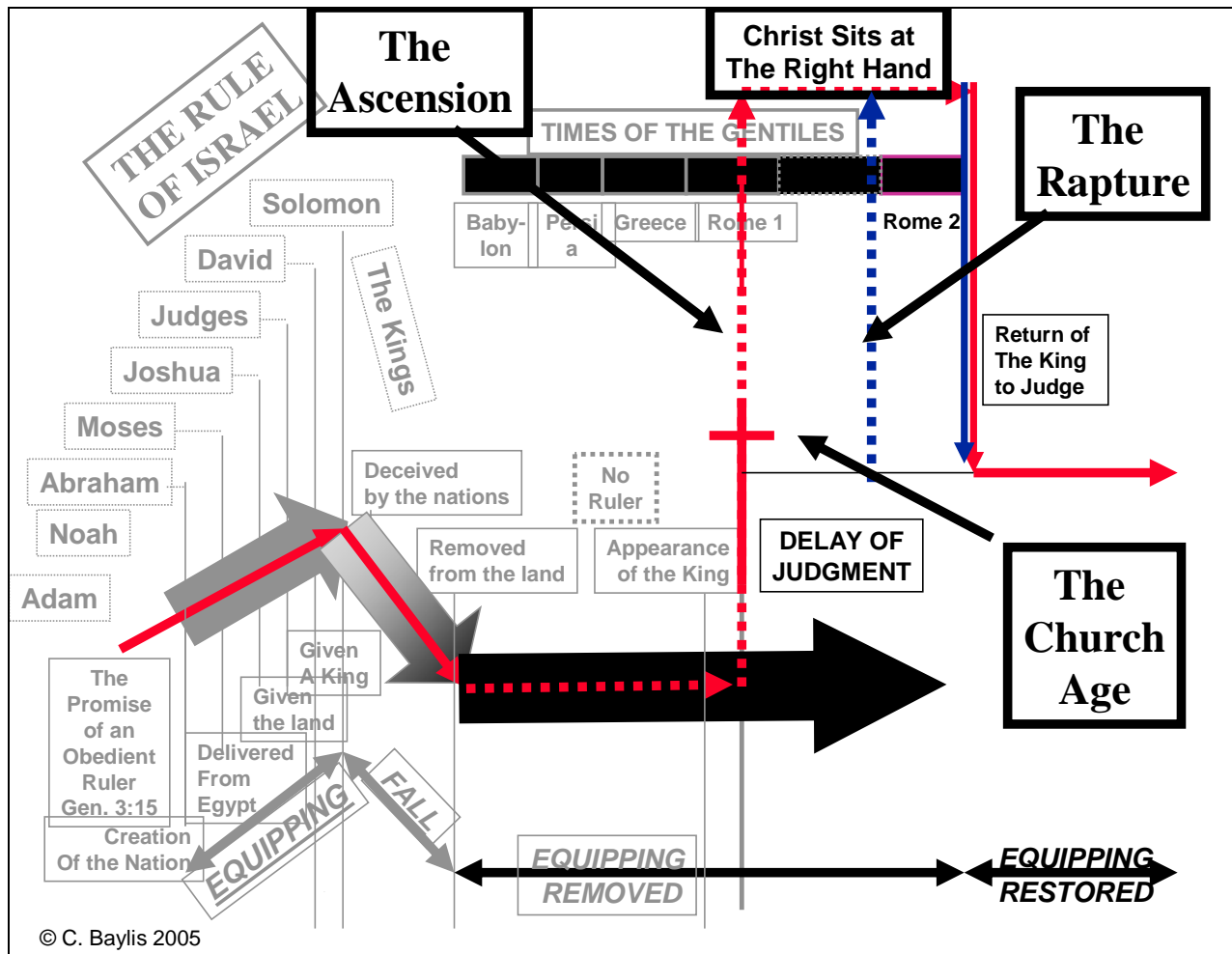


THE STORY OF THE BIBLE

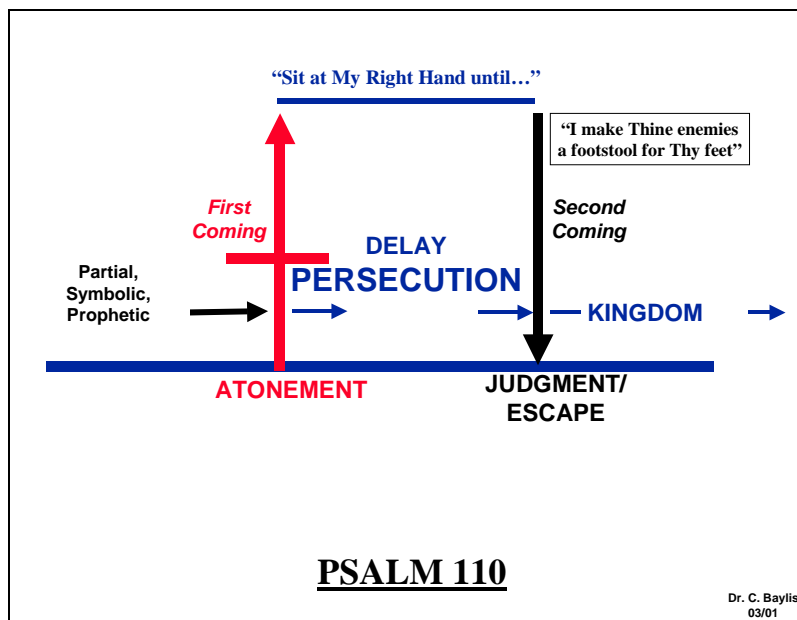
SESSION #13

THE CHURCH AGE



I. The Age of Delay (Psalm 110): "Sit at My Right Hand *UNTIL* I make Thine Enemies a footstool for Thy feet (Psalm 110:1).

Following Christ's crucifixion God delayed in order to confirm some men in their rejection and their judgment, and others would escape through belief in the full Sacrifice of Christ. God is patient, but will ultimately return His Son, Who sits at the Right Hand of the Father, to the earth to restore rule to Israel, and to judge God's enemies (the unbelievers in His Son).



A. The Ascension of Jesus to heaven after dying as a sacrifice.

According to Psalm 110, Jesus would ascend to the right hand of the Father until He was ready to return and destroy the enemies.

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." (Psa 110:1)

B. The Return of Christ

Psalm 110 used these words, "Until I make thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." In other words, there would be a time of delay and then Christ would return as the Psalm 2 Conqueror and take the world back under God's rule.

