

~Imminence--by Futurists!~

im-mi-nence *n.* *The quality or condition of being about to occur; Something about to occur.*

Henry Alford (1868) "The apostle for the most part wrote and spoke of it (the coming of the Lord) as soon to appear, not however without many and sufficient hints, furnished by the Spirit, of an interval, and that no short one, first to elapse." (Quoted in *The Parousia*) It would not be clear from this passage alone whether St. Peter regarded the coming of the Lord as likely to occur in the life of these his readers or not; but as interpreted by the analogy of his other expressions on the same subject, it would appear that he did." (Quoted in *The Parousia*) Answering-Christianity.com "At first, the Christian community expected an imminent return of Christ .." ("The Ultimate Test of Jesus: Jesus' second coming and 'grace'.')

Johann Bengel (1742) "From such passages as this we see that the apostolic age maintained that which ought to be the attitude of all ages,---constant expectation of the Lord's return." (Quoted in *The Parousia*)

Dr. Louis Berkhof (1933) "Pentecost marked the beginning of the last days, that is, of the last dispensation.. Clearly the earliest Christians believed that they were living in the last days. (*Manual of Christian Doctrine*; Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Company, [1933] 1995, p. 346)

G.C. Berkower (1972) "Consistent Eschatology sees the expectation of the coming of the Kingdom within the first generation of believers as the heart and soul of the early church. Clearly we cannot simply ignore this view of eschatology.. we are obligated to deal with the accented nearness of the Kingdom found in the New Testament. We read there that the end of all things is at hand; that the believer is to be sane and sober (1 Pet. 4:7); that the Lord is at hand (Phil. 4:5); that the judge is standing at the door (James 5:8,9); that the time is near (Rev. 1:3). These passages have constantly presented problems for New Testament preaching. What does the New Testament mean by the last days, the last hour? What does it mean when it says that "the night is far gone, the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12)? In what sense has the end of the ages come upon the community of believers (1 Cor. 10:11)? How are Paul's words to be explained when he says that God will soon (*en tachei*) crush Satan (Rom 16:20)?" (*The Return of Christ* p. 82)

Ernest Best (1972) "One of the striking features of N.T. belief in the parousia is its nearness." (*A Commentary of the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*; p. 360)"There are those like W.G. Kummel, *Promise and Fulfillment*, pp. 64ff, and G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future*, London, 1954, pp. 183ff., who argue strongly that Jesus foresaw a period between his own death and the accomplishment of the Kingdom but that this period would not be lengthy and would come within the life-time of his disciples." (*ibid.*, 350)

Coneybeare and Howson (1835) "This phrase (*εσχατίζουσα*, used without the article, as having become a familiar expression) generally denotes the termination of the Mosaic dispensation. (See Acts ii. 17; 1 Pet. i. 5, 20; Heb. i. 2.) Thus the expression generally denotes (in the apostolic age) the time present; but here it points to a future immediately at hand, which is, however, blended with the present (see vers. 6, 8), and was in fact the end of the apostolic age. (Compare 1 John ii. 18, 'It is the last hour.')

The long duration of this last period of the world's development was not revealed to the apostles: they

expected that their Lord's return would end it, in their own generation; and thus His words were fulfilled, that none should foresee the time of His coming." (Quoted in *The Parousia*)

Dr. Everett Ferguson (1996) "Early Christians expressed the conviction that they were living in the 'last days' and therefore that the church was the eschatological community." (*The Church of Christ: A Biblical Ecclesiology for Today*, Eerdmans; p. 67-68)

Edward Gibbon (1776) "In the primitive church, the influence of truth was very powerfully strengthened by an opinion, which, however it may deserve respect for its usefulness and antiquity, has not been found agreeable to experience. It was universally believed, that the end of the world, and the kingdom of heaven, were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; the tradition of it was preserved by their earliest disciples, and those who understood in their literal senses the discourse of Christ himself, were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of Man in the clouds, before that generation was totally extinguished, which had beheld his humble condition upon earth, and which might still be witness of the calamities of the Jews under Vespasian or Hadrian." (*Rise and Fall...*, p. 426)

Charles L. Holman (1998) "The fact that the Synoptic Gospels portray the expectation of an imminent parousia of the Son of man that is rooted in the message of Jesus is undeniable." ("The idea of an Imminent Parousia in the Synoptic Gospels," *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 3; p. 30)

Tim LaHaye (1998) "The apostles and first century church universally expected His return in their lifetime, which is why they were so motivated to live holy lives and so dedicated to evangelism and reaching the world for Christ." ("The Signs of the Times Imply His Coming," in *10 Reasons Why Jesus is Coming Soon: Ten Christian Leaders Share Their Thoughts: Multnomah*, p. 191)

Daniel L. Lewis (1998) "Without question, the New Testament writers concluded that the last days began with the Jesus event." (*3 Crucial Questions about the Last Days* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Company, [1933] 1995, p. 346)

Leon Morris (1984) "They are surely wrong who affirm that Paul thought of the parousia as imminent in his early years, but that the idea faded in later life. Much later he still thought of the Lord's coming as at hand (Phil. 4:5; cf. 1 Cor. 16:22)." (*1 and 2 Thessalonians*, MI: Eerdmans, 1984, p. 94)

John Murray Rom 13:11-12 "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." It is often claimed that the apostle, like other New Testament writers, expected the advent of Christ within a short time and that this expectation was reproduced in his teaching in the form of affirmation to that effect (cf. 1 Cor 7:29-31)."

