

First Generation After AD 70

*By Ed Stevens -- Garrettsville Seminar -- Sept. 16-17, 2011
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INTRODUCTION:

- A. If an artist wanted to paint a picture of what the first generation of Christianity after AD 70 really looked like, what would he need to do? In order to do a decent job at that, he would need either a good photograph of the subject, or a live specimen to pose for him while he paints it. In order to paint a good picture of the next generation right after AD 70, we would need a lot of good information coming from that time period. It is patristic literature and historical tradition that we would need to look at. Unfortunately, there is not much of it available, and what we do have is questionable in value.
- B. And what makes this all the more frustrating is that this paucity of historical evidence is NOT what we would have expected to find right after the generation of the apostles in which so much missionary and literary activity had flourished. Instead of silence and confusion, we would have expected great exuberance and clarity after they had seen and experienced the fulfillment of the endtime events.
- C. After all, Apostle Paul had told them that when the Perfect arrived, their partial knowledge would be replaced by "knowing fully as they had been known." Yet that is not what we see after AD 70. None of the Christians afterwards seem to be aware that the Parousia, Resurrection, and Judgment had taken place.
- D. Furthermore, the few statements that we do have from post-70 Christian writers are all saying that these big three events are still future.
- E. But those are not the only problems. The post-70 church fathers were not only confused about eschatology, but ecclesiology, sacramentology, and soteriology as well. It is almost like they were starting over from scratch trying to interpret the New Testament documents the best they could, without any help from the apostles or the pre-70 saints. This has baffled many of the church historians. We will look at some of their statements shortly.
- D. In this lesson on the First Generation After AD 70, I want to make us all acutely aware of these historical problems, and then suggest what I believe is a very reasonable solution to them.

I. Here is One of the Dilemmas that We Preterists Need to Face:

- A. Some preterists agree with futurists that Apostle John and some of the other apostles remained alive on earth after AD 70, down to the end of the first century.
- B. Some preterists also agree that some of the hundred or more saints mentioned in the NT remained alive on earth after AD 70, probably down into the first few decades of the second century (especially the younger ones such as Timothy, Titus, Gaius, Aristarchus, and others, etc.).
- C. This means that those pre-70 saints who would still have been alive on earth after AD 70, were still around at the very time when the Didache, Barnabas, Hermas,

Clement, Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius were writing their books, all of which claim that the Parousia was still future.

- D. Do you see the dilemma here? The very folks who lived through AD 70 and who experienced the Parousia, Resurrection, and Judgment were supposedly still around afterwards at the very time when the apostolic father writings began to appear in the late first and early second century. Every one of those post-70 writers say that the Parousia is still future. Why didn't some of those pre-70 saints, who were still alive, speak up and set the record straight? Why did they remain silent and let the post-70 writers keep on saying that the Parousia was still future? If they had seen, heard, and experienced the Parousia in the way they had expected, then they would have known that it had occurred, and could not keep quiet about it later when the next generation of church writers started saying it was still future. Their refusal or neglect to speak up and set the record straight is hard to explain. There are not many reasonable options.
- E. From a futurist perspective, their silence in the face of all the futurist statements afterwards, makes it appear as if they were either:
- Totally unaware that the Parousia had occurred, or even worse:
 - Embarrassed into silence by the non-fulfillment of the Parousia.
- F. Those appear to be the only two reasonable explanations for their silence, if indeed they were still on the earth after the Parousia had occurred. However, neither of these two options are acceptable to a Preterist. Jesus and the apostles promised the first century saints that they would see, hear, and experience the Parousia. Paul had told them that they would "know fully" when the Perfect came. So there is no way they could have been totally unaware of it afterwards. Ignorance is no excuse. Nor is non-fulfillment an option. If the Parousia did not occur, then Jesus is a false prophet and our faith is in vain.
- G. So, for a preterist, the only other reasonable alternative has to be that none of those pre-70 saints were still around after the Parousia. They could not talk about what they saw, heard, and experienced, nor set the record straight, because they were no longer on earth. And we know that they did not all die before the Parousia, because Jesus and the apostles said that some of them would not taste death before they saw the Son of Man come in glory with His angels. That means that some of them would have still been around after the Parousia, unless they were raptured out of there at the Parousia.
- H. One of my preterist buddies who is a critic of the rapture view suggested that almost all of the pre-70 Christians died in the Neronic persecution, and that the few who survived were either unaware of the occurrence of the Parousia, or afraid to speak up because of the ongoing persecution. Let's examine that idea more closely and see if it really solves the problem.
- First of all, it is fairly clear that most of the pre-70 saints were indeed killed in the Neronic persecution, but not all of them. There were a significant number of them still around at the Parousia.
 - How do we know this? Simple. There are two texts which show this:
 - Matt. 16:28 -- "some of those who are standing here **will not taste death until they see** the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom"

- b. Matt. 24:22 -- "unless those days were cut short, no life would have been saved, but **for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short**"
- 3. Do you see what Jesus said here? Some of those folks who were standing there listening to Jesus teach in AD 30 would **still be alive** when He returned in glory with His angels to judge every man according to their deeds.
- 4. In regard to the great tribulation (i.e., the Neronic persecution which started in AD 64 and ended abruptly in AD 66 when the Jewish revolt broke out), notice that Jesus said this horrendous persecution would be cut short so that it could **not wipe out His elect** (the ones He had chosen beforehand to remain alive until His return).
- 5. Moreover, in Luke 18 Jesus commanded his disciples "at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart" in view of the great tribulation (Neronic persecution) that was coming upon them. He told the parable about the widow who incessantly bothered the unjust judge until he finally relented and gave her justice. Jesus then said that "will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. [Luke 18:7-8]
- 6. Now here is the problem for my critic: Jesus clearly indicates that there would be some pre-70 saints who would remain alive at the time of the Parousia. In fact, he says that some were chosen (elect) for that very purpose. Furthermore, Jesus and the apostles say that those who would remain alive until the Parousia would "SEE the Son of Man coming" (Matt. 16:28) and experience relief, rescue, and reward (2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Thess. 1:10; Matt. 19:28; 25:31ff; Luke 18:8). Did they see, hear, and experience those things like Jesus promised? There is simply no way they could have been ignorant of the Parousia. Therefore, their silence later in the face of later Christians who said the Parousia was still future, has no excuse. It was criminal negligence on their part to remain silent and not speak up and set the record straight, especially if any of those who survived were apostles, such as Apostle John (cf. 1 John 2:28 "not shrink back").
- 7. Nor would the ongoing persecution silence them. The persecution after AD 70 was nothing compared to the intensity of the Neronic persecution, and as we know, those pre-70 Christians did not keep their mouths shut during that worse tribulation. So why could we think that they would keep silent after AD 70 when the persecution was dramatically decreased?
- 8. We know for a fact that the elect remained alive until the Parousia, and experienced the Parousia in the way Jesus promised that they would. They were not all killed in the Neronic persecution. Some of them were alive at the Parousia, yet not a single one of them ever surface after AD 70 to announce the fulfillment. There are over 100 individuals mentioned by name in our New Testament, and not a single one of them write anything after AD 70 to document the Parousia which they surely witnessed and experienced. This is all the more baffling when we see new Christians popping up after AD 70 who are unaware of the Parousia, and were saying that it is still future.
- 9. Saying that most of them were killed in the Neronic persecution is NOT a solution. We still have to explain why the elect who did remain alive until the Parousia did NOT speak up afterwards and set the record straight.

II. Here is How Dr. Charles Hill Explains the Historical Problem:

- A. One of the chapters in Mathison's book, written by Dr. Charles Hill, showcases all the futurist statements from the early church fathers, during the first two generations right after AD 70. He focuses on the most important historical problems facing the Preterist movement:
 1. Lack of documentation for an AD 70 Parousia, Resurrection, & Judgment
 2. Continued futurist statements right after AD 70 and onwards
 3. Silence of pre-70 saints about the AD 70 fulfillment of BIG three events
 4. Doctrinal confusion and ecclesiastical departures which quickly and abruptly appeared in the first and second generations of church fathers right after AD 70
- B. Chuck Hill makes the point that there is not a single Christian writer in the first three centuries after AD 70 who says that the BIG three events (Parousia, Resurrection, and Judgment) were fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem. He quotes them page after page in a virtual litany of futurist statements. Every one of the Church Fathers for the first three centuries after AD 70 were futurists. And then he asks us preterists what we are going to do with all this evidence.
- C. I do not think very many of us preterists feel the weight of this problem. We have ignored it, swept it under the carpet, tried to explain it away as insignificant, or waved our magic hyper-spiritualizing wand over it and declared it fulfilled in some covenantal, spiritual, positional, allegorical, typological, or mystical sense. But the problem is still there, staring us in the face, rapping its fingers on the table demanding a response, and I am not satisfied with the answers we have given to it in the past, nor are our futurist critics.
- D. So, there is a real problem here. It is not imaginary. And it does not solve the problem when we preterists go into denial mode, or refuse to take it seriously.
- E. See **Appendix 1**, for some quotes from Dr. Hill explaining the problem we face.

