

An Extract from
**Christ and the
World of Thought**
by

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Theology
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Publishers T & T Clark

Highlighted by Peter Bluer

I was directed by **Professor F F Bruce of Manchester University** to read **this book of Professor Lamont's**.

I knew Prof. Bruce personally and when I wrote to him, about my studies in the New Testament in which I had discovered that the Apostles, in the Gospels and letters, taught the Second Advent was to occur in their own life time.

The answer he gave, was that my studies, had shown the correct understanding of the New Testament.

I was shocked by my discovery and his answer.

Prof Bruce also told me he believed the futurist position was **untenable** and the Second Advent was **a past event**.

I asked him why his views were not generally known and he said he did not want to upset his close brethren.

When I tell other Christians about my views they go off at the deep end, even though, they have not studied the subject to any depth.

Prof. Bruce said he could not get a consistent view of the Second Advent from the Gospels and at the time in 1978 I understood exactly what he meant.

It took me **15 years** to resolve the difficulties.

The major break through came by comparing the scriptures Ezekiel 38,39,47 and Rev 20,21.

I had read these scriptures hundreds of times and the problem which was located there, never dawned on me.

I know of no book or writer that has ever spotted the problem in these two books.

Peter Bluer

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...But now our second criticism of these two schools is that both of them uncritically assume either that Jesus predicted **"the end of the world"** as close at hand, even within that generation, or that His disciples **mistakenly** supposed Him to have predicted it. This assumption is made not only by the two extreme schools in question but also by **the majority of modern theologians and New Testament scholars**. In spite of all this authority we venture to hold that it is **a huge misunderstanding**.

Let it be admitted that Jesus did predict an event **of cosmic significance**, which was **to occur within the lifetime** of some who listened to His words.

To what kind of event did He refer ? That is the whole question. The assumption with which we have issue—varies in particulars, but in general it is to the effect that **Jesus expected**, or was supposed by **His disciples to have expected**, that **He would return in Person to the earth within that generation**, execute judgment upon His enemies, transform the course of nature, and reign over a pure and undying race. In short, **the existing physical order was to terminate in something like forty years from the time of the prediction**. **Such a change did not occur**, and so the assumption passes on to the inference that **Jesus was mistaken** or else that His **disciples reported Him wrongly**.

This alleged mistake is often pointed to with **the finger of scorn by enemies of Christianity**, **by Christian theologians it is minimized**; it was an error which **did not** affect the substance of the faith; the faith indeed **proved its vitality** by triumphing over the **"disappointment"** caused by **the non-occurrence of the predicted event**; and so on. Even so clear and profound a theologian as Emil Brunner follows the device to which resort has often been made¹... that **"in the literal sense the critics are right: Jesus and the Apostles did identify this 'soon' with a point in the time-series; and this definition of a special time has proved to be incorrect."**

1. The Mediator, p. 421 (note).

But no one who is quite unsophisticated is likely **to be satisfied with such minimizing**. If Jesus or His Apostles **made the alleged mistake**, we can hardly object to some honest minds putting them, in this particular matter, on a level with those earnest but misguided souls who, down through Christian history, have predicted **"the Second Coming"** for some date in the near future, and **have thereby fortified millions in their skepticism**.

No truth-loving person can very well deny that the four portraits of Jesus given us in the four Gospels reveal One who, even **"according to the flesh," possessed incomparable balance of mind**. Is it likely that this balance **forsook Him** in the matter which we are now discussing ?

One can hold very strongly that it would not be like the Jesus whom we otherwise know, to commit Himself to a very definite time-prediction (**not "the day or the hour," but the generation**) unless He had the best of reasons to know that it would be fulfilled.

This conviction forces one **to examine the prediction very closely** to make sure that one has understood its meaning. It is possible, after such an examination, to come to the conclusion that the mistake is **not in the apostolic tradition but in an interpretation of it which, beginning very early, has persisted until today**. Even in New Testament times we have evidence of it. The difficult verse¹ in the Appendix to St. John's

Gospel which runs; **"Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die"** seems meant to serve as **the apostolic correction** of the very misinterpretation of which we are speaking. Note the distinction between **"brethren"** and disciple. The Second Epistle of Peter also, which is probably the latest document of the New Testament, **bears traces of the misinterpretation**. The time has come for New Testament scholarship to apply itself to the task of **is entangling the apostolic tradition in eschatology from the misunderstandings which rose so early** and which still cast their shadow upon the Faith of the Church. **What did Jesus predict for the close of His own generation ? certainly not the end of the world** in the commonly accepted sense of that phrase. The translation of the New Testament phrase **"the consummation of the age"** by **"the end of the world"** is proof of **the bondage of our translators to the misinterpretation**. Jesus **never once** foretold, nor is He ever reported to have foretold, **the end of the world in that generation**.

