

# The Doctrine of the Parousia of Christ

## A Survey of Systematic Theology (Synopsis-Outline)

The primary streams of thought I will be pursuing are:

1. Scholarly perspectives on the Parousia
2. The fulfillment of the great commission as a sign of the nearness of the Parousia
3. The clear and consistent teaching of a first century Parousia
4. Conclusions on the overall treatment of the doctrine of the Parousia in systematic theology

My present conclusions or inclinations regarding these thoughts are:

1. The scholarly perspectives on the Parousia have for the most part been misguided and unsatisfactory, resulting in the modern controversy over the inspiration of scripture and the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. According to Paul, the great commission had been fulfilled during his ministry, therefore, the Parousia was truly near in the first century.
3. It is literally undeniable that Jesus and his apostles taught a first century Parousia.
4. The overall treatment of the doctrine of the Parousia in systematic theology is lacking in its application of fundamental biblical hermeneutics and is therefore in need of reformation.

Key/primary sources:

1. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology*
2. J. van Genderen, *Concise Reformed Dogmatics*
3. Millar Burrows, *An Outline of Biblical Theology*
4. R. C. Sproul, *The Last Days According to Jesus*

Thesis Statement:

Although systematic theologies admit the objective nearness of the Parousia in the first century, they have denied its historical fulfillment. Thus, the dogmas of the church concerning the “time” of the Parousia are contrary to the Word of God, and therefore have ceased to be authoritative.

Paper outline:

We will begin with a brief survey of scholarly perspectives on the Parousia Christ in the New Testament, interacting with the likes of Russell, Schweitzer, Bultmann, Cullman and Burrows. Although diverse in their opinions, they are alike in that they all misunderstand and distort the eschatology of the New Testament.

From there, time will be given to demonstrate the seemingly universal acknowledgment of the great commission as a sign of the nearness of the Parousia (Matthew 24:3,14). Yet, the scholars seem blissfully ignorant of the fact that according to Paul, the great commission and thus the “sign of the Parousia”, was accomplished in the lifetime of his own generation.

Next, we will explore the clear and consistent teaching of a first century Parousia by both Christ and His apostles; keeping in mind that the great commission (which was the sign of its nearness) was at that time in the process of being accomplished.

Finally, by pulling our research together we will make some obvious conclusions regarding the overall treatment of the doctrine of the Parousia in the pages of systematic theology.