III. How Should We Deal with this Historical Dilemma?

- A. First of all, we need to state very clearly up front that history can never trump scripture. I agree with that, and so does Dr. Hill.
- B. So, it does not really matter what history or tradition says, as long as we have clear scripture to back up our beliefs. If scripture says it, that settles it.
- C. Furthermore, the little bit of testimony that we do have is so limited, weak, and confused that virtually nothing can be known for sure about the first generation after AD 70. See the quotes from patristic scholars about this in **Appendix 2**.
- D. But when there is a conflict between history and scripture, what does it tell us? It tells us that something is wrong somewhere.
- E. Scripture cannot be wrong. But our interpretation of scripture, or our understanding of history could easily be wrong, and history is forcing us to re-examine our interpretations of scripture to make sure that is not where the problem is.
- F. Therefore, when there is a conflict between history and scripture, we owe it to ourselves and to those whom we teach, to find out where the problem resides. Is our interpretation of scripture wrong, or our understanding of history wrong, or both? History can help us find our misinterpretations of scripture, and correct them.

- G. Tradition and History cannot prove anything for or against scripture, but it can help us understand what scripture is talking about. History can help us understand how the prophecies were fulfilled. It can support and explain scripture, but it cannot overturn it or confirm it.
- H. Like Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees about their traditions, "You have invalidated the Word of God by your traditions" (Matt. 15). What He meant by that is that they were letting their traditional interpretations and applications of scripture negate what scripture itself plainly teaches. They were putting their traditions above scripture, the same way creedalists today put their creeds above scripture. They would rather let scripture be wrong than to charge their precious creeds with error! They would rather have an inspired writer be wrong, than for an uninspired churchman to be wrong! That is exactly what the scribes and Pharisees were doing in the first century.
- I. This is what Dr. Hill is saying. There is a conflict here between what we preterists say about the occurrence of the Parousia, and the lack of historical documentation to back it up. He calls this problem our "Nemesis of History" (i.e., history is our enemy or adversary). History does not support our assertions that the Parousia occurred. So there is a conflict here, and we need to give it a serious look and see where the problem really resides. Is it in our interpretations of scripture, or is it in our understanding of history, or both? There is a real possibility it could be both.
- J. We preterists have done an excellent job interpreting the TIME statements. There are over a hundred books out there written by preterists in the last two hundred years proving that the TIME of fulfillment was AD 70. There is zero chance that we have misunderstood the TIME of fulfillment. The problem instead must reside in our understanding of the NATURE of fulfillment and the significance of church history.
- K. We need to show that futurists have misunderstood not only the TIME of fulfillment, and the nature of fulfillment, but also the facts and implications of history.
- L. I believe that both futurists and preterists have misunderstood what scripture says about the NATURE of fulfillment, and that it is doing us all a favor by making us aware of these historical conflicts. History will help us correct our understanding of the NATURE of fulfillment.
- M. Furthermore, I am convinced that both futurists and preterists have also misunderstood the historical evidence, so that it is not just a futurist mistake, nor a preterist mistake, but that both of us missed the significance of the historical evidence.
- N. Therefore, the best place to start in our analysis of the problem is to assume that both preterists and futurists have misunderstood both issues (the nature of fulfillment and the historical evidence). Then we can go through a process of elimination to locate the source of the conflict. That is the approach I am following in my response to the patristic evidence that Dr. Charles Hill has used against us.

IV. Redating the Apostolic Fathers Will Help:

- A. Quotes from John A. T. Robinson book (*Redating the New Testament*), the chapter entitled, "A Post-Apostolic Postscript" (p. 213) -- showing why the Apostolic Fathers need to be redated (especially by preterists):

If the canonical books of the New Testament are all to be dated before 70 the question naturally arises: What happens to the space in the last third of the first century previously occupied by so much Christian literature? Is there not an **unexplained gap** between the end of the New Testament writings and the first productions of the subapostolic age? And does not history, like nature, abhor a **vacuum**?

The possibility, if not the probability, must indeed be faced that there was not a steady stream of early Christian writings but that an intense period of missionary, pastoral and literary activity, culminating in the desolation of Israel and the demise of all the 'pillars' of the apostolic church ... **was followed by one of retrenchment and relative quiescence**. A '**tunnel period**' in which there **was no evidence of literary remains** would therefore be perfectly explicable – in fact more explicable, and less extended, than that which the traditional dating has presupposed prior to the emergence of the gospels in written form.

Yet it may also be that **the gap** to be accounted for is largely artificial. It may have been created by pushing the sub-apostolic literature late so as to leave room for meeting the supposed requirements of New Testament development. In other words, because the latter part of the first century is already occupied, other documents must belong to the second. Remove the initial presupposition and what happens? A look at the dating of some of the earlier subcanonical literature will help to test and to set in perspective our previous conclusions.

The first thing that strikes one is the still greater lack in **this twilight area** of any fixed points or solid obstacles. Indeed there can really only be said to be two which are generally accepted, and they are **by no means as secure as is usually assumed**.

- B. Redate four of the Apostolic Fathers (Didache, Barnabas, Clement, Hermas), so that they are clearly seen as pre-70 documents, thus removing them from the arsenal of evidence that the futurists use against preterists. These four books have been a major thorn in our side. Redating them before AD 70 would be a giant leap toward solving this historical problem.

1. External traditions about the dates are not reliable and defensible. To really be convincing, the dates must be derived from careful examination of the internal, grammatical, and contextual evidence. Few conservative scholars have done a satisfying job on that.
2. One of the ways to test the internal evidence, is to do a Frequency Analysis of their usage of TIME indicator words and phrases, in comparison with the usage of those same words and phrases in our NT books. I have already begun doing that, and my preliminary results suggest that these four Apostolic Father writings

have the same frequency usage as the last few NT books which were written after AD 62. See a sample of my work on this in [Appendix 3](#).

3. This redating of the four writers would create a much wider gap between the NT writings and the first productions of the post-70 period (Papias, Polycarp, Justin, Ignatius, Hegesippus, Irenaeus). This means that the first Christian writings did not appear until almost a decade into the second century, making a gap of over 40 years from the last NT writings. This raises all sorts of questions about the pause in writings. If there was no rapture, and some of the apostles and other pre-70 saints were still around, then why didn't they continue writing books, doing missionary work, and teaching the late first and early second century church fathers about the occurrence of the Parousia which they just experienced? Why didn't Timothy, Titus, Gaius, Aristarchus, or some of the other 83 individuals named in our NT who supposedly lived beyond AD 70, speak up and set the record straight? If there was no rapture, then they should have still been around teaching and evangelizing and writing. However, this is not what we see! Why? After AD 70 we do not see a single one of those pre-70 saints re-surface, nor do we have any writings from any of them (they were totally silent and absent). This is not what we would have expected from these individuals, if any of them had survived the Parousia and lived beyond AD 70. They would have known that the Parousia occurred and would have corrected all the other new Christians who were not aware of it, who were saying that it was still future.
- C. But redating those four Apostolic Fathers (Didache, Barnabas, Clement, Hermas), does not solve all of the problems. Dr. Charles Hill lists several more lines of evidence to support his contention that the post-70 church traditions and church father writings offer no support whatsoever for the occurrence of the Parousia in AD 70. The writings of Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius at the beginning of the Second Century (40 years removed from AD 70) are clearly futurist, and it does not seem possible to neutralize their futurist timing of the Parousia by pushing them back 50 years to date them before AD 70. So, we will need to take a different approach for them. My tentative answer is to simply suggest that they were not aware of the fulfillment because of the rapture removal of all the pre-70 saints who knew about it. But there are several things that will need to be looked at, including the date of writing, corruption of their contents by later Roman Catholic scribes, and other issues. We do know that the epistles of Ignatius have been tampered with. But the rapture is still going to be the main explanation. It best explains how they would not be aware of the fulfillment. All the people who knew about it were removed. The wicked died, and the saints were raptured. There was no one left who knew that Christ had come. That is why Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius were not aware of it.

V. Did Any of the Pre-70 Saints Live Beyond AD 70?

- A. This question has always bothered me. There are over 83 specific individuals named in the New Testament, some of whom we know would not have tasted death before the Parousia. If there was no rapture, then they would have remained

alive after AD 70, and would have continued their teaching and missionary activity and book-writing activity. There would not have been a gap in the history. There would not have been a "tunnel period" which several church historians have noticed and commented on (see **Appendix 2**). There would be a continuous stream of missionary and literary activity, with some of those 83 individuals from the pre-70 era taking a leadership role in it. We should see their names mentioned and their books appearing in the literary record. We should know what churches they founded and which church leaders they discipled. There should not be an abrupt absence and silence. We should have heard from and heard about some of those 83 individuals during the post-70 period. Why do they vanish without a trace? We do not know when they died, where they were buried, nothing. Several church historians have noticed this silence and absence. I have quoted some of their comments about this in **Appendix 2**. This raises several serious questions.

- B. Did John live two decades beyond AD 70 until 96 AD? If so, then he would have been alive at the same time as Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius, who make numerous futurist statements, which Apostle John would have been aware of. This creates a huge problem for us preterists.
- C. Likewise, if any of the other inspired apostles or their missionary trip companions were still alive after AD 70, some of them were young enough to have remained alive one or two decades into the second century, easily overlapping the lives of Papias, Polycarp, Ignatius, and even Justin Martyr and Hegesippus. This would present a massive historical problem for all preterists. Think about the following:
- D. All the Futurists need is for one NT book to have been written after AD 70 --
 - So if John remained alive on earth for twenty-five years beyond AD 70, there is no way we can prove that he could not have **written at least one of his books after AD 70**. And the same thing goes for any of the other apostles who wrote NT books. This, in fact, is the very argument that liberal scholars use to prove the late date of several NT books.
 - There would be no other purpose in keeping any of the inspired apostles around after AD 70 if they were not going to **continue teaching and writing by inspiration**. If any of them were still around, then they still had the gift of inspiration and were still able to teach and write by inspiration, and their post-70 writings would be canonical. This means that if John was still around after AD 70, then any of his canonical books could have been written after AD 70.
 - The apostles were able to impart the gifts by laying on the hands. Some futurists argue that this included the **gift of inspiration**, since Luke, Mark, and Jude were not of the original twelve, but they apparently had the gift of inspiration. This means that in at least three cases, the gift of inspiration was passed on by the laying on of the apostles' hands. This means that if any of the apostles were still around after AD 70, they could have laid hands on some other Christians and imparted any of the gifts to them, including the gift of inspiration. If John still had the gift of inspiration after AD 70, he could easily have written more inspired books after AD 70.