II. The Church Age

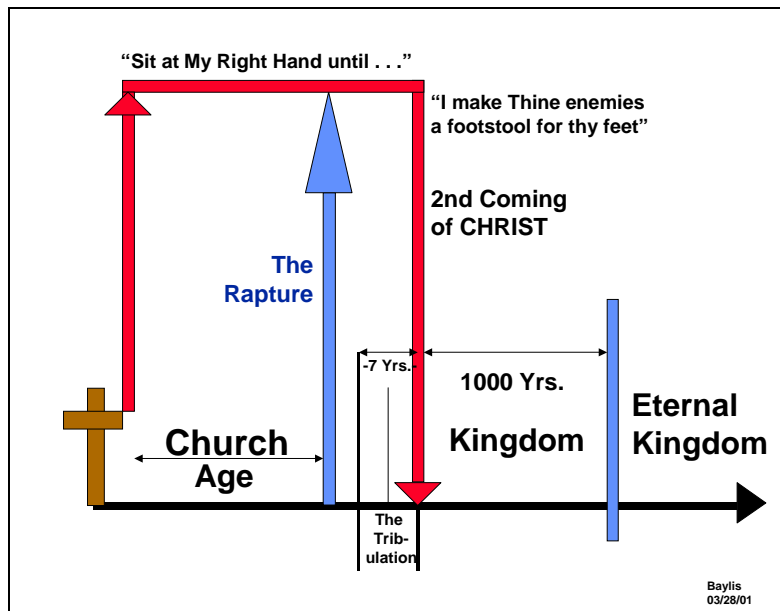
The Church Age begins with Jesus Ascension into heaven recorded in Acts 1. It ends with an event called the "Rapture" where all believers will get renewed bodies and live in heaven until the return of Christ to restore the Kingdom.

A. The Church made up of believers of all nations.

The Apostles begin to take the Gospel into this Age of Delay. As they gather men and women, Jews and Gentiles into one body which is unified by their belief in Jesus Christ, Israel continues to reject and persecute the Apostles and

believers. This is the condition that will continue during this age of delay before the coming of the King.

B. The Rapture: The end of the Church Age



The Age will end with an event called the rapture where Christ will descend part way in the sky and believers will ascend up to Him. If they are alive they will have their bodies changed in the air. If they are dead (alive in heaven but with no physical body), they will get their body back, but it will be made like new.