But His prediction had reference to something of cosmic significance. **What was it ?** It was essentially something in **the unseen world**.

1. John 21.23

It would be accompanied by repercussions upon the earth, **signs which any eye could see**, in particular the judgment upon the Jewish race.

But in its essence it could be discerned by Faith alone.

It was to be the completion of His redeeming and revealing work. Not till **His Parousia**, which means **His Presence** but **not His bodily Presence** on earth, would the work which His Father had given Him to do produce its full benefit to Faith.

His Parousia would mark the end of the age then in progress and the inauguration of the final age when everything that is human would be judged by its relation to Him and when **all who believed on Him would immediately pass, at death, into His Presence**. The standpoint of the New Testament is in **"the last days"** of the old age.

The forty years or so during which the work of the Apostles was accomplished were no doubt regarded by them as **the last days of the old order** because they had the word of Jesus for it. During that time **the Parousia of Jesus was believed by them to be ever more imminent**.

In one of his later letters¹ St. Paul writes: **"The Lord is at hand."** The vindication of the above interpretation of the Parousia of Jesus would require a volume all to itself. But an outline of the argument may be attempted here. I shall indicate it under four heads.

1. Man's redemption finds its completion in the redemption of his body, and this completion is one part of the essence of the Parousia of Jesus. In the last days of the old order believers at death **"slept"** in Christ. **In the new order believers at death** would **"wake"** at once into His Presence.

The Thessalonian Christians **were troubled** at the thought of their friends passing away before the age of the Parousia arrived. St. Paul comforts them with the assurance that those who survive and live on into the **"Parousia"** will not anticipate [go before] those **who die before the new age arrives**. When the *new* age comes in, those who have already fallen asleep in Christ will at once enter His Presence in their full risen life. **They will be the first to "rise."**

Those who live on into the age of the Parousia will not **"sleep"** at all. At death they will **"wake"** at once into the Presence of the Lord. This is surely the grammatical sense of 1 Thess 4.15-17, though our **Authorized translators have obscure it, as they have obscured the whole subject, through their obsession by the old misinterpretation**.

1. Phil 4.5

St. Paul's use of **apocalyptic language in the 17th** verse has misled many into supposing his meaning to be that believers who survived **at the Parousia would not die at all but be instantaneously caught up into glory.**

But what he means, as is plain from the whole context, is that those who live on into the age of the Parousia will pass at once, **when they die**, into the Presence of the Lord, to be gathered there with their loved ones concerning whom they were needlessly anxious. When, later in this epistle¹ St. Paul uses the words: **"whether we wake or sleep,"** he does not mean **"whether we escape death or not,"** but **"whether we die in the Parousia-age or before it comes."**

In any case they have to die. St. Paul never suggests that he or any one else will not die. He always takes death for granted.

The trouble is that we read **the customary interpretation**, which I regard as **the old misinterpretation**, into his words. But St. Paul is not responsible for that.

We cannot appreciate the New Testament emphasis upon the Parousia of Jesus so long as we lack the seriousness of the New Testament thought of death. In our age, when the body has come to mean so much and the soul so little, we are apt to feel that the only serious thing about death is the dissolution of the body. This feeling springs from the double illusion that the soul is of little or no consequence and that God does not matter. There is no illusion of that kind in the New Testament. Death is not simply pathetic; it is tragic; and the tragedy lies here, **that death cuts away all the earthly props on which we have been leaning and leaves the soul in naked guilt before the living God.**

Many people of to-day boast openly of their superiority to this aspect of the fear of death. They suppose that they have *got* above God. In their own way **they have robbed death of its sting.** But what they have really done is to take the frozen serpent, sting and all, into their bosoms. With **"man's unconquerable levity" they laugh at death while they are still on this side of it.** But no laugh can alter the fact of sin or the fact of death or the fact of God.