- And even if it could somehow be proved that the gift of inspiration did cease at AD 70, it still would not mean that John was somehow stripped of all the knowledge and experience that he had acquired up to that point. John had written the book of Revelation, and had penned the words in 1 John 2 which refers to the *imminent return* of Christ and the *world passing away*, and that it was *the last hour*. He would have remembered all that, and known it had been fulfilled, and would have been able to correct the futurist ideas that began to be taught after AD 70. Why didn't he speak up and set the record straight?

E. Where did Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius get their futurist ideas?

- If John was still around after AD 70, he would have remembered what all the NT writings had taught, and would have known that the Parousia had come, along with the resurrection and judgment. There would have been others who survived AD 70, who would have known about the Parousia as well.
- There would have been no reason for them to keep quiet about the occurrence of the Parousia, especially in view of new Christians coming into the faith unaware of the Parousia and thinking that it was still future. Surely the apostles and other pre-70 saints would have spoke up and set the record straight. There would at least have been some uninspired traditions (if not inspired scripture) coming from them stating that the Parousia had occurred. If they were still around afterwards, they would not have let the post-70 Christians continue believing and teaching that the Parousia was still future. Apostle John would have had just as much right to write uninspired tradition as any of the other post-70 writers. Why didn't he inform the others about the Parousia?
- Case in point: *Papias*, *Polycarp*, and *Ignatius*. These three post-70 writers (early second century) stated repeatedly that the Parousia, Resurrection and Judgment were still future. Yet according to tradition, they were taught by some of John's disciples (who should have known about the past Parousia). If the longevity of John is true, there is a good chance that all three of these writers (*Papias*-Hierapolis, *Polycarp*-Smyrna, and *Ignatius* in Antioch) would have known John personally and heard him teach. How could John let them teach futurism right under his nose and claim that they got it from him (or from his immediate disciples)?
- This particular argument from the futurists really bothers me. I have lost sleep over it. It ought to deeply bother all Preterists. It is not just a problem for rapture preterists. It is a critical problem for all preterists. So, it does not help our cause to compromise with the futurists on the longevity of John. It is like manufacturing ammunition for our enemy to shoot back at us.
- The reason why John still being around after AD 70 is so troubling for us preterists, is because of his failure to correct all the other confusion, ecclesiastical aberrations, and doctrinal falsehoods that began to appear in the late first and early second century. It is not just eschatological errors. There are several other doctrinal deviations that abruptly appeared at the end of the first and the beginning of the second century. If John was still around, he should have been speaking out against that false teaching, and bringing them back to the pattern of teaching that the apostles gave us in their NT writings. If John was

still around, we would have to assume that he was still inspired, and therefore still able to write and speak out authoritatively against the errors that were appearing. The failure of John and all the other pre-70 saints to speak out against all this confusion and doctrinal deviations is extremely troubling. It discredits them, and reflects adversely upon their integrity and faithfulness. If the Apostle John was still around until the beginning of the second century, he should have set the record straight. His silence at this critical moment drives futurists to wonder whether the Parousia actually occurred. If it really occurred, and he knew it occurred, why is he so silent about it, especially when some of his disciples were teaching that it was still future? Can he have been so confused himself, that he did not even realize that the Parousia had occurred?

F. All the Futurists need is for one NT book to have been written after AD 70 --

- It is easy to see now why those brethren (John 21:23) circulated the rumor that Apostle John would never die (implying that he would be changed and raptured). They had heard the apostles talk about the rapture (gathering, receiving). The apostles had given them many expectations about what would happen at the Parousia. Paul's epistles had clearly indicated that those who live and remain until the Parousia would *not have to die*. The apostles got all this teaching from Christ Himself. Jesus told the twelve that they would be "received up to be with Him" when He came again (John 14:3), implying that those still alive would not have to taste death. They would be seated on twelve thrones with Christ to judge the twelve tribes (Matt. 19:28). The elect would be gathered by the angels (Matt. 24:31). The good wheat would be gathered into the barn by the angels at the end of the age (Matt. 13: 30-43). And these things would be experienced by both the living and the resurrected dead. The living would see it, and experience it, and receive their share in it, without having to die physically.
- In Matt. 19:28, Jesus mentioned His return to fully establish His Kingdom and take his seat on His glorious throne, and judge the twelve tribes. He would seat the twelve apostles on thrones at his side to judge the twelve tribes. This appears to be referring to His three and a half year Parousia when he literally judged the twelve tribes, but it could also include the eternal phase of His Kingdom after the Parousia. Either way, it means that the apostles would no longer be on earth after AD 70 doing that judgment of the twelve tribes. And even if some of them were still on earth, somehow performing that judgment in conjunction with Christ and the other apostles who had already died, they would still be very much aware of the fact that Christ had returned and given those thrones to them. There is not the slightest hint by Jesus that the apostles remaining alive on earth would sitting on those thrones judging the twelve tribes without even knowing that they were doing it. That idea is not only foreign to the context, it would have been utterly scandalous for any of the remaining apostles to accept.

G. Did John Fail to Recognize that the Parousia Had Occurred?

- The idea that John lived through the Parousia, and knew that the Resurrection and Judgment had taken place, but failed to inform his post-70 disciples in

Ephesus and nearby Hierapolis and Smyrna, creates a monstrous historical problem for preterists.

- It makes us wonder whether John himself (the inspired writer of the book of Revelation) even realized that the Parousia had occurred!
- If John the apostle was still around and saw no value in explaining or even mentioning the incredible fulfillments of his book of Revelation, why should we? Was it because he didn't understand the fulfillments, or was it simply because he did not see Christ at His Parousia, and consequently did not know that the Parousia had occurred? If he didn't see the Parousia, then he would not have understood the fulfillment, and would not have been able to claim or explain the fulfillment. But is that an acceptable explanation for us preterists? How many of us would be comfortable with that? I surely would not.
- Is it even conceivable that the inspired Apostle John (who wrote the book of Revelation saying his return was imminent) would not even know about the occurrence of the Parousia afterwards? In 1 John 2:18, 28 and 3:2 he indicates that they would know it when Christ returned, and would see it happen, and would not shrink away from Him when He appeared, and would experience a bodily change when they saw Him. Well, did they see and experience those things? Or, did even John the apostle fail to "recognize the time of His visitation" the same way the Jews failed to recognize His first coming? John was supposed to be sitting on a throne judging the twelve tribes after Christ's return (Matt. 19:28), not meandering about the Ephesian countryside muttering gentle platitudes about "love one another" (as the Roman Catholics would have us believe). There is something desperately wrong with this picture.
- If John remained on earth after AD 70, he would surely have recognized the fulfillments and said something about it. His silence is incriminating and discrediting against him.
- I think we are now beginning to get an inkling of the enormity of this problem.
- The only way for us to neutralize all of these futurist arguments is to show that John died a martyr's death in the Neronic persecution before the Parousia. Fortunately, there is both historical (Papias) and biblical evidence (Matthew 20 and Mark 10) to support that thesis.
- But that is not all that is required. There must also be a rapture to explain why none of the other apostles and pre-70 saints were still around after AD 70. The same problems that we have looked at regarding Apostle John, would apply directly to any of the other apostles or pre-70 saints who lived beyond AD 70.

VI. How Do We Explain Their Silence and Absence After AD 70?

- A. What were they expecting to see, hear, and experience at the Parousia?

In [Appendix 4](#), there is a list of the major texts which identify what the pre-70 saints were expecting to see, hear, and experience at the Parousia.

- B. Were they expecting to remain on the earth after the Parousia? One of the things that clearly emerges from a study of the "expectation statements" (Appendix 4) is that the saints were absolutely not expecting to remain on earth after the Parousia.

