

5 Books on the Victorious Christian Hope for History

by Virginia Orton

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The devastating effects of certain defective eschatological scenarios in the contemporary church are seen in the retreat and decline of the Christian faith and social order in our time.

Eschatology is not merely a narrow view of ‘the end’ but concerns more fully the entire direction and goal of God’s purpose in history. It therefore has a profound influence on a Christian’s world-and-life-view and, consequently, on one’s practical, daily living. Ideas have consequences. Our view of the future directly impacts our activity in the present. Despite the distinctive claims of the three major eschatological systems, they can be categorised broadly as either ‘pessimistic’ or ‘optimistic’ in their view concerning the gospel’s progress in history before the end comes.

The emergence of pessimistic eschatology in the Western church over the past 150 years has tragically led to the majority of evangelical Christians today believing that God has destined history to be a realm of defeat for Christ’s church and their proclamation of the gospel in human culture and society. Evil will triumph in history. Consequently, facing the inevitable historical irrelevance of Christian efforts to turn back the satanic tide, Christians have surrendered history and culture to the devil, placing their hope in a future supernatural escape from this world. Rather than the church’s proclamation of the gospel progressively redeeming and re-orienting creation and culture in history, Christians await creation’s destruction narrowing the gospel to the ‘spiritual’ realm of ‘soul-saving’ through individual evangelism and personal piety—making it irrelevant to the affairs of the everyday world.

In his article, [“Planning for Defeat”](#), Sandlin encapsulates: "The eschatology of the pessimists truly is a self-fulfilling prophecy: God has predestined the increasing defeat and irrelevance of His kingdom, His church, and His gospel; therefore, we must create a version of Christianity that conforms to our (lack of) expectations; and, sure enough, as a result of dedication to a theology of irrelevance and impotence, the kingdom, church, and gospel become increasingly irrelevant and impotent."

However, while various pessimistic eschatologies have dominated most of the Western Church for the last 150 years, masquerading as biblical orthodoxy, this is not historic Christianity nor its view of history. According to Gentry, the recent emergence of these defeatist eschatological schemes has, in contrast to previous ages of Christian civilizational advance, “paralyzed the Christian cultural enterprise, emptied the Christian worldview of practical significance, and given Christians a sinful ‘comfort in lethargy,’ because it tends ‘to justify social irresponsibility.’” Moreover, as Gentry draws out, “this modern paralysis is all the more lamentable because it has caused the forfeiture of great gains made by the tireless and costly labours of our Christian forefathers, particularly from the Reformation era through the early 1900s.”

In the midst of cultural ruin, if we are to restore and rebuild upon the gains of past generations of faithful Christian laborers, we must recover the potency and scope of the Christian faith and calling—its relevancy to *every* area of life and culture. This can only be done by rediscovering a truly Christ-glorifying and creation-affirming biblical vision of history. A vision that confidently anticipates, according to God’s word, Christ and his gospel progressively subduing and transforming men and nations; a vision that liberates creation and culture in history, so that “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Isa 11:9). These books serve this end.

He Shall Have Dominion: A Postmillennial Eschatology (Third Edition: Revised & Expanded), Kenneth L. Gentry Jr.

In this expanded and updated version of Dr. Gentry’s classic study of postmillennialism, you will sense anew the powerful message of Psalm 72 that Christ “shall have dominion from sea to sea” (Psa 72:8). You will learn that God’s word promises that “the whole earth will be filled with his glory” (72:19) so that “all nations will call him blessed” (72:17) before Christ returns.

Many evangelicals today are concerned about those being Left Behind on this Late Great Planet Earth as it collapses into absolute chaos. But the postmillennialist optimistically believes that He Shall Have Dominion throughout the earth. In this book you will find the whole biblical rationale for the postmillennial hope, from its incipient beginning in Genesis to its

glorious conclusion in Revelation. Your faith will be re-invigorated as you begin to recognize that "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom 1:16) and that our Lord Jesus really meant it when he commanded us to "go and make disciples of all the nations" (Matt 28:19).

The Third edition includes an enlarged appendix on the Errors of Hyper-preterism; both theological and exegetical.

This comprehensive and important work examines the major eschatological schools from a historical and exegetical standpoint. It is a must read for anyone who is serious in understanding God's purpose in history. You can download the first edition for free [here](#).

The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy, Iain H. Murray

Today the Church's hope in respect to her mission of discipling all nations is in eclipse. The world gives Christianity no future and evangelicals themselves doubt whether the cause of Christ can ever attain to a greater triumph before his Second Advent. Must the prospects for succeeding generations be darker than those of today? Can we even expect any period of history to intervene before the Advent of Christ? How can readiness for Christ's coming be consistent with the belief that revivals are yet to be given to the Church?

Such questions are brought to the fore in this book and the author, employing both exposition of Scripture and much historical and biographical material, sets out the case for believing that it is not 'orthodox' to indulge in gloom over the prospect for Christianity in the world.

God's Plan for Victory: The Meaning of Postmillennialism, Rousas Rushdooney

An entire generation of victory-minded Christians, spurred by the victorious postmillennial vision of Chalcedon, has emerged to press what the Puritan Fathers called "the Crown Rights of Christ the King" in all areas of modern life.

Central to that optimistic generation is Rousas John Rushdoony's jewel of a study, *God's Plan for Victory* (originally published in 1977). The founder of the Christian Reconstruction movement set forth in potent, cogent terms the older Puritan vision of the irrepressible advancement of Christ's kingdom by his faithful saints employing the entire law-word of God as the program for earthly victory

Paradise Restored, David Chilton

Does the Bible teach Christians to expect victory or defeat in this world? In this powerful book, David Chilton sets forth extensive biblical evidence for the historic Christian view known as postmillennialism - the teaching that, before the Second Coming of Christ, the world will be successfully evangelized and disciplined to Christianity.

The author emphasizes that our view of the future is inescapably bound up with our view of Jesus Christ. The fact that Jesus is now King of kings and Lord of lords means that His Gospel must be victorious: The Holy Spirit will bring the water of life to the ends of the earth. The Christian message is one of Hope: Pentecost was just the beginning.

See also Chilton's magisterial commentary on [the Book of Revelation](#).

Last Days Madness, Gary Demar

DeMar sheds light on the most difficult and studied prophetic passages, including Daniel 7:13-14; 9:24-27; Matt. 16:27-28; 24-25; Thess. 2; 2 Peter 3:3-13, and many more. He identifies the Beast, the Antichrist, and the Man of Lawlessness and clears the haze regarding Armageddon, the abomination of desolation, the rebuilding of the temple, and the meaning of 666.

This is the most thoroughly documented and comprehensive study of Bible prophecy ever written! LDM will be your survival guide and spiritual compass to insure you escape the paralysis of last days madness.

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