It is not the passing out from life that makes death so serious; it is the passing into another form of life. So Jesus assumed, and the Apostles preached, and those who heard them believed. The fear of death borrows its dark colour from the fear of God. That is the same thing as saying that **"the sting of death is sin."** Into this plight of sinful man came the sinless Son of God. In what Emil Brunner has called the self-movement of God. Christ came from God and returned to God.

1. 1Thess 5.10

His coming to man was not complete until He had returned to God, and His Parousia was the final term in His return to God. It was then that the age of His Presence was born He had prepared a place for His own people. The familiar words, "***I go to prepare a place for you,***"¹ are a statement of the supreme eschatological fact for Faith, expressed in spatial rather than in *apocalyptic* terms.

The children of this world scoff at both kinds of terms, but Faith understands. When that place was prepared, death was robbed of its sting for all who were and are in Christ. The last enemy was destroyed. The Apostles, living as they did in **the last days of the old age**, were lyrical in their prospect of it; and if our Faith is like theirs, we too must rejoice that it happened as Jesus had foretold.

2. A formal difficulty arises in connection with the forty years or so, which elapsed between our Lord's Resurrection and His Parousia. Why so long a time ? Many are reconciled to the third day for His Resurrection, who are not so easily reconciled to the fortieth year for His Presence. We make no attempt to explain the delay, for while it impinges upon the Time-series it is essentially transcendent. But there are certain historical circumstances which fit in to the fact of this delay and which have a reconciling effect upon the mind. **Israel as a whole had to get its chance before being judged.**

The Jews were responsible for the rejection of Jesus, but the entire Jewish race could not be incriminated. The bulk of it was scattered over the Roman Empire; and Israel as a race had yet to prove how it would react to the Gospel of a Crucified and Risen Messiah. **To give Israel its opportunity was the first task of the Apostles.** From the words of Jesus Himself and from the words and actions of the Apostles we can gather the urgency of the command of Jesus that the Gospel should be preached to the Jew first and then to the whole world. Israel must have its full opportunity before the *telos* [end], and that meant the work of a generation at least. Jesus counted upon the fidelity and zeal of His followers.

This brings us to another historical consideration, which possesses even greater weight. The Revelation in Christ had to be completed by His Apostles. It is amazing that this fact receives so little attention from theologians. As St. Paul puts it, the Apostles were the foundation of the Christian edifice, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. This was the apostolic view of the matter. In another connection we have emphasized the simple fact that there can be no Revelation unless there is Faith to receive it.

1. John 14.2

The Faith is an integral part of the Revelation itself. **...It was the momentous task of the Apostles, as first-hand witnesses, to receive the Revelation and hand it on by their testimony to others.** If they had failed in their task, which of course is an empty hypothesis, there would have been no Revelation, no Gospel, no Church. Conceivably they might have failed in either of two ways: by a misunderstanding of the Person and Work of Jesus, or by a failure to be faithful when days of persecution arose.

As to the former, there is **not a single hint** in the New Testament of any fear that **Jesus might have been misinterpreted by His Apostles.** As to the latter, their fidelity could only be proved by time and life and death, and it was so proved to the utmost. They gave their lives for Jesus and the Gospel. Everything depended upon their being true, and they knew it. Their life work was indispensable to the Revelation. The earthly work of Jesus was not complete **till their work was done,** and the dawn of the Parousia marked that completion. Nowhere is clearer and nobler expression given to all this than in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Revelation. The apocalyptic form ought not to conceal the spiritual fact. There, after the Resurrection of Jesus is referred to, Satan is represented as being conquered in heaven and cast out. This is an echo from a word of Jesus:¹

"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Satan had been busy accusing the brethren before God, no doubt bringing up to date his old taunt made familiar by the Book of Job: **"Wait till the persecution comes; these fellows will then curse Jesus to His face."** This is followed by one of the most triumphant passages in all literature:

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."² Note the emphatic *they*. Michael and his angels conquered Satan in heaven; *the brethren* conquered him on earth. They finished their work victoriously.