- C. Instead, they were expecting to be rescued, relieved, and rewarded for their faithfulness, and "enter into" the kingdom of heaven, NOT left in tribulation on earth without a clue about what had just happened! Note their intense longings for the Parousia in the numerous expectation statements (see [Appendix 4](#)).
- D. Were their expectations fulfilled? Apparently so. Their silence afterwards is strong testimony to their absence. Silence is not what we would have expected from them if they had just experienced the Parousia of Christ.
- E. If they had still been around after AD 70, and were not aware that the Parousia had occurred, even though they were expecting to experience it, then they should have been complaining about the non-occurrence, or puzzled and confused about it happening in a different non-experiential way than they had expected. They would either be disillusioned with the non-occurrence, or confused by the non-experiential nature of fulfillment.
- F. The silence and confusion and doctrinal departures that we see in the historical record after AD 70 is certainly not what we would have expected to occur, if those pre-70 saints were still around after experiencing the Parousia. Apostle Paul had told them that they would "know fully as they had been known" (1 Cor. 13) after the Perfect had come. This implies that if they had any partial understandings or misunderstandings about the eschatological events (such as the Parousia, resurrection, or judgment), it would all be cleared up for them at the Parousia. They would "know fully" about all those things. This includes the Collective Body concept of the Resurrection, or the Individual Body Change/Rapture view. Any misunderstandings they might have had about the resurrection, change and rapture would have been cleared up at the Parousia. Furthermore, if there was no rapture, then those saints would have been left on earth with a perfectly clear understanding ("know fully") of the Resurrection (whatever its concept). The fact that none of the post-70 Christians knew about the occurrence of the Parousia, much less understood the fulfillment of the Resurrection, speaks volumes about what must have happened. Either they were raptured out of there, or the Parousia did not happen and they never got their Perfect understanding of all things!
- G. It is therefore extremely significant that not a single post-70 writer shows any awareness of the collective body view of the resurrection, much less a clear understanding of it, nor even a past fulfillment of it.
- H. How did they miss the fulfillment? How could they get so confused? Why doesn't any of the remaining apostles (like John) or their immediate disciples (like Timothy, Titus, Gaius, Aristarchus, Tychicus, Silvanus, etc) speak up and set the record straight? In view of the confused and misleading statements of the post-70 writers like Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius, the remaining apostles and their disciples (like Timothy, Philip, etc) should have risen to the occasion and testified to what they saw, heard, and experienced at the Parousia. If the Parousia had occurred and they knew it had happened, and they had seen Him "face to face" and now "knew

fully as they had been known," then they should have been shouting from the rooftops that the Parousia occurred, and that it happened just as Jesus said, and they saw it, heard it, and experienced it. Why the silence, if they now "knew it fully" as Paul had promised that they would? If the process of raising a collective body of saints out of dead Judaism was the resurrection that Paul is talking about here in 1 Cor. 15, and that process was completed and reached perfection at AD 70, as the Collective Body advocates claim, then why do the post-70 saints appear to lose all understanding of it after AD 70, at the very time when Paul says they would "know fully"? This is a real historical problem for the Collective Body view, and some of their advocates are beginning to acknowledge it. For instance, Preston says:

Stevens is correct to say that we have no [patristic] authors who point to AD 70 as the time of Christ's final coming, the judgment and **resurrection of the dead**. This silence is indeed perplexing ... for which we have no easy answer. ...how in the name of reason did they fail to see that the Parousia had indeed occurred? ...Are we to suppose that the post 70 saints were so ignorant that they could not see that connection? [We Shall Meet, p. 286, 287, 291, 299. boldface mine, ees].

Indeed, there is no easy answer, but there is a biblical answer, if we are willing to believe it. And we have seen what that answer is, as we looked at all the "expectation statements" listed in **Appendix 4**. The living saints were expecting to be CHANGED and SNATCHED AWAY to be with Christ in the heavenly realm.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Several fellow preterists who are critics of the rapture view have emailed me and said, "*Silence and lack of documentation is not a valid argument for a rapture.*" And I replied back with the same words that Futurists use against all preterists: "Silence of all the Church Father writings after AD 70 about the fulfillment of the Parousia does not prove that there was a Parousia in AD 70. Instead, that silence tends to suggest non-occurrence." This historical problem is not just a Rapture problem. It is a problem for all Preterists.
- B. *Why is the rapture so hard to accept for most preterists?* It is because they have committed themselves to a particular Resurrection paradigm (CBV), or a particular hermeneutical approach (allegorizing or spiritualizing) which arbitrarily precludes the literal rapture from their consideration. Yet, if we reject the rapture as a viable explanation, we have no viable means to counter either of the two main futurist arguments of "silence out of embarrassment for the non-fulfillment" or "silence because of ignorance of the fulfillment." The rapture idea is the only reasonable explanation of the silence and absence of the pre-70 saints after AD 70, as well as the theological and ecclesiastical confusion of the following generations.
- C. Furthermore, the silence is not a problem for the rapture view, since silence is exactly what we would expect if all the saints who knew about the Parousia were taken to heaven. And silence is NOT what we would have if any of the pre-70 saints were still on earth after AD 70. They would have known that the Parousia occurred, and would have talked about it and set the record straight. So, the

historical problem is much more devastating against the non-rapture preterists, and there really is no reasonable or satisfying solution to it without a removal of all the folks who knew about the occurrence of the Parousia.

- D. Almost every church historian has noted the strange veil of silence that fell over the church immediately after AD 70. John A. T. Robinson in his book, Redating the New Testament, likens this silence after AD 70 to a noisy train with smoke chuffing and horns blowing. Then suddenly the train goes into a tunnel and comes out the other side a radically different train. We are at a loss to know what happened in the tunnel to change the train so drastically.
- E. In the book of Acts we see the Apostles and their couriers traveling all over the Roman empire teaching the gospel and building churches and writing dozens of letters to the scattered churches. Truly there was a blaze of missionary activity and literary activity before AD 70. But for some reason all that activity came to a screeching halt in AD 70.
- F. Luke in the book of Acts, and Paul in his fourteen epistles, mention 83 individuals by name that were involved in the missionary activity before AD 70 -- Timothy, Titus, Gaius, Aristarchus, Tychicus, Apollos, Zenas, Hermas, Clement, Barnabas, Mark, Luke, and so on. Jesus and the apostles had clearly taught that "some of them standing there" would "live and remain" until the Parousia. Yet not a single one of these over 83 named individuals ever surface after AD 70. We do not know when they died, where they died, where they were buried -- nothing! They vanish without a trace. Strange silence (and absence).
- G. This silence is inexplicable in view of their expectations beforehand to see the Parousia, and the fact that the later Christians were saying that the Parousia was still future. None of the pre-70 saints ever speak up to set the record straight.
- H. A rapture is the only way to explain how they could experience the Parousia and yet not say a word about it afterwards to later Christians who thought it was still future. They could not set the record straight because they were no longer on earth to do it. Their **silence** was because of their **absence**, NOT because of a **non-occurrence** or a **non-awareness** of the Parousia.

APPENDIX 1

Dr. Charles Hill explains the Historical Problem That All Preterists Face

1. [Max King] argues, as well he must, for the general unreliability of the church fathers and their untrustworthiness in eschatology in particular – citing Irenaeus as his only example. **King is apparently aware that early church history offers little or no support for his understanding of eschatology. Therefore, we find hints, in several places in his writings, that the New Testament understanding of eschatology was virtually lost. Our brief review of early Christian literature shows that it must have been lost with breathtaking swiftness and comprehensiveness. But what can account for this sudden disappearance of true Christian eschatology?** [Hill, *WSTTB*, pp. 94-95, boldface mine, ees]
2. *Could the church have missed the eschaton?* After just a cursory review of the early noncanonical evidence of Christian eschatology, certain questions inevitably spring to mind. The first is, How could it possibly be that the very people who were taught about the consummation of redemptive history by the apostles, and *who lived through this consummation*, missed the great event when it happened? [Max] King says, "This 'soon' coming of Christ was not some isolated, off the beaten path event. It encompassed all of the events in Scripture that were tied to the eschatological coming of the Son of man, such as the judgment, the end of the world (age), the new heaven and earth, etc." [King, TCTP, p. 13] **And yet we find no trace of any awareness on the part of the church that these things happened in A.D. 70. Instead, all Christians continued to look for the blessed hope after it had already supposedly come. That the very people who experienced the momentous consummation of God's promises in Christ should not have noticed it when it happened, would be cause for the greatest possible astonishment.** [Hill, *WSTTB*, pp. 105-106, boldface mine, ees]
3. *Could the church have so completely misunderstood the nature of the eschaton?* And if it were conceivable that the Christians who lived through the climactic end of the age were by some imponderable set of circumstances so dull as to have missed it, there would still remain other serious complications. We would at least expect that they, as churches trained by the apostles themselves, should have known what kind of events they were looking for. They should at least have known what the resurrection was, what the judgment was, what the end of the age was, and what the new heavens and new earth would be. [cf. King, TCTP, p. 740] **What then are they doing [after AD 70], not only still looking for these events to occur, but believing them to be of a completely different nature than what the apostles had taught them to expect? How is it that Christians, not just in some isolated backwater, but all over the Empire, including apostolic churches, expect that the return of Christ will actually be visible to the world "as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west"; that the coming resurrection will be a bodily one;**

that all of humanity will then be judged, individually recompensed, and assigned their eternal lots; that then a new age will dawn "in which righteousness dwells"? [Hill, WSTTB, pp. 106, boldface mine, ees]

4. If "fulfilled eschatology" is true, then indeed King's judgment on the early church is more than justified – truly, "there is no light in them." The early church then failed to comprehend even the first principles of the apostles' teaching on all the great essentials of eschatology; they failed to grasp the very terms of discourse.

Could the apostles have failed so miserably? Are the New Testament Scriptures so impenetrable? If such a horrendously dismal assessment of the early church could be maintained, it would inevitably carry with it a stinging reproach of the teaching abilities of the apostles, rendering their mission all but an unqualified disaster. Can we really conceive of the apostles and their coworkers as such weak and ineffective teachers that they failed to pass on to the next generation not just the details, but the very core and framework of biblical eschatology, the "sum and substance" of the gospel? Perhaps we all know how things that should be at the center can slide off to the periphery. But this is not the case here. We do not even find this understanding of eschatology at the periphery. An early Christian writer who is even aware of a hyper-preterist eschatology in the church has yet to be found.

