

Dr. David L. Turner, The Gospel of John, Session 22, Life Eschatologized: The Future in John, Podcast Audio Overview

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Hey, everybody, and welcome back for another deep dive with us. This time, we're going to be taking a look at the Gospel of John, but with a little bit of a twist. Yeah, a little bit of a twist.

We're going to be exploring this idea of life eschatologized. And we've got a lecture from Dr. David Turner for us. And it's all about how the future, you know, those end-times ideas shape how we understand life right now.

Yeah. You know, we often think of eschatology as like predicting what's going to happen, like a timeline of future events. Right.

But in John, it's much more about how that future reality is already kind of breaking into our lives today. That's what I thought was so fascinating about it. It's like the future isn't just something out there.

It's something we're experiencing in a way. Exactly. And before we get too far, let's just address the elephant in the room, which is the authorship of John's Gospel, the letters, and Revelation.

Right. Well, we're going to be operating under the traditional view that John the Apostle wrote all of them. It's not a slam-dunk case.

Right. There's always some debate around these ancient texts. Absolutely.

But for our deep dive, what's really fascinating is how these writings, even if they were written by different people, share similar ideas about the future. Okay. So we're focusing on the big picture, the overall message, rather than getting lost in the weeds of who wrote what.

Exactly. Now, to understand John's unique perspective, we have to kind of wade into a bit of scholarly debate. You've probably heard the term end times thrown around a lot, right? Oh, yeah, for sure.

But to be honest, it always felt a bit, I don't know, doom and gloom, like everything's just going to fall apart. Well, some scholars believe that John actually thought the end times were already fully here. Really? Like when Jesus arrived, everything changed, and the future promises were basically fulfilled right then and there.

So it's like hitting the reset button on history. Everything we're experiencing now is part of that new reality. Yeah, that's the idea behind what scholars call realized eschatology.

Okay. Think of it like this. If you hear someone saying that heaven is already here on earth, they might be tapping into this concept.

But I'm guessing there are other viewpoints too. You bet. On the other end of the spectrum, you've got the futurists, often folks called dispensationalists.

They believe that God works in different ways throughout history, and they're very focused on predicting specific events that haven't happened yet, like the tribulation or the rapture. For them, God's kingdom is entirely a future reality. Okay.

So we've got two pretty different views here. Where does Dr. Turner land in all of this? Well, he lands somewhere in between, advocating for what we call inaugurated eschatology. This is where it gets interesting.

He says that the future is both already here, partially realized in what Jesus has done, and still to be fully realized later. Okay. So it's not either.

It's both hands. That makes sense. But it's still a bit mind-bending.

I mean, how can the future already be here in some ways? It is a bit of a paradox, right? But that's what makes John so fascinating. He's not giving us a timeline or a checklist. He's showing us how the future reality impacts our present understanding.

All right. I'm ready to dive into those specifics. What are some of the key themes that Dr. Turner highlights? Well, there's this one phrase that really captures the heart of it all.

The hour is coming, yet now is. Ooh, I've heard that before, but I never really stopped to think about what it meant. It's like it's pointing to that tension between the present and the future.

Exactly. And we see this tension play out in some really powerful stories in John. Okay.

Remember the woman at the well in John 4? Yeah, the Samaritan woman. That's always been one of my favorite stories. Well, think about this.

Jesus tells her that true worshipers will worship God in spirit and in truth, not tied to a specific place like Jerusalem or even the Samaritans' Mount Gerizim. That's right. He's basically saying that authentic worship isn't about location anymore.

It's about something deeper. And that shift signals that the messianic age, the time when God's promises are fulfilled, has already begun in a sense. Okay.

But it's still moving toward a future completion. We're living in the in-between. I've never thought about it that way before.

It makes me want to go back and reread those stories with fresh eyes. Are there other examples of this tension in John? Absolutely. Think about the story in John 5 where Jesus heals the paralyzed man on the Sabbath.

The one where the religious leaders get all upset? That's the one. Jesus boldly claims that the hour of resurrection and judgment is already happening. Wow.

He's turning their understanding of time and authority upside down. Wow. That's powerful.

It's like he's saying, you're looking for this future event, but it's already unfolding right before you. You got it. And this connects to the Lazarus story in John 11, where Jesus emphasizes that believers already possess eternal life.

It's not just something we get after we die. It's a present reality. But wait, doesn't Dr. Turner also talk about a future bodily resurrection? He does.

He's not saying that the physical resurrection is irrelevant. Both the present reality of eternal life and the future hope of bodily resurrection are true. So again, it's both hands, not either.

It's like holding two seemingly contradictory ideas in tension. Exactly. It's a paradox that John embraces.

Now what stands out to you so far? Anything sparking your curiosity? You know, hearing all this makes me wonder if I'm really living out this hope in a way that impacts others. It's easy to get caught up in my own life and forget about sharing this incredible truth. That's a great point.

It's not just about understanding these ideas intellectually. It's about allowing them to shape how we live. Let's keep going.

I'm eager to hear more about these specific themes in John. What about the kingdom of God? I know it's a big deal in the other Gospels, but it doesn't seem as prominent in John. That's true.

It comes up less often, but it's still crucial. The conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3 is a prime example. Oh yeah.