Meanwhile, there is a loud voice in heaven. **"Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ."³** Here, as elsewhere in the Book of Revelation, the completion of Christ's work on earth is identified with the completion of the apostolic testimony. According to the apostolic Faith, "the self-movement of God" which constituted the Christian Revelation had for its outstanding peaks the Birth, Baptism, Cross, Resurrection, and Parousia of Jesus. These all transcended history, but all had their counterpart within history.

1. Luke 10.18 2. Rev 12.2 3. Rev 12.10

3. It is surprising that this line of thinking with regard to the Parousia of Jesus has been so little explored. It has its difficulties, of course, but any other interpretation has much more serious difficulties, and this one has the advantage of preserving the unity and reliability of the New Testament.

It was powerfully sketched a generation ago by **Alexander Brown of Aberdeen in his book entitled *The Great Day of the Lord***. This book, after passing through two editions, went out of print.

Like most books it had its blemishes, and Dr. Brown was not regarded as in the front line of scholarship. But for incisive thought, moral passion, and spiritual insight I have read no book to compare with it in its own field.

Dr. Hastings of dictionary fame reckoned it to be the truest of all expositions of the Book of Revelation,

but scholarship in general passed it by on the other side. Why do so many scholars and so many who are not scholars insist **on assuming that Jesus and His Apostles were mistaken on this matter**? To the New Testament at least it was a vital matter. New Testament scholars have **not proved** that Jesus is represented as predicting **His early return to earth in a form which would be visible to every eye. His judgment upon Jerusalem would be visible to every eye**, but that is very different. Nor have they *proved* that the New Testament represents Him as predicting an impending transformation of the existing physical order.

They merely assume it. The assumption that the Parousia, in its essence, was **something which any eye might see**, and which, **because no eye did see it, was therefore an unfulfilled expectation**, has been so widespread from early times to our own day that it must have its roots in our common human nature.

I suspect that prosaic literalism is one of these roots. Let us see how influential this has been in generating the assumption in question. **Much of our modern scholarship is given to interpreting figuratively things in the New Testament which are meant to be taken literally and to interpreting literally things which are meant to be taken figuratively.**

It was natural that, when the Apostles passed away, apocalyptic language should tend to be **misinterpreted by the Greek mind, and perhaps still more by the Latin mind**. This tendency may account for the fact that St. John's Gospel, while preserving the apocalyptic facts, avoids apocalyptic language as far as possible.

We have substantial proof that Jesus did not take the scenery of apocalyptic literally but used it with the utmost freedom.

To take only one instance, **Elijah was expected to return to earth** before Messiah came, and Jesus, when challenged by His disciples on the point, replied in effect that it was quite true about Elijah coming, but that **he had already come**.

And St. Matthew adds ***" Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist."***¹

That is to say, not only did Jesus use apocalyptic scenery very freely, but His disciples also came to understand that He did so. *They* were not likely to be literalists in such matters. The question which they put to Jesus regarding the predicted destruction of the Temple is illuminating in this connection. ***" When shall these things be ? And that shall be the sign of Thy Parousia and consummating the age ?"***²

Note that there are **two questions** here, the first relating to events expected to be visible such as the destruction of the Temple, the second relating to events of a different kind which they presumed would be invisible. Indeed, the invisible events referred to in the second question are but one event.

Grammatically, **"Thy Parousia"** and **"Thy consummating of the age"** must be regarded as one thing. The Parousia of Jesus would, in the disciples' minds, be His consummating of the age. But the important point is that these disciples already distinguished between coming events which would be visible and those which would be invisible. Their double question is almost equivalent to: **" Will the destruction of the Temple be one of the signs of Thy Parousia"** For a **"sign"** in the New Testament is not a prelude to something afterwards to occur, but a visible accompaniment of something which is invisible. Their question therefore suggested the possibility of the Parousia arriving without any one knowing it.

The answer of Jesus bears out this interpretation of the disciples' question. **The destruction of the Temple would indeed be part of the sign required.** The sign of ***" the Son of Man in heaven "*** would be the judgment which was to fall upon Jerusalem and the Jews. Here He uses apocalyptic scenery, such as ***" the stars shall fall from heaven"***³ but only a pitiful prosiness could imagine that Jesus meant an actual dropping of the stars upon the earth. Indeed it is about as certain as any such thing can be that not only He, but also apocalyptic in general, meant by this impressive figure that the moral and spiritual standards by which the chosen people had lived would be laid in the dust. And so it came to pass.

