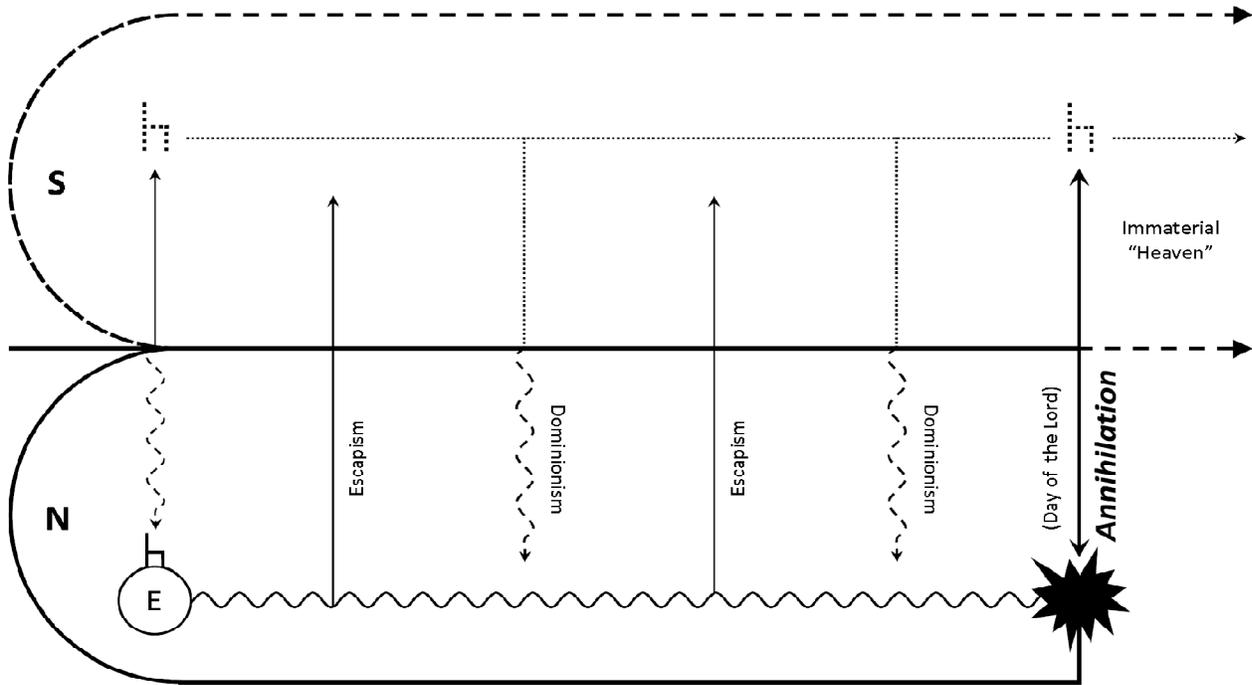


## Session 3: Biblical vs. Western Theology

### I. Salvation and Sovereignty in the Western Worldview



#### A. Salvation = Escape of Materiality

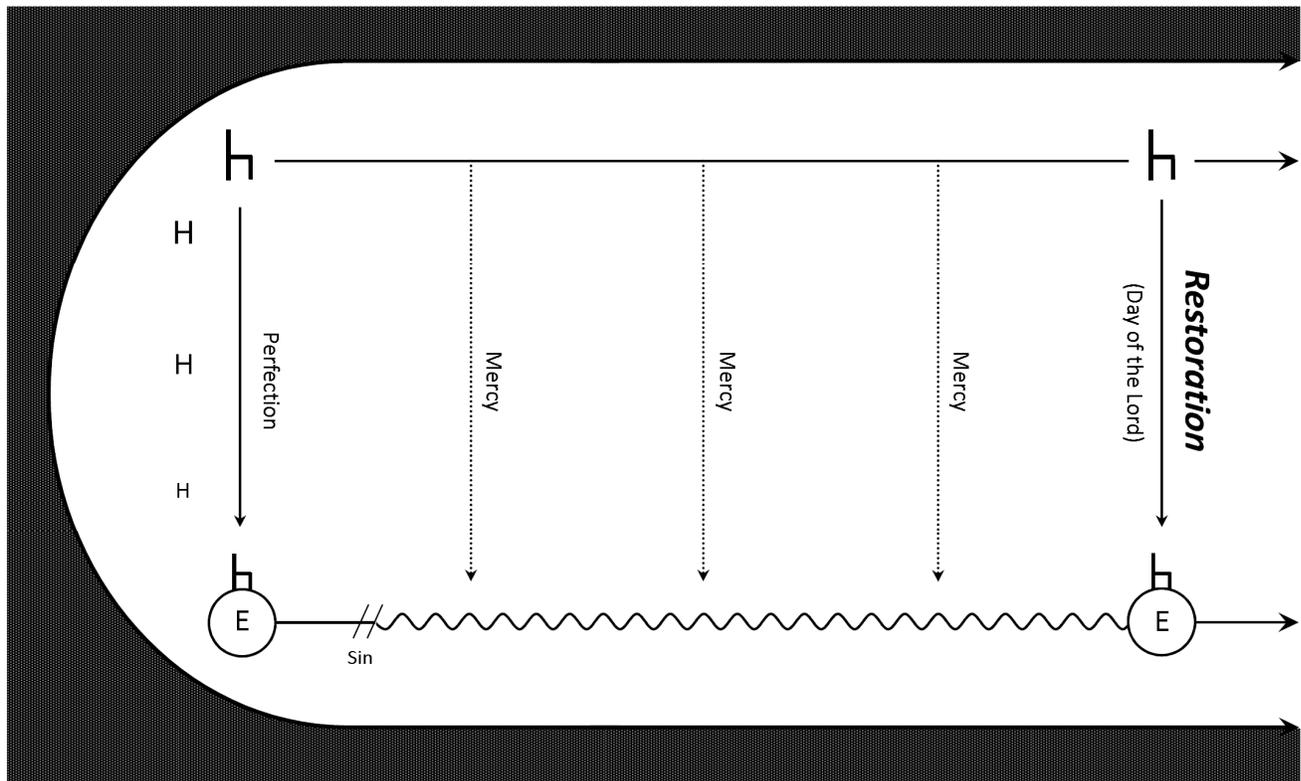
*“And again he says, ‘We shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.’ We are therefore to suppose that the saints will remain there [in their progress to immateriality] until they recognize the twofold mode of government in those things which are performed in the air... If any one indeed be pure in heart, and holy in mind, and more practiced in perception, he will, by making more rapid progress, quickly ascend to a place in the air, and reach the kingdom of heaven, through those mansions, so to speak, in the various places which the Greeks have termed spheres, i.e., globes, but which holy Scripture has called heavens; in each of which he will first see clearly what is done there, and in the second place, will discover the reason why things are so done: and thus he will in order pass through all gradations, following Him who hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, who said, ‘I will that where I am, these may be also.’ And of this diversity of places He speaks, when He says, ‘In My Father’s house are many mansions.’”<sup>1</sup>*

#### B. Sovereignty = Dominion of Materiality

<sup>1</sup> Origen, *De Principiis*, Book II, chapter 11; italics mine; available at [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ante-Nicene\\_Fathers/Volume\\_IV/Origen/Origen\\_De\\_Principiis/II/Chapter\\_11](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ante-Nicene_Fathers/Volume_IV/Origen/Origen_De_Principiis/II/Chapter_11).

*“It is then of this kingdom militant, in which conflict with the enemy is still maintained, and war carried on with warring lusts, or government laid upon them as they yield, until we come to that most peaceful kingdom in which we shall reign without an enemy, and it is of this first resurrection in the present life, that the Apocalypse speaks in the words just quoted [cf. Rev. 20:1-6]. For, after saying that the devil is bound a thousand years and is afterwards loosed for a short season, it goes on to give a sketch of what the Church does or of what is done in the Church in those days, in the words, ‘And I saw seats and them that sat upon them, and judgment was given.’ It is not to be supposed that this refers to the last judgment, but to the seats of the rulers and to the rulers themselves by whom the Church is now governed. And no better interpretation of judgment being given can be produced than that which we have in the words, ‘What ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’”<sup>2</sup>*

## II. Salvation and Sovereignty in the Biblical Worldview



### A. Salvation = Restoration of Creation

***Repent therefore...<sup>20</sup> that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,<sup>21</sup> whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration (Gk. *apokatastasis*) of all things,***

<sup>2</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, Book XX, Chapter 9; italics mine; available at [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The\\_City\\_of\\_God/Book\\_XX/Chapter\\_9](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_City_of_God/Book_XX/Chapter_9).