Nobody is insisting that the whole church must have understood Paul. But surely it is not too much to ask that **somebody understood him and perpetuated at least the core of his eschatology**, the sum and substance of his gospel, or at least the true meaning of his terms of discourse. Or, if nobody understood Paul, that somebody understood Peter. Or, if even Peter was too hard to comprehend, that somebody understood John, or James, or Luke, or Matthew, or the author of Hebrews. **Can we really believe that all these New Testament authors were unable to secure the transmission of their basic eschatological teaching to the next generation, leaving these teachings to vanish without a trace?** Can we really believe that it remained for someone in the late nineteenth or twentieth century to rediscover the core of New Testament eschatology?

Many, I trust, will find that conclusions like these place too high a demand on their credulity, especially when to read the New Testament in a way that preserves a more or less traditional futurism makes infinitely better sense of the New Testament historical environment.

Can so little be made of the great change effected by the eschaton? An extremely negative judgment against the competency of the apostles and the intelligence of those taught by them throws up a glaring irony. How is the wholesale departure of the church for an alien eschatology conceivable, given that we are talking about the church that itself supposedly experienced the freshness of the arrival of the new age? King seems to speak of the eschaton as if all of its great transactions would not really effect any change in individual Christians, [cf. King, TCTP, pp. 669, 556] but rather would bring about the completion of a status already enjoyed by Christians, a full and sudden revealing of something that had been taking place in Christians since the Cross. [cf. King, TCTP, pp. 639, 641] I fear that this slight what the New Testament writers say about the

great change to be effected at the Last Day. In 1 Corinthians 13:12, Paul avers that the ignorance that he then experienced would be remedied when the perfect would come. His dim vision would then cease; he would then "understand fully, even as I have been fully understood." Where then is the perfection of knowledge that Paul so earnestly expected? How paradoxical it is that the very generation which attained consummate fullness of knowledge when the perfect came, saw that knowledge evaporate virtually overnight! How utterly unimaginable it is that those who became like him when he appeared, for they saw him as he is (1 John 3:2), not only did not recall the experience for us, but, apparently, were no different for it! Or, rather, the only observable change is that their spiritual understanding was plunged suddenly into the abyss, from which it has yet to be recovered! All the evidence we have from the period is that the Christian church embraced a completely foreign eschatology, the so-called "dislocated eschaton" eschatology, which has puzzlingly been attributed by hyper-preterists to the effects of Hellenization. When Paul says that the night is far spent and the day is at hand (Rom. 13:11-12), King explains that the nighttime was still lingering in the apostolic age and that the daytime is the era of Christianity. [cf. King, TCTP, pp. 277, 479, 673, 731, and esp. 521-522] Yet, according to King, the church has been off base ever since "the day" arrived! [cf. King, TCTP, pp. 560, 703, 756, and 671-672] Surely we were much better off during the last watch of the night, when at least we had the living, apostolic word!

The irony is astounding. The dreaded and nearly fatal "Hellenization" of the gospel is supposed to have struck the church, according to hyper-preterism, concurrently with the church's attainment of its ultimate state of perfection. It does not seem to me that one can have it both ways. If one wants to argue for a radical nosedive of the church as soon as the apostles left the scene somewhere around A.D. 70, then I do not see how one can argue that it was precisely then that the church also attained the consummation of its hope, its full measure of knowledge and sanctification, its final state of conformity to the image of Christ. [Hill, WSTTB, pp. 106-109, boldface mine, ees]

5. If all the Christians implicitly understood the terms of Paul's discourse during his ministry (including cryptic uses of such expressions as "the creation" in Rom. 8:19-22 and "the elect" in 2 Tim. 2:10, which are said to refer to Israel), and if right up until the end Christians were looking for Jerusalem to be destroyed as the fulfillment of the eschaton, then how can it be that all this changes as soon as we hear from any Christian sources after A.D. 70? I do not see how one can have it both ways. If the vocabulary of the common, apostolic eschatological teaching" was generally understood, then the wholesale departure of the entire early church for another understanding cannot be accounted for. Or, if it was not understood, then the apostles' abilities as teachers must be called into question and [Max] King's argument for a "clear" and "obvious" hyper-preterism falls to the ground. If the apostles' own hearers did not understand them, how can we be expected to understand them? [Hill, WSTTB, pp. 117-118, boldface mine, ees]

6. The hyper-preterist may try to make peace with the discomfiting anomalies of history by viewing them as an indication of the abysmally low level of spiritual apprehension in the subapostolic age. But then this conclusion will belie his other contention that his view would have been the same one preached universally by the apostles and received by the congregations they founded. If this claims to be the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), we have to conclude that the delivery was never quite made. Somebody – no, everybody – fumbled the faith away. In addition, the hyper-preterist will then have the troubling paradox that the generation which experienced God's final perfecting of his saints is the very generation which let the faith slip through its hands. [Hill, *WSTTB*, pp. 118-119, boldface mine, ees]
7. One can now appreciate the desperate attractiveness of an approach like Russell's. How convenient it would be simply to rid ourselves of the nemesis of history with a theory of a literal rapture in A.D. 70. [Hill, *WSTTB*, p. 118, emphasis mine, ees]
8. J. S. Russell's solution to the problem is as brilliant as it is bizarre. He is able to circumvent all the evidence from the early church by claiming that the rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4:17 occurred on or before A.D. 70 in a more or less literal fashion, sweeping away not only the remaining apostles, but all watchful Christians as well:

"The language of the prophecy certainly implies the **sudden and simultaneous removal** of a very great number of the faithful. Is there, then, any vestige in history of such a **blank**? Most certainly there is, and just such an indication as we might expect Ask the ecclesiastical historian to put his finger on the spot where the records of early Christianity are **most obscure**, and he will unhesitatingly point to the period when the Acts of the Apostles end." [Russell, *The Parousia*, preface to the new edition]

Russell then cites contemporary authorities to support the conclusion that after A.D. 70 there followed a "**total blank**" in church history. ...Russell's solution is almost too fantastic to deserve a response, but due to the current revival of his approach in some circles, some of the evidence for large-scale survival of A.D. 70 by the church, missed by Russell, should be mentioned. [Hill, *WSTTB*, p. 92, boldface mine, ees]

APPENDIX 2

Church Historian Quotes About the Silence, Absence, Confusion, and Doctrinal Problems After AD 70

"And one of the interesting things about church history is that when you look at the immediate post-apostolic church, you find that they did not know very much. You read the Apostolic Fathers like Barnabas, Clement, and other people who were writing around the year 100 and you think, "How could they not know more than they know?" And you start looking at the other fathers and find they don't know much either. Barnabas has an exposition of the dietary laws that is crazy. He says that the Jews were never supposed to actually offer sacrifices. He did not get that from Paul. And you think, "What happened to the disciples of the disciples?" Didn't John and James and Peter and Mark and Matthew and Paul raise up a large company of people who would know New Testament Theology? Biblical Theology? And pass it on? There is a gap. And the explanation for that gap seems to be that the Two Witnesses are killed in the city, and the first fruits church is harvested, and the church kind of starts over again after AD 70. Some escape. [based on the principle in Lev. 23:22 that the corners of the field were not harvested, but left for the needy of the land.]... Now, I would suggest that not everybody was harvested. But there was a Big Harvest -- a lot of Christians taken off the scene. That is why there is not the kind of continuity we expect between the Apostolic Church and the Early Church, and why they seem to be ignorant of so many things that are in Paul." [Question from audience: "It seems like I remember Chilton suggesting in his book, *Days of Vengeance*, that NO Christians died in the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans."] "I don't think Christians died under the Romans. They were persecuted and killed by the Jewish church and the Judaizers BEFORE the destruction of Jerusalem. Babylon is punished for killing the saints. The wine that is poured out of the wine press is then taken and poured out on Babylon." [James Jordan's comments on Rev. 15, Tape #3, *Revelation Audio Tape Series*, Transcribed from the MP3 file, starting at 39:30 min. and ending at 41:45 min. -- Note from Ed: this is why on another occasion Jim Jordan referred to the Church Fathers as "Church Babies" since they knew so little about what the Apostles actually taught about so many issues.]