1. Matt 17.13 2. Matt 24.3 [**exact translation**] 3. See footnote ****** next page
4. Wars of the Jews Book V 5. Rev 11.18

This was the inward side of the Jewish apocalypse. Josephus⁴ tells us how incredibly depraved the religious leaders of the Jews had become before Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Book of revelation confirms the lurid tale by informing us that the Jerusalem of that day was spiritually called **"Sodom and Egypt,"**⁶ synonyms for moral depravity and spiritual tyranny. Jerusalem and its Temple were in every way ripe for destruction. Jesus predicted all this and His disciples did not misunderstand Him.

They neither misinterpreted His apocalyptic figures nor confused His Parousia with its outward signs. They could not well do so when He added: **" When ye see all these things, know ye that He is nigh, even at the doors."**

The visible judgment was to mean that the Judge was there, invisible but very near. It was to mean also that He was very near to Faith as Saviour. The age of His Parousia would then have arrived when, in addition to giving them victory over life. He would be ready to give them victory over death. **"The coming of the Son of Man in the clouds"** is the impressive apocalyptic figure for the Son of Man executing judgment. The judgment is something to which none can be oblivious. The Jewish Apocalypse was also to be a time of supreme trial for the followers of Jesus and especially for His Apostles.

It is seldom recognized with precision that the Parousia had its two sides. It meant on the one hand that Jesus was now the Saviour of His people from death as well as from sin, and on the other hand that He was now Judge of all the earth.

1. Matt 24.33 [R.V.]

**** "...Instantly there are all the signs which usher in the Day of the Lord. The darkened sun, the lurid moon, the showers of meteors, the shriveled heavens, the terror with which men call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them, are the metaphors of vast earthly changes and catastrophes. A first sight it might well seem as if they could describe nothing short of the final conflagration and ruin of the globe. But there is not one of these metaphors which is not found in the Old Testament prophets and in them they refer in every instance to the destruction of cities and the establishment of new covenants, or to other earthly revolutions. Not only had our Lord adopted these vivid Oriental symbols to describe the sign of His coming in the fall of Jerusalem and the close of the aeon..."**

See Isa 2.12,19; 13.10; 34.3,4; 50.3; 63.4; Jer 4.23; Ezek 32,7,8; Joel 2.10,21; 3.4,15; Hos 10.8; Nah 1.6; Mal 3.2; etc The extant to which the Apostle borrows the phrases of the Old Testament may be seen by taking Rev 1.12-17, and comparing it phrase by phrase with Zech 4.2; Dan 7.13; 10.5; 7.9; 10.6,11,12; Isa 49.2; Ezek 43.2 ' Early days of Christianity by F W Farrar page 447/8 '

It was therefore something for Faith to rejoice in with joy unspeakable. At the heart of Faith was the "good hope through grace." But at the same time it was something whose advent was to be attended with sore trial for Christ's folk. The Apocalypse was to be like a Golgotha to them. The earnestness of Jesus in warning His disciples in view of the great tribulation is unmistakable.

***"Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake."
"By your endurance ye shall win your souls."***

They were never permitted to imagine that they would have an easy time in the approaching *telos* [end]. They would be persecuted, and most if not all of them would be killed before it came. Forewarned is forearmed. Jesus would be with them in the power of the Spirit and by this power they would conquer, but it would be a hard, hard battle. The idea which is so prevalent among modern writers that there was disappointment at the non-fulfillment of the Lord's prediction is, so far at least as the Apostles were concerned, as remote from all the realities of the situation as any idea could be.

How could they be disappointed when they expected nothing else and got nothing else than contumely and persecution from the world, and when they lived and died in the greatest of all faiths and the brightest of all hopes? Their triumph was to be through tribulation. The last days were days of increasing trouble and of increasing triumph. In the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "***the powers of the impending age***" were already at the disposal of men of faith. And those men of Faith were actually completing the Revelation of God in Jesus. Of course they were doing it by the power of Jesus Himself. One feels that in this whole question of Christian eschatology we have to begin again at the alphabet of the New Testament.