***which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.* (<sup>NKJV</sup> Acts 3:19-21)**

- <605> ἀποκατάστασις *apokatastasis* {ap-ok-at-as'-tas-is}  
*Meaning:* 1) restoration 1a) of a true theocracy 1b) of the perfect state before the fall  
*Origin:* from 600 [Gk. *apokathistemi*, "to restore to its former state"]; TDNT - 1:389,65; n f  
*Usage:* AV - restitution 1; 1 [Acts 3:19]

***I tell you the truth, at the renewal (Gk. *paliggenesia*, "regeneration" KJV/NKJV/NASB) of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* (<sup>NIV</sup> Matthew 19:28)**

- <3824> παλιγγενεσία *paliggenesia* {pal-ing-ghen-es-ee'-ah}  
*Meaning:* 1) new birth, reproduction, renewal, recreation, regeneration 1a) hence renovation, regeneration... the word often used to denote the restoration of a thing to its pristine state... 1b) the renovation of the earth after the deluge 1c) the renewal of the world to take place after its destruction by fire... 1d) the signal and glorious change of all things... that restoration of the primal and perfect condition of things which existed before the fall of our first parents, which the Jews looked for in connection with the advent of the Messiah, and which Christians expected in connection with the visible return of Jesus from heaven.  
*Origin:* from 3825 [Gk. *palin*, "anew, again"] and 1078 [Gk. *genesis*]; TDNT - 1:686,117; n f  
*Usage:* AV - regeneration 2; 2 [Mt. 19:28; Tit. 3:5]

***The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. <sup>23</sup> Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved.* (<sup>NIV</sup> Romans 8:19-24)**

***Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away... <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them... <sup>4</sup> He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." <sup>5</sup> He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" (<sup>NIV</sup> Revelation 21:1-5)***

B. Sovereignty = Faithfulness/Mercy to Creation

***All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field... <sup>8</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever... <sup>10</sup> See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense***

*accompanies him...<sup>12</sup> Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance? ...<sup>15</sup> Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales...<sup>21</sup> Have you not understood since the earth was founded? <sup>22</sup> He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. (<sup>NIV</sup> Isaiah 40:6-22)*

*Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,<sup>45</sup> that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous...<sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (<sup>NIV</sup> Matthew 5:44-48)*

*Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent,<sup>31</sup> because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead. (<sup>NASB</sup> Acts 17:30-31)*

*But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.<sup>6</sup> He will render to each one according to his works:<sup>7</sup> to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;<sup>8</sup> but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. (<sup>ESV</sup> Romans 2:5-8)*

*Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done.<sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. (<sup>ESV</sup> Revelation 22:12-13)*