How did Christianity record this event of epoch-making consequence to itself? The answer is by **silence, complete and absolute**. The fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of its sacred Temple—Holy Sanctuary of both Judaism and Christianity—the collapse and disappearance of the Apostolic Body—hitherto the supreme authority and symbol of Christian prestige—and the fate of the original followers of Jesus **went unrecorded in Christian literature until the fourth century**. The books of the New Testament **ignore it** [i.e. Furneaux thinks they were written after AD 70, deliberately failing to mention these events.]. Thus did the later Christians draw the **veil of silence** over the Church's embarrassing past [i.e., "embarrassing" because he thinks it was not fulfilled]. [*The Roman Siege of Jerusalem* – Rupert Furneaux, pp. 246-248]

The death of Paul ends for us the apostolic age. With this event **we leave sure history for the uncertain and conflicting traditions**, which have been made **more doubtful** by the doubts which careful and thoughtful as well as biased historians have cast upon them. [*The Apostolic Church* – Oliver J. Thatcher, p. 270]

Of nine of the twelve we have absolutely **no authentic information**, but a learned German professor has collected three large volumes of the stories that were told about them during the Middle Ages. [*The Apostolic Church* – Oliver J. Thatcher, p. 270]

The course of the life of the Apostle John is **veiled in obscurity**. . . . it is said that he was banished to Patmos, and that he died two years later. [*The Apostolic Church* – Oliver J. Thatcher, pp. 271-272]

In the first place, Clement of Rome, in the year 96, wrote as if **all the apostles were dead**. It is very improbable that he would have been ignorant of the fact if John had been still alive. **A still graver doubt** is thrown on this tradition through the fact that Ignatius, who lived and wrote his seven letters between the years 107 and 140, makes **no mention of John**. He was at the time passing through Asia Minor, a prisoner on his way to Rome, and wrote letters to the Ephesians, to the Philadelphians, to the Smyrnaeans, to the Magnesians, to the Trallians, to the Philippians, and to the Romans. He speaks of Peter and Paul, but never once of John. If John had lived in Ephesus and labored throughout Asia Minor, is not **this silence very strange**, especially since his death must have been quite recent? **But it is impossible with the present state of our sources to know what the end of John was.** [*The Apostolic Church* – Oliver J. Thatcher, pp. 271-272]

Practically for us the apostolic age ends with the death of Paul, for **we have no certain information about the whereabouts or labors of any of the other apostles**. [*The Apostolic Church* – Oliver J. Thatcher, p. 309]

After Luke and the other biblical writers (particularly Paul who left us a considerable knowledge of early apostolic activities), **there is silence for a time**. It is as if the **Christian movement was in a tunnel, active, but out of sight for a period**. ...In any case, the early Christian movement **was in a tunnel and out of sight as far as the recording of history is concerned**. [*The Search For The Twelve Apostles* – William Steuart McBirnie, p. xv]

Ecclesiasticism in the highly organized and authoritarian forms it later took was almost **unknown to them**. The apostles were evangelists and pastors, not ecclesiastics. Their histories, then, are the **histories of evangelists, not of prelates**. [*The Search For The Twelve Apostles* – William Steuart McBirnie, p. xvi]

Secular history **largely ignored Christianity** in the early centuries. ...Josephus did not pay much attention to Christianity though he mentions the death of James. Roman history, except for the writings of Pliny the Younger, **hardly notices Christianity until long after the apostolic age**. It remains for churchmen such as Hegesippus and

Eusebius to give us further details of the travels and history of the Twelve. ... Roman historians pretty well **ignored Christianity in its early days**. [*The Search For The Twelve Apostles* – William Steuart McBirnie, pp. xvi-xvii]

Apparently **the apostles themselves did not seem aware that their mission was historic so they kept few records which have remained**. Such records as we have, apart from the Scriptures, **are not without flaw and often lean toward the fanciful**. [*The Search For The Twelve Apostles* – William Steuart McBirnie, pp. 9-10]

...there is a long gap between the close of the apostolic writings and the commencement of ecclesiastical literature proper. The intervening period is one of **silent growth, broken only by a few scattered voices**. **We could have wished for fuller information**, both as to the founding of Church institutions and the formulating of Christian doctrine. **As it is, we are left a good deal to conjecture.** **Nor is the amount of knowledge obtainable from the few documents that remain by any means equal to what might have been expected.** It was with Christianity as with so many other great things: the period of its early growth was **involved in obscurity**, and when it awoke to self-consciousness, it had **forgotten the events of its infancy**, or retained them only in scattered recollections. The vivid light that encircles its first preaching gives way to **a dim twilight, ...finds but feeble expression in words**. The *Apostolic Fathers*, as they are usually called, though *sub-apostolic* would be a more correct name, supply in a **partial and fragmentary way the blank in our sources of information**. [*A Literary History of Early Christianity Including the Fathers and the Chief Heretical Writers of the Ante-Nicene Period* – Charles Thomas Cruttwell, p. 21]

The dates and authenticity of nearly all [the Apostolic Father writings] have been hotly disputed. Few of them have much definite attestation, which makes it all the more desirable that the attainable evidence, such as it is, should be sifted with an unbiased mind. [*A Literary History of Early Christianity Including the Fathers and the Chief Heretical Writers of the Ante-Nicene Period* – Charles Thomas Cruttwell, p. 22]

There may, indeed there *must* have been [From Ed: Notice his assumption that "there must have been"] a large number of letters and treatises written on different points of the faith as occasion arose, but **these have perished, partly from confiscation by the authorities, instigated by hostile Jews, partly from their not having had sufficient general influence to secure their preservation.** Hence **the few fragments** of this intermediate literature that remain have a peculiar interest for us, as **forming practically the only landmarks for our guidance during a period when almost all the great institutions of early Christianity were matured.** [*A Literary History of Early Christianity Including the Fathers and the Chief Heretical Writers of the Ante-Nicene Period* – Charles Thomas Cruttwell, p. 84]

[In regard to the Apostle John] ...the death of James [AD 62] seemed to open a new chapter in the history of the Mother Church. [*The Early Days of Christianity* – F. W. Farrar, p. 388]

Since very few documents from the first century have survived, dogmatism about doctrinal issues from the period should be kept at a minimum. Dispensationalist John D. Hannah, department chairman and professor of historical theology at Dallas Theological Seminary, is honest enough to admit that it's "**not an easy task to piece together a picture of what early Christians thought about the end times.... [since] our sources for their thought in this area are relatively limited.**" [The Early Church and the End of the World. Gary DeMar and Francis X. Gumerlock, p. 16]

APPENDIX 3

Imminency Word Usage in Apostolic Fathers vs. NT Writers

The following is just a sample of the kind of grammatical analysis I am doing for the four main Apostolic Father writings (Didache, Barnabas, Clement, and Hermas). I am comparing the usage of the IMMINENCY indicator words and phrases in the Apostolic Fathers versus their usage in the New Testament. Which of the NT books have the same frequency and intensity of these words and phrases as the Apostolic Fathers? If the frequency and intensity of one of the Apostolic Fathers is similar to the frequency and intensity in one or more of the New Testament books, that would indicate that it may have been written at the same time as the NT book. It will help us assign a new date to the Apostolic Fathers.

MELLO

μέλλω to be about to; to linger (85)

1Clem 24:1; 28:1; 31:3; 42:3-4; 43:6; 55:6; 2Clem 5:5; 6:3; 10:3-4; 18:2; 20:2; Eph 11:1; 20:1; Mag 5:1; Poly 8:2; Phili 5:2; MPoly 8:2; 11:2; 13:3; 14:3; 17:2; 18:3; Barn 1:7; 4:1,9; 5:3,9-10; 6:7,9,14; 7:2-3,5,10; 9:8; 12:1-2,10; 16:5; 17:2; Shep 1:6,8; 6:3,8; 13:5; 16:11; 23:5; 25:5; 31:3; 32:3; 34:8; 43:7,18; 46:3; 50:1,5; 53:2; 55:1; 56:3,5,7; 58:4; 61:3; 72:2; 79:4-5; 80:2,4; 82:1,7; 83:8; 88:3; 89:3; 103:6; 107:3; Diog 8:2

Apost. Fathers	Occurrences of Mello	Hits per 1000 words
1Clement	7	.58
2Clement	6	1.65
Ephesians	2	.90
Magnesians	1	.76
Trallians	0	0
Smyrnaeans	0	0
Polycarp	1	1
Philippians	1	.73
Mart. of Polycarp	6	1.79
Didache	0	0
Barnabas	20	2.41
Shepherd	40	1.19
Diognetus	1	.30
Papias	0	0
Total Occurrences - 85		

MELLO (NT writers usage)

μέλλω to be about to; to linger -- (109 total occurrences in 106 verses)

Matt 2:13; 3:7; 11:14; 12:32; 16:27; 17:12, 22; 20:22; 24:6; Mark 10:32; 13:4; Luke 3:7; 7:2; 9:31, 44; 10:1; 13:9; 19:4, 11; 21:7, 36; 22:23; 24:21; John 4:47; 6:6, 15, 71; 7:35, 39; 11:51; 12:4, 33; 14:22; 18:32; Acts 3:3; 5:35; 11:28; 12:6; 13:34; 16:27; 17:31;

18:14; 19:27; 20:3, 7, 13, 38; 21:27, 37; 22:16, 26, 29; 23:3, 15, 20, 27; 24:15, 25; 25:4; 26:2, 22-23; 27:2, 10, 30, 33; 28:6; Rom 4:24; 5:14; 8:13, 18, 38; 1Cor 3:22; Gal 3:23; Eph 1:21; Col 2:17; 1Th 3:4; 1Tim 1:16; 4:8; 6:19; 2Tim 4:1; Heb 1:14; 2:5; 6:5; 8:5; 10:1, 27; 11:8, 20; 13:14; James 2:12; 1Pet 5:1; 2Pet 1:12; 2:6; Rev 1:19; 2:10; 3:2, 10, 16; 6:11; 8:13; 10:4, 7; 12:4-5; 17:8

NT Writers	Occurrences Of Mello	Hits per 1000 words
Matthew	9	0.41
Mark	2	0.15
Luke	12	0.51
John	12	0.64
Acts	34	1.58
Romans	5	0.58
1Corinthians	1	0.12
2Corinthians	0	0.00
Galatians	1	0.36
Ephesians	1	0.35
Philippians	0	0.00
Colossians	1	0.51
1Thessalonians	1	0.57
2Thessalonians	0	0.00
1Timothy	3	1.52
2Timothy	1	0.65
Titus-Philemon	0	0
Hebrews	9	1.46
James	1	0.46
1Peter	1	0.48
2Peter	2	1.53
1John-Jude	0	0
Revelation	13	1.11

ENGUS

ἐγγύς (+gen) near (21)

1Clem. 5:1 ἔλθωμεν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔγγιστα γενομένους ἀθλητάς·

1Clem. 21:3 ἴδωμεν πῶς ἐγγύς ἐστιν, καὶ ὅτι

1Clem. 27:3 νοήσωμεν ὅτι πάντα ἐγγύς αὐτῷ ἐστίν.