Joseph Plevnik (1997) "Paul expected the Lord to come soon; his statement that "we shall not die" suggests this. And he clearly states in 1 Cor 7:29,31 that "the appointed time has grown short" and that "the present form of this world is passing away. As 1 Cor. 7:25-31 clearly shows, Paul is convinced that he is living in the last generation on earth." (*Paul and the Parousia: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation*; Hendrickson; p. 158-159)

"To Paul's thinking, the parousia has not receded into the distant future; he keeps on talking about the near approach of the end. In Phil 4:5 he asserts, "The Lord is near (ho kyrios engys)," and in Rom 13:11-12 he states, "Salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is

near." (ibid., 159-160) "How close is the parousia, according to Paul? As **G. Klein** observes, the first person plural in 1 Thess 4:15,17 indicates that he thinks he will live to see the Lord's coming." (ibid., 278)

F.W. Robertson "In the first centuries the early Christians believed that the millennial advent was close; they heard the warning of the apostle, brief and sharp, "The time is short." " (Sermon on the Illusiveness of Life.)

Neal Robinson (1974) "The first generation of Christians were convinced that Jesus would shortly return in glory." [Christ in Islam and Christianity (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 78.]

J.S. Russell (1878) "Strange that the plainest, strongest, most oft-repeated affirmations of his faith and hope by St. Paul should produce in the mind of a reader so faint an impression of his convictions as this. But there is not faltering in the declaration of the apostle; it is no peradventure that he utters; it is with a firm and confident tone that he raises the exulting cry, 'The Lord is at hand.' He does not express his own surmises, or hopes, or longings, but delivers the message with which he was charged, and, as a faithful witness for Christ, everywhere proclaims the speedy coming of the Lord." "This imminency of the Parousia explains the fervour with which the apostle urges Timothy to put forth every effort in discharging the duties of his office: 'Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.' These injunctions are sometimes employed to set forth the normal intensity and urgency with which the pastoral function should be discharged (and we do not condemn the application); but it is plain that St. Paul is not speaking of ordinary times and ordinary efforts. It is the agony of a tremendous crisis; the time is short; it is now or never; victory or death. These are not the common-place phrases about the diligent discharge of duty, but the alarm of the sentinel who sees the enemy at the gates, and blows the trumpet to warn the city." (The Parousia)

H. J. Schoeps (1961) "It is undeniable that Paul, with the whole of primitive Christianity, erred about the imminently expected parousia." (The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History, p. 46)

Stephen S. Smalley (1964) "In the earlier Pauline epistles, I and II Thessalonians, the parousia seems to be expected in Paul's own lifetime (I Thess 2:19); it is associated with the "day of the Lord," which is felt to be "at hand" (5:2). Quite clearly, whatever Paul expected, he expected it to happen soon, and no doubt within his own lifetime." ("The Delay of the Parousia," Journal of Biblical Literature 83; p. 48)

Dr. James D. Tabor "There is absolutely clear evidence running through the New Testament documents that the early followers of Jesus (Nazarenes) were convinced that they were living very close to the end of the Age. They expected the "Parousia" (arrival) of the Messiah within the span of their generation. This apocalyptic hope was largely based on the preaching of Jesus himself that the "Kingdom of God was at hand," as well as a general understanding of the prophecies of the book of Daniel, especially chapters 9 and 11." ("Christian Origins and the New Testament")

Phil Ware (1979) "Modern theologians raise the question "Did Paul expect the Parousia in his lifetime?" On the basis of such passages as 1 Corinthians 7:26; 15:51; Romans 13:11 ff and 1 Thessalonians 4:15,17 most scholars answer with a resounding "Yes!" ("The Coming of the Lord: Eschatology and 1 Thessalonians," Restoration Quarterly 22; p. 117) "For them the Parousia was to happen soon, in their immediate future. This emphasis is felt even in Paul's letter: 1:10; 3:13; 5:2, 23; esp. the use of present tense in 1:10; 5:2. The Parousia was an event on the way." (ibid., 113) CRITICAL

Dr. Ellicot 'It may, perhaps, be admitted that the sacred writers have used language in reference to the Lord's return which seems to show that the longings of hope had almost become the convictions of belief.' (Quoted in *The Parousia*)