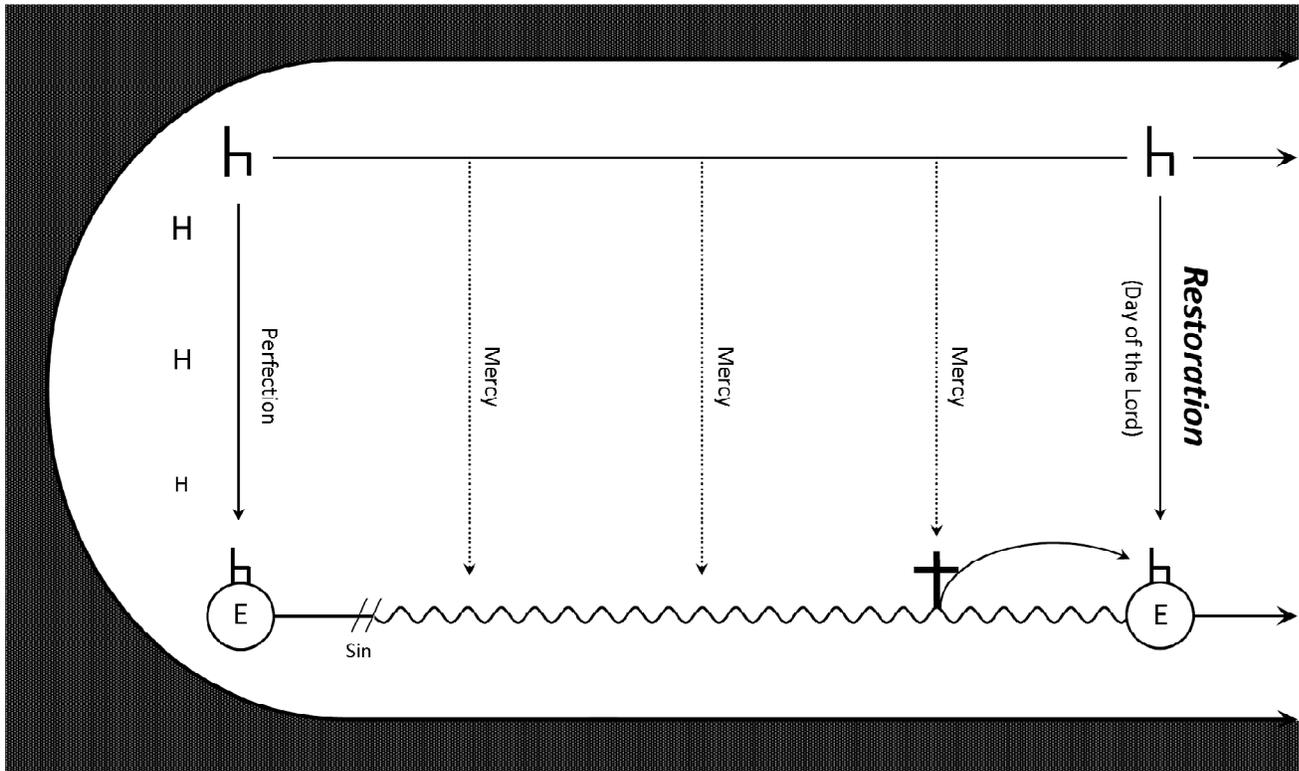
## C. Temporal Recompense Testifies to Eschatological Recompense

*But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.<sup>3</sup> For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked...<sup>16</sup> When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me<sup>17</sup> till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.<sup>18</sup> Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin.<sup>19</sup> How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!<sup>20</sup> As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. (<sup>NIV</sup> Psalm 73:2-20)*

*There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.<sup>2</sup> And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way (temporal judgment)?<sup>3</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish (eternal judgment). (<sup>ESV</sup> Luke 13:1-3)*

***And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home-- these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. <sup>7</sup> In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. (<sup>NIV</sup> Jude 1:6-7)***

### III. Biblical Salvation and Sovereignty Embodied in the Cross



***Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (<sup>NIV</sup> John 3:14-16)***

- A. The Cross as the Means of Salvation (cf. Mt. 20:28; 26:28; Acts 20:28; Rom. 3:24ff; 5:6ff; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; 1 Tim. 2:6; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 9:12ff; 1 Pe. 1:18f; 1 Jn. 2:2; Rev. 5:9f)

***This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. <sup>25</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. (<sup>NIV</sup> Romans 3:22-25)***

***You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. <sup>10</sup>***

***You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth. (<sup>NIV</sup> Revelation 5:9-10)***

B. The Cross as the Embodiment of God's Sovereignty

***"I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." <sup>19</sup> And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." <sup>20</sup> In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (<sup>NIV</sup> Luke 22:18-20)***

***You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (<sup>NIV</sup> Romans 5:6-9)***

***Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, <sup>8</sup> he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death-- even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (<sup>NRSV</sup> Philippians 2:5-11)***

C. Believers Called to Imitate the God of the Cross

***Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children <sup>2</sup> and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (<sup>NIV</sup> Ephesians 5:1-2)***

***The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup> I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. <sup>25</sup> The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup> Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. (<sup>NIV</sup> John 12:23-26)***

***This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. <sup>24</sup> Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. (<sup>NIV</sup> Colossians 1:23-24)***