4. The last consideration to be mentioned in connection with this subject is that the foregoing interpretation of **the Parousia does not preclude the idea of a final judgment of mankind.** This world will of course come to an end, and the New Testament is no stranger to the fact. But I have been dealing only with our Lord's definite prediction of an impending cosmic event. That event, in its essence, could only be known by Faith. The **Apostles expected it** and rejoiced in the expectation, and we should accept it as an accomplished fact and rejoice in the experience of it.

We are in the age of the Parousia. Faith can know the Presence of Christ to the utmost that is possible under earthly conditions and Hope can confidently expect to enter His nearer Presence when our day's work is done.

1. Heb 6.5 [**exact translation**]

We should set no limits to what His Presence can mean to us now, but even at the best it is only an earnest and foretaste of what He will mean to us by and by.

It is important to recognize that the Parousia is an age. It began in an event, if we can rightly speak thus of something which, while it impinges upon history, essentially transcends history. **The Parousia is the Presence of Jesus**, to Faith during this earthly life, and **"face to face"** in the life which is to come. **Its beginning, according to the prediction of Jesus, was to be attended with judgment upon Israel.**

But that was only the first term in the series of judgment. The other terms of the series would follow in due course. All the nations would be liable to similar historical judgment, now that the age of His Presence had come; they would in every case stand or fall by their attitude to Him. All judgment upon the earth was committed to Him. It is particularly in the Book of Revelation that there looms up the picture of a more distant judgment of the whole Time series. That judgment will be both the *teles* and the termination of the existing temporal order. In this age of His Parousia, Christ judges progressively **"all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues,"** but this process will take end in the final judgment of the temporal order itself.

How long that will be in coming is no concern of ours, for Revelation does not tell us. What it does tell us is to make our calling and election sure, so that we enter not into condemnation but into salvation. It ought not to be necessary to add that the judgment upon the Jewish race, foretold by Jesus and fulfilled in the year A.D. 70, does not mean that the Gospel is less free to the Jew than it is to any one else. It is an unwarranted and wicked idea that the curse of God rests upon the Jew. It would be an impertinence even to mention such an idea were it not that the behaviour of many nations, sometimes in the name of Christianity itself, seems to be rooted in it. Judgment by the Son of Man began at the House of God, and since the Son of Man was Himself of the seed of David, it is true to say that judgment is from the Jews.

But it is Jesus Himself who reminds us¹ that salvation also is from the Jews. Jews were the first to receive the Revelation and to know salvation; Jews were also the first to suffer judgment as a race in the new age. That judgment was the termination of their special religions privilege and leadership. The destruction of the Temple was an instrument as well as a symbol of the universalising of Christianity. Renan tells us dispassionately that if the Temple had not been destroyed Christianity could not have been more than a mere appendage of Judaism.

1. John 4.22 2. Rev 11.19

But the classical statement of the liberation of the Gospel from the trammels of Judaism is in the Book of Revelation. In reference to the events of A.D. 70 we are there told that "*the temple of God was opened in heaven.*"²

Indeed this whole picture, which makes the close of the earthly temple coincide with the opening of the heavenly one, is a true and graphic, epitome of the whole New Testament doctrine of the Parousia. The purpose of this rough sketch of the relation between ethic and apocalyptic may not be immediately apparent.

But it is my conviction that the comparative ineffectiveness of modern Protestantism is due to indecision, and that this indecision is bound up with the loss of the New Testament eschatological sense. New Testament eschatology, its doctrine of the Last Things, is interpenetrated with the idea of apocalypse. This idea, quite apart from the scenery in which it is embodied, is absolutely indispensable to Christianity. It is a voice declaring the tremendous urgency of the Present. It is an authentic and authoritative voice. It is the very voice of God. It declares, first, what every one is capable of hearing, that the Present is pregnant both with Past and Future, that we carry our whole past along with us, and that we are pressing on inexorably to a goal ahead.

Our souls are making for something stupendously momentous. And it declares, next, what Faith alone can hear. that the whole urgency of the Present is concentrated in the fact of Jesus Christ. His Parousia, which is His Presence, makes the Present what it really is. The Present is that in which we have to do with One who is Saviour and Judge. If we decline to have Him as Saviour, then we must have Him as Judge. Our *telos* will reveal to every one of us which of the two choices we have made. The Day will declare it. The Present is the moment of decision, and decision is the theme to which this chapter tends.

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