understanding of the believer as "old and new" and a strong emphasis on ethics.*

## **The End Times as "already but not yet"**

1. The Resurrection of Christ has started a new age
  - a. <sup>11</sup> Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom **the end of the ages has come**. (1 Cor 10:11)
  
2. The new age will bring the glorious redemption of all things
  - a. <sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of **this present time** are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the **creation itself will be set free from its bondage** to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. (Rom 8:18-22)
  
3. Though the new age has already started, this age is still evil...
  - a. <sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from **the present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father... (Gal 1:3-4)
  
4. ...and under the influence of Satan
  - a. <sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup> In their case **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Cor 4:3-4)
  
  - b. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against **the cosmic powers over this present darkness**, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Eph 6:12)

## The believer as “old and new”

5. God has given us new birth into the coming age through the Resurrection of Christ
  - a. And **you were dead** in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the **course of this world**, following the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit that is now at work** in the sons of disobedience— <sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> **even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ**—by grace you have been saved— <sup>6</sup> **and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,** <sup>7</sup> **so that in the coming ages** he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:1-7)
  
6. We are already new in Christ...
  - a. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation. The old has passed away;** behold, **the new has come.** (2 Cor 5:17)
  
  - b. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have **put off the old self** with its practices <sup>10</sup> and have **put on the new self, which is being renewed** in knowledge after the image of its creator. <sup>11</sup> Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but **Christ is all, and in all.** (Col 3:9-11)

## Strong emphasis on ethics

7. ...and are called to live as the new people God has made us to be
  - a. <sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> **We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death**, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, **we too might walk in newness of life.** <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> We know that **our old self was crucified with him** in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would **no longer be enslaved to sin.** <sup>7</sup> For one who has died has been **set free from sin.** <sup>8</sup> Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup> For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves **dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.** (Rom 6:3-11)

- b. For we know that **if the tent that is our earthly home** is destroyed, we have a building from God, **a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.** <sup>2</sup>For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, <sup>3</sup>if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. <sup>4</sup>For **while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened**—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that **what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.** <sup>5</sup>He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. <sup>6</sup>So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, <sup>7</sup>**for we walk by faith, not by sight.** <sup>8</sup>Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup>So whether we are at home or away, **we make it our aim to please him.** <sup>10</sup>**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,** so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. (2 Cor 5:1-10)
- c. I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup>**Do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)
- d. <sup>11</sup>Besides this **you know the time, that the hour has come** for you to wake from sleep. For **salvation is nearer** to us now than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup>The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us **cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.** <sup>13</sup>Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>**But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh**, to gratify its desires. (Rom 13:11-14)

## Conclusion and comparison

If for Matthew and Mark the End Times are in the future, and for John the End Times are in the present, for Paul the End Times are “already here but not yet.” We could describe Paul’s as a “two-dimensional” view of history with a resulting two-dimensional view of the person. For Paul, eschatology leads directly to ethics—“How should we live in these End Times?”