

What Has to Happen Before the End of the World? – Part 2

1 Corinthians 15:24-28

Introduction:

1. Our God is a God of purpose. **Ephesians 3:11** speaks of "...*the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"
2. Likewise **Titus 1:2** speaks of eternal life that God promised before the world began. Who did He promise it to? There was nobody else there. He promised it to Himself. **Hebrews 6:13** says that God can swear by no greater than himself.
3. God has a plan and purpose for His creation. The good news is that God has fully revealed His plan to us through His Word. He has made it known.

Ephesians 1:8-9; Titus 1:2-3

- God invites men and women to participate with Him in His glorious plan for His creation.
4. In the passage before us we see the culmination of God's plan. God's plan is consummated and fulfilled.
 5. Paul calls this time of the end "the dispensation of the fulness of times" (**Ephesians 1:10**). The ultimate purpose for why time was created will then be fulfilled.
 6. Verse 24 says, "*Then cometh the end, when he (Christ) **shall have delivered up...***"
 - In other words, "the end" can't come until these things happen, and Paul begins to go through them. So Paul tells you in verses 24-27 what has to happen and what, in fact, **will** happen before the end comes and the eternal ages begin.
 7. Paul starts with the end (vs. 24), but then backs up and tells us how it will be arrived at (vs. 24-27). Then he tells us what will happen when the end finally does come (vs. 28).

Before the end comes, Christ must come again. vs. 23

1. We have already covered verse 23 in detail in previous studies, but we must note that the end of all things cannot come until Christ first returns to the earth.
2. When Christ returns, "the end" doesn't come immediately, but the consummation of God's plan and purpose **begins** to be set in motion at that point. It is what will kick off the events leading up to the end.
3. Verses 24-27 make it clear that there are still things that must happen after Christ returns, but "the end" cannot be in view and is not possible until Christ **does** return.

Before the end comes, Christ must reign over creation with total authority. vs. 24

1. God's ultimate plan is that all things be brought under the authority, headship, and control of the Lord Jesus Christ. Turn to **Colossians 1:15-20**.
 - There was a governmental structure and order that was created by and for Christ on earth and in the heavens. It was designed to center in and glorify the Son, Jesus Christ. vs. 16-17
 - Both have been defiled by sin and are in rebellion against the authority of Christ. Both must be brought under the authority of Christ before the end comes. The governmental structures of heaven and earth must be reconciled under Christ's authority. vs. 18

2. God's purpose and plan is to make Christ the head over all the government of the heavens and the earth. Both must be reconciled to Him. vs. 20
 - He will accomplish this plan on earth through Israel - this is the subject of prophecy.
 - He will accomplish this plan in the heavens through the church, the body of Christ - this is the subject of the mystery.
3. Christ must be preeminent in **all** things, and the entire system (heavens and earth) must be reconciled and brought under the authority, rule, and power of Jesus Christ.
4. "The end" cannot come until Christ is center stage and is visible as the conquering King of earth and heaven. This has not happened yet. **Hebrews 2:5-8**
5. All things **positionally** have been placed under Christ by the Father, but Christ has not executed that power and authority yet.
 - In **Revelation 12:7-12**, the **heavens** are cleansed and Christ's kingdom begins there.
 - In **Revelation 19:11-21** the kingdoms of this **earth** are smote with Christ's sword and He rules them with a rod of iron (total control). He demonstrates Himself to be King of kings and Lord of lords. vs. 15-16; cf. **Revelation 11:15-18**

Before the end comes, Christ must destroy death. vs. 25-26

1. Through His death for sin on Calvary and glorious resurrection, Christ took the sting out of death (**1 Corinthians 15:55-57**) and took the keys of death from Satan (**Revelation 1:18**).
 - Keys speak of authority and power. Christ conquered death and now holds the keys, but Christ hasn't fully executed that power yet.
2. But 1,000 years after Christ returns to earth, He will destroy death with finality. **Revelation 20:11-15**
3. At this point, God will take the first earth and heavens that have been corrupted by sin and death, and He will fold them up and recreate a new heaven and earth. All traces of sin and death will be gone forever. **Revelation 21:1, 4**
 - Death is the last enemy that shall be destroyed.
4. Everything will then be subjected to the Son, except the Father, of course (vs. 27). The Father is the One who subjected it all to the Son.
 - The Father has the authority, and the Son is His regent who acts in His place to execute the authority of the Father.

Before the end comes, Christ must present the kingdom to the Father. vs. 24, 28

1. Get the picture - everything in the heavens and on earth have been brought under the lordship and control of the Son, Jesus Christ. Everything has been reconciled and is glorifying Christ as it was intended to do.
2. Once this intended purpose is reached, Christ takes this fully functioning system, and presents it to the Father, to whom He willingly and cheerfully subjects His own power.
 - He says, "Father, you have subjected it all to Me, and now I am giving it back to You."
3. At this point, eternity commences, the eternal ages begin to roll, and Paul says, "God is all in all."

4. Please understand, this does not mean that the members of the Godhead lose their identity. Revelation 21 and 22 give details concerning this eternal state, and the Father, Son, and Spirit still have their personal identities.
Revelation 21:22-23, 22:3, 17
5. When it says that God is all in all, it simply means that the life of the Godhead will be the only issue. There won't be any Satan, or sin, or plan of rebellion to compete with the glory of God.
6. At this point, God will have fully demonstrated the futility of rebelling against His plan and purpose. All of this will be cast aside and the only issue will be the life of the Godhead. He will be all in all.
 - Just as Adam was invited to come and enjoy the life of God, we will simply enjoy God and commune with Him.
7. The life of the Godhead is really amazing. They all live for each other. The Holy Spirit lives to exalt the Son, the Son lives to exalt the Father, the Father lives to exalt His Son - total humility and unselfishness.
8. In eternity, God's life is what will live. Aren't you glad you can have that life right **now!** Paul said concerning the church, "*Christ is all, and in all.*" He also said, "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" We have that very life right now as a present possession!