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1Th 4:16-17)

III. The Doctrine of the Church: Imputed Righteousness through Christ and the Forgiveness of sins.

A. The Book of Romans represents the core doctrines of the church.

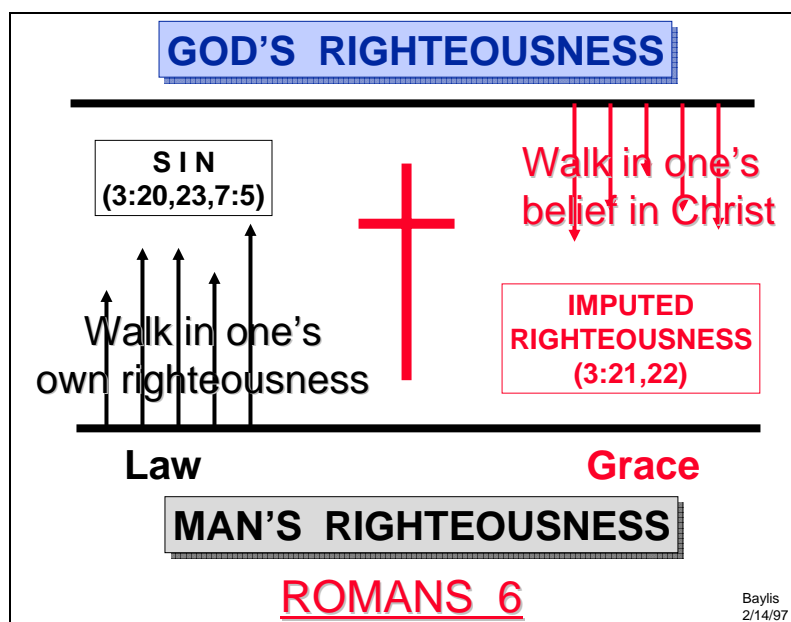
1. Depravity of man shown by man under General Revelation and the Law (Chapters 1—3)

There was no one who measured up to God's righteousness. Both those who did not have the Law and those who did both rejected and disobeyed what was obvious. They not only sinned but had a depraved mind which would justify their sin. With a depraved mind they had no hope of knowing God.

2. The Salvation of Man through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (3—4)

Since man had no hope under the Law and was condemned to death, Jesus Christ came forth from God and was offered as a sacrifice. It is through His death that man may become righteous and have forgiveness of sins, simply by believing.

3. The Sanctification of Believers: “The Walk in the Spirit.” (5—8)



Now that the believer has been saved, the question arises as to how he will continue to walk with God. In the church age, man will walk, not on his own righteousness or works, but on the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. In other words, he is no longer a slave to the Law who must prove his ability to meet a standard, he is a son who is accepted fully by God. Thus his walk should be that of a son. He is not one who must be good to get God to accept him, but one who does good because he represents his Father and the great mercy in Jesus Christ. The Spirit will guide one to believe in the imputed righteousness that he finds in the Scripture.

In 8:1, Paul declares,

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus . . . “

And in the last part of Chapter 8, Paul states that during this period of time the believer longs for the kingdom since he is struggling with persecution, sickness, etc. But one day the Kingdom will come and believers will not believe how wonderful it will be.

4. The Return of Israel to Christ (9—11).

The Nation Israel of the Abrahamic Covenant had chosen to base their salvation on their own works. As such they had rejected God and because of their self-righteousness had rejected the mercy in Jesus by killing Him. They were then set aside for a time, but ultimately will be saved as they turn to Christ in the Tribulation Period.

5. Application of Imputed Righteousness (12—16)

In the final chapters, Paul exhorts them to be humble before their brothers. Everything they have they have been given and thus should not be arrogant, should serve others, submit to the government and not belittle their brother that Christ died for. One should never involve oneself in activities that would not represent Christ's sacrifice to one's brother. The believer thus is to avoid all things that might lure his brother into sin. He is to be loyal to His Bridegroom the King of all Kings, Jesus the Christ.

Assignment #13

THE CHURCH AGE

Reading:

Romans 3

Study Questions: Give answers from the Notes

1. What Old Testament passage prophesied a delay of time between the first and second comings of the Christ?

2. Name and describe the event that ends the “church age.”

3. In the Book of Romans, what does Chapters 1—3 show about man?

4. In the Book of Romans, what does Chapters 3--4 what did God do for man’s sin?

5. In the Book of Romans, chapters 5—8, on what basis should a man walk with God?

6. According to Romans 9—11, why did Israel fail God’s requirements?