He must be born again. It's one of those verses that gets thrown around a lot. But what does it really mean in this context? Well, for Nicodemus, a Jewish leader steeped in tradition, the kingdom was probably all about a future political and national restoration for Israel.

Like, make Israel great again? Huh. Well, something like that. But Jesus challenges this earthly understanding.

He says that entering the kingdom requires a spiritual rebirth, a transformation that goes beyond outward circumstances. So the kingdom isn't about where you live or what your social status is. It's about an internal change.

And this reinforces that idea that the kingdom is both present in the transformed lives of believers and future in its ultimate fulfillment. Okay. So we're seeing this already-not-yet pattern again.

It's like a recurring theme in John's writing. You're catching on quickly. Now let's move on to another key theme.

The coming of Jesus. John is very clear that Jesus has already come as the Messiah. Right.

But there are also these promises about a future coming, which seem to confuse a lot of people. Indeed. And Dr. Turner offers an insightful take on this.

He points to passages like John 14, where Jesus talks about going to prepare a place for his disciples and then coming back for them. And then there are the post-resurrection appearances and the sending of the Holy Spirit as a helper. Yes.

Dr. Turner sees all these comings as interconnected. They equip and empower disciples to carry on Jesus's mission until his ultimate return. It's like Jesus is saying, I'm not abandoning you.

I'm with you in the spirit, and I will come again. Right. It's a powerful message of hope.

It really is. It's a reminder that we're not alone in this journey. Okay.

We've covered a lot of ground already. I'm really starting to grasp the profundity of life eschatologized. It's not just about what happens when we die.

It's about how that future reality impacts how we live now. What else is there to unpack? Well, we need to talk about Dr. Turner's fascinating insights on the renewal of creation. He argues that John's prologue, John 1.1-18, hints at a new creation theology that often gets overlooked.

Okay. I'm intrigued. Break it down for me.

John links the Logos, the Word, with both the original creation and its renewal through Jesus. So Jesus isn't just a part of creation. He's the agent of creation itself.

Yeah. Exactly. And Dr. Turner points to the light and darkness imagery throughout John.

Believers are brought into the light, experiencing new life. It echoes Genesis 1, but now with Jesus as the agent of this new creation. This is incredible.

I'm starting to see how all these pieces fit together. It doesn't stop there. Dr. Turner briefly mentions how the book of Revelation expands on this theme, culminating in the vision of the new Jerusalem.

Whoa, Revelation. That's a whole other deep dive. Right.

But for now, let's stick with John. What does this life eschatologized look like in practice? How does understanding the future shape our lives in the present? That's the million-dollar question. Right.

Thankfully, Dr. Turner provides some insightful answers based on John's teachings. He points to several key characteristics of a life lived in light of the future. Okay, I'm all ears.

Give me the rundown. First, there's this idea of abundant life, which John talks about in chapter 10, verse 10. This life is found through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, as we see in John 6.6368. It's like tapping into a source of life that flows directly from God.

Exactly. This abundant life shows up in several ways. It's a life of authentic worship, like we talked about with the woman at the well, where it's less about rituals and more about a heart connection with God.

So it's all about relationship over rules. That's a great way to put it. It's also a life of love, as John describes in chapter 13 and in his first letter.

This love encompasses God, fellow believers, and even humanity as a whole. That's a pretty tall order, but it's also incredibly inspiring. Indeed.

And remember, this love isn't just a feeling; it's an action. It involves obedience to Jesus, which John emphasizes in chapter 15. So love and obedience are two sides of the same coin.

Absolutely. And then there's the importance of unity among believers. John highlights this in his prayer in chapter 17.

This unity isn't just about avoiding conflict; it's about being united for the sake of mission, for sharing the good news of Jesus with the world. So it's outward-focused, not inward-focused. It's about working together to bring light into the darkness.

You got it. And finally, Dr. Turner stresses that life eschatologized is a life that anticipates transformed life after death. He points to several passages in John that speak about the future resurrection.

So it's not about escaping this world; it's about living in this world with the hope of a transformed world to come. That's beautifully said. It's about living in the present, empowered by the future hope we have in Christ.

This is so much richer than just focusing on when the world will end. It's a whole new framework for understanding my faith. But I have to admit, it's a lot to take in.

It definitely is. So let's take a quick pause and come back to explore these ideas even further. Okay, we're back and ready to dive even deeper into this life eschatologized idea.

We've been unpacking a lot from Dr. Turner's lecture, and I'm already seeing the gospel of John in a whole new light. It's amazing how this perspective can just kind of shift our understanding, isn't it? It's like putting on a new pair of glasses and suddenly seeing the world with more clarity. Yeah, totally.

It's like we've been so focused on the destination, on what happens after this life, that we've missed the beauty of the journey, the ways in which that future hope is already shaping our present reality. Exactly. And that's a key point that Dr. Turner makes.

John's view isn't about denying a future consummation. It's about emphasizing its significance in light of what's already happening. Okay, I'm a little confused.

How does focusing on the present actually make the future more important? Well, think about it this way. If everything promised has already been fully realized, then why bother looking forward to anything else? Yeah, I see what you mean. It would be like reaching the peak of