2Clem. 7:3 στεφανωθῆναι, καὶ ἐγγύς τοῦ στεφάνου γενώμεθα

2Clem. 18:2 ισχύσω καὶ ἐγγύς αὐτῆς γενέσθαι,

Eph. 15:3 τὰ κρυπτὰ ἡμῶν ἐγγύς αὐτῷ ἐστιν.

Rom. 10:2 οἵς καὶ δηλώσατε ἐγγύς με ὅντα,

Phila. 10:2 ως καὶ αἱ ἔγγιστα ἐκκλησίαι ἐπεμψαν ἐπισκόπους

Smyr. 4:2 ἐγγύς μαχαίρας, ἐγγύς

ἐγγύς μαχαίρας, ἐγγύς θεοῦ· μεταξὺ

- Barn. 21:3** ἐγγὺς ἡ ἡμέρα ἐν ᾧ συναπολεῖται πάντα τῷ πονηρῷ. ἐγγὺς ὁ κύριος καὶ
- Shep. 7:4** πάλιν ἄρνησαι. ἐγγὺς κύριος τοῖς ἐπιστρεφομένοις
- Shep. 10:9** ἑτέρους δὲ πίπτοντας ἐγγὺς ὑδάτων καὶ μὴ
- Shep. 15:3** ἑτέρους τοὺς πίπτοντας ἐγγὺς τῶν ὑδάτων καὶ
- Shep. 22:9** ἔρχομαι ἐγγὺς αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ τηλικοῦτο
- Shep. 72:5** ἐπιδεδωκότες, καὶ οὗτοι ἐγγὺς αὐτῶν ἥσαν
- Shep. 75:4** ἀλλὰ ἐπιμενόντων ταῖς ἡδοναῖς, ὁ θάνατος ἐγγύς.
- Shep. 83:2** αὐτόν, καὶ ἥρξαντο ἐγγὺς αὐτοῦ περιπατεῖν κύκλῳ
- Shep. 83:6** δέ τινος πεδίου ἐγγὺς ὅντος ἐκέλευσεν ἐνεχθῆναι
- Shep. 87:2** φησί, καὶ ἐγγὺς τὸ ἔργον τελεσθήσεται

	Occurrences of Engus	Hits per 1000 words
1Clement	3	.25
2Clement	2	.55
Ephesians	1	.45
Magnesians	0	0
Trallians	0	0
Romans	1	.74
Philadelphians	1	.82
Smyrnaeans	2	1.36
Polycarp	0	0
Didache	0	0
Barnabas	2	.24
Shepherd	9	.27
Diognetus	0	0
Papias	0	0
Total Occurrences - 21		

NT usage of ENGUS (31 occurrences in 31 verses)

ἐγγύς (+gen) near = 31

Matt. 24:32; Matt. 24:33; Matt. 26:18; Mark 13:28; Mark 13:29; Luke 19:11; Luke 21:30; Luke 21:31; John 2:13; John 3:23; John 6:4; John 6:19; John 6:23; John 7:2; John 11:18; John 11:54; John 11:55; John 19:20; John 19:42; Acts 1:12; Acts 9:38; Acts 27:8; Rom. 10:8; Rom. 13:11; Eph. 2:13; Eph. 2:17; Phil. 4:5; Heb. 6:8; Heb. 8:13; Rev. 1:3; Rev. 22:10

	Total Hits	Hits per 1000 words
Matthew	3	0.14
Mark	2	0.15
Luke	3	0.13
John	11	0.59
Acts	3	0.14
Romans	2	0.23

1Corinthians-Galatians	0	0.00
Ephesians	2	0.69
Philippians	1	0.50
Colossians-Philemon	0	0
Hebrews	2	0.33
James-Jude	0	0
Revelation	2	0.17
	Total Occurrences - 31	

TAXUS

Total number of verses = 28
 (total number of verses displayed = 28)

(ταχν, ταχνς, ταχунω, ταχος, ταχинос, ταχεως) (33 total words)

Number of different forms = 6:

ταχέως (ταχύς) **quickly, soon** = 4
 ταχινός (ταχύς) **soon** = 3
 τάχος (ταχύς) **quickness** = 7
 ταχν **quickly** = 13
 ταχύνω (ταχύς) **to send quickly, to be quick** = 1
 ταχύς **swift, quickly, soon** = 5

ταχέως **quickly, soon** (4)

1Clem. 65:1 ήμας, ὅπως **θᾶττον** τὴν εὐκταίαν καὶ
 Phili. 6:1 φιλαργυρίας, μὴ **ταχέως** πιστεύοντες κατά τινος
 MPoly. 13:1 τάχους ἐγένετο, **θᾶττον** ἢ ἐλέγετο,
 Barn. 3:4 σου **ταχέως** ἀνατελεῖ, καὶ

ταχινός **soon** (3)

Shep. 75:4 ἡ μετάνοια αὐτῶν **ταχινὴ** ὀφείλει [188]
 Shep. 97:4 μετάνοιά ἔστι, **ταχινὴ** δέ, ἵν
 Shep. 103:6 μέλλει μετανοεῖν, **ταχινὸς** γενέσθω πρὶν τὸν

τάχος **quickness** (7)

1Clem. 48:1 οὖν τοῦτο ἐν **τάχει** καὶ προσπέσωμεν τῷ
 1Clem. 53:2 κατάβηθι τὸ **τάχος** ἐντεῦθεν, ὅτι
 1Clem. 63:4 εἰς τὸ ἐν **τάχει** ὑμᾶς εἰρηνεῦσαι.
 1Clem. 65:1 μετὰ χαρᾶς ἐν **τάχει** ἀναπέμψατε πρὸς ἡμᾶς
 MPoly. 13:1 οὖν μετὰ τοσούτου **τάχους** ἐγένετο, θᾶττον
 Barn. 4:8 Μωϋσῆ, κατάβηθι τὸ **τάχος**, ὅτι ἡνόμησεν
 Barn. 14:3 Μωϋσῆ, κατάβηθι τὸ **τάχος** ὅτι ὁ λαός

ταχν **quickly** (13)

1Clem. 23:5 ἐπ' ἀληθείας **ταχν** καὶ ἐξαίφνης τελειωθήσεται

- τὸ γραφῆς ὅτι **Ταχὺ** ἥξει καὶ οὐ
- 1Clem. 53:2** Αἰγύπτου· παρέβησαν **ταχὺ** ἐκ τῆς ὁδοῦ
- 2Clem. 20:3** οὐδεὶς τῶν δικαίων **ταχὺν** καρπὸν ἔλαβεν,
- Shep. 16:9** τέλος. ἀλλὰ **ταχὺ** ἐποικοδομηθήσεται. μηκέτι
- Shep. 39:7** μὴ διψυχήσῃς ὅτι **ταχὺ** οὐκ ἔλαβες τὸ
- Shep. 48:3** μήποτε ὤξισαν **ταχὺ** γὰρ τὰ ἀπόκενα
- Shep. 74:3** μετάνοιαν, ἐὰν **ταχὺ** μετανοήσωσι, καὶ
- Shep. 74:5** μετάνοια, ἐὰν **ταχὺ** μετανοήσωσι καὶ μὴ
- Shep. 76:1** τὸ πλεῖστον μέρος **ταχὺ** μετενόησαν, καὶ
- Shep. 96:2** κεῖται, ἐὰν **ταχὺ** μετανοήσωσιν ἐὰν
- Shep. 98:4** οὗτοι, ἐὰν **ταχὺ** μετανοήσωσι, «
- Shep. 100:2** εἰσιν αἱ καταλαλιαί, καὶ **ταχὺ** μετανοήσουσιν.

ταχύνω to send quickly, to be quick (1)

Barn. 4:3 ἡμέρας, ἵνα **ταχύνῃ** ὁ ἡγαπημένος αὐτοῦ

ταχύς swift, quickly, soon (5)

1Clem. 65:1 εἰς τὸ **τάχιον** καὶ ἡμᾶς χαρῆναι

MPoly. 3:1 θηρίον προσβιασάμενος, **τάχιον** τοῦ ἀδίκου καὶ

MPoly. 13:2 πιστῶν σπουδάζειν ὅστις **τάχιον** τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ

Shep. 40:6 τὰ λεγόμενα αὐτοῖς **τάχιον** νοοῦσι καὶ συνίουσιν

Shep. 73:5 ἔαυτοὺς καὶ μετενόησαν **ταχύ**. ἐγένετο οὖν

	Occurrences of Taxus	Hits per 1000 words
1Clement	9	.74
2Clement	1	.27
Ephesians	0	0
Polycarp	0	0
Philippians	1	.73
Mpolycarp	4	1.19
Didache	0	0
Barnabas	4	.48
Shepherd	14	.42
Diognetus	0	0
Papias	0	0
Total Occurrences - 33		

NT usage of TAXUS:

Matt. 5:25 “ Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.

Matt. 28:7 “Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you.”

Matt. 28:8 ¶ And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples.

Mark 9:39 But Jesus said, “Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me.

Luke 15:22 “But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet;

John 11:29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him.

James 1:19 ¶ This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;

Rev. 2:16 ‘Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

Rev. 3:11 ‘I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Rev. 11:14 ¶ The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

Rev. 22:7 ¶ “And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.”

Rev. 22:12 ¶ “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

Rev. 22:20 ¶ He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming quickly.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

	Total Hits	Hits per 1000 words
Matthew	3	0.14
Mark	1	0.07
Luke	1	0.04
John	1	0.05
Acts-Hebrews	0	0.00
James	1	0.46
1Peter-Jude	0	0.00
Revelation	6	0.51
Total Occurrences - 13		

APPENDIX 4

What Were the Pre-70 Saints Expecting to See, Hear, and Experience at the Parousia?

Rescued From the Coming Wrath:

- 1 Thess. 5:23 -- ...may your **whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved** blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. [NKJV]
- 1 Thess. 1:10 ...wait for His Son from heaven... who **rescues us** from the wrath to come.
- 1 Thess. 5:9-10 -- "...God has not appointed us to wrath, but for **obtaining salvation** ... and to await His Son from Heaven ... the One **delivering us from the coming wrath.**"
- 2 Thess. 1:7-10 ...**give relief to you** who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire... when He comes to be **glorified in His saints** on that day, and **to be marveled at among all who have believed...**

Bodily Change:

- 1 Cor. 15:37-38 ...that which you sow [the seed], **you do not sow the body which is to be** ... But **God gives it** [the seed] **a body** just as He wished, and **to each of the seeds a body of its own.**
- 1 Cor. 15:51-53 -- ...we will **not all sleep** [die], but **we will all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the **trumpet will sound**, and the dead ones [plural] will be raised imperishable, and **we will be changed**. ...**put on the imperishable...put on immortality.**
- 2 Cor. 5:2-4 ...**in this house** we groan, longing to be **clothed with our dwelling from heaven**, inasmuch as we, having **put it on**, will not be found naked. ... **in this tent**, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be **unclothed** but **to be [clothed upon]**, so that what is **mortal will be swallowed up by life**. [cf. Weymouth and NIV]
- 1 John 3:2 ...We know that when He appears, **we will be like Him...**
- Phil. 3:20-21 ...eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will **transform our lowly body** that it may be **conformed to His glorious body...** [NKJV]
- Rom. 8:18-25 ...the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with **the glory** that is about to be [Gr. mello] **revealed to us**. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for **the revealing** of the sons of God... for our **adoption as sons**, the **redemption of our body...**
- 1 Thess. 5:23 -- ...may your whole spirit, soul, **and body be preserved** blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. [NKJV]

Caught Up:

- 1 Thess. 4:16-17 -- 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 will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be **caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**
- Matt. 24:30-31 -- ...they will see **the Son of Man coming** on the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a **great trumpet** and they will **gather together His elect**

John 14:3 -- ...I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

2 Thess. 2:1 ...the Parousia of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him

Presented To Christ: (not shrink away, but draw near to Him)

2 Cor. 4:14 knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.

1 Jn. 2:28 ...abide in Him so that when He appears we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming...

Luke 21:36 -- ...that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.

Jude 1:24 -- ...stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy

1 Thess. 2:19 ...in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His Parousia

Col. 1:22-23 yet He has now reconciled you... in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach — if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel...

Glorify Him and Marvel at Him:

2 Thess. 1:7-10 ...the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels... when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...

1 Pet. 1:7 so that the proof of your faith ... may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ

1 Pet. 4:13 -- but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

Rewarded by Christ for their Faithfulness: (Judged and Rewarded)

Matt. 19:28-29 -- ...you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has [forfeited property or relationships] for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

2 Tim. 4:8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to... all who have loved His appearing.

Col. 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

1 Pet. 5:1-6 -- ...partaker also of the glory that is about to be [Gr. mello] revealed... when the Chief Shepherd appears you will receive the unfading crown of glory... exalt you at the proper time

Rom. 8:17-23 ...if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is about to be [Gr. mello] revealed to us. ...the revealing of the sons of God. ...creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ...we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

1 Pet. 1:13 -- Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Enter Into the Kingdom and Eternal Life: (Remain with Him)

1 Thess. 4:16-17 -- For the Lord Himself will **descend from heaven** ...caught up together with them in the clouds to **meet the Lord in the air**. And so **we will always be with the Lord.**"

Jude 1:21 -- ...waiting anxiously for ... **eternal life**.

Matt. 5:20 "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not **enter the kingdom of heaven**.

Matt. 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; **enter into the joy of your master.**'"

Matt. 7:21 " Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will **enter the kingdom of heaven**, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*.

Matt. 18:3 and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not **enter the kingdom of heaven**.

Mark 9:43 " If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to **enter life crippled**, than, having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire,

Mark 9:47 " If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to **enter the kingdom of God** with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell,

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, " Through many tribulations we must **enter the kingdom of God.**"

Rev. 22:14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may **enter by the gates into the city**.

Recommended Books and Media

for more info about the Resurrection, Change, and Rapture
(most of these avail. from the International Preterist Association website)

Books:

- Demar, Gary and Gumerlock, Francis X. *The Early Church and the End of the World*. Powder Springs, Georgia USA: American Vision, 2006. Excellent survey of the patristic statements supporting a partial preterist view.
- Frost, Samuel M. *Misplaced Hope: The Origins of First and Second Century Eschatology*. Second Edition. Colorado Springs, Colorado USA: Bimillennial Press, 2006. First Edition was 2002. This was written before Frost left the preterist movement. Offers a lot of good analysis of the patristic writers from a preterist perspective, countering the arguments of Seraiah and other partial preterist critics.
- Harding, Ian. *Taken To Heaven in AD 70*. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2005. <http://preterist.org>
- Russell, James Stuart. *The Parousia: The New Testament Doctrine of Christ's Second Coming*. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003. <http://preterist.org>
- Robinson, John A. T. *Redating the New Testament*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976. Phenomenal study of the early pre-70 date of all New Testament books. Chapter 10 deals with the Apostolic Fathers and suggests that they need to be redated as well.
- Stevens, Edward. *Expectations Demand a First Century Rapture*. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003.
<http://preterist.org>

Articles and Papers:

- Stevens, Edward. *Christianity After the Rapture*. Focuses on the effect of the rapture upon the continuity of the church, and how the church restarted itself afterwards. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Cosmology of the Rapture*. This shows how the rapture fits into the sequence of cosmological events in the plan of redemption, and explains how the rapture occurred cosmologically in the unseen realm. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Did John Live Beyond AD 70?* A study of Matthew 20, Mark 10, John 21, and the history of Apostle John, showing that Jesus predicted his death before the arrival of the Kingdom at the Parousia. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Examining the "Apostles-Only" Rapture idea*. An exegetical examination of 1 Thess. 4:13-17, showing the fallacies of the Partial Rapture idea, and proving that all the saints were raptured, not just the Apostles or some limited subsection of saints. Available in PDF format. Bradford,

- Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003.
<http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Expectations of the Pre-70 Saints*. A survey of the major expectation statements, showing what the pre-70 saints expected to see, hear, and experience at the Parousia. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003.
<http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Exposition of 1 Thess. 4:13-17*. An excerpt from the exegetical section in the *Expectations* book, dealing with 1 Thess. 4:13-17. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *The Fall of Adam*. A research paper for one of the courses taken for his Masters degree. Available in PDF by request. Talks about the Tree of Life, mortality vs. immortality, the kind of death they died, the probation period, and the ultimate destiny of redeemed mankind. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2010.
<http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Gather Together His Elect*. An article published in *Fulfilled Magazine*, dealing with Matt. 24:31, showing that the angelic gathering immediately after the tribulation was the rapture. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2008.
<http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *John 14 and the Dwelling Places*. A nineteen-page paper, analyzing John 14:3 contextually and grammatically, showing that it is indeed talking about a rapture of the apostles at the Parousia. There are two MP3 audio tracks available for this (see in the Media section below). Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *The Rapture – Great Expectations*. An article published in *Fulfilled Magazine*, which lists nothing but excerpts from scripture categorized under various topical headings related to what the pre-70 saints expected to happen at the Parousia. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Rapture in the Old Testament*. The lesson outline from my speech on this subject at the 2010 Garrettsville seminar. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003.
<http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Sequencing the Rapture*. The lesson outline from my speech on this subject at the 2010 Garrettsville seminar. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003.
<http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *The History of Eschatology*. The lesson outline of my 2002 North Carolina seminar speech, explaining the documentation problem and the silence of Christians after AD 70. Available in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2003.
<http://preterist.org>

Media:

- Stevens, Edward. *Garrettsville Seminar 2010*. This seminar focused exclusively on the First Century Rapture. Available in both video (DVD) and audio (MP3), including the PDF lesson outlines. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2010. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *John 14 and the Dwelling Places*. A detailed analysis of the usage of the Greek word MONE in John 14. Two audio presentations, plus a twenty-page lesson outline in PDF format. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2010. <http://preterist.org>
- Stevens, Edward. *Parables of the Tares and the Ten Virgins* (audio MP3 lessons plus the PDF lesson outlines). Two of the eschatological parables of Jesus which portray the rapture using the harvest and wedding analogies. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA: International Preterist Association, 2010.
<http://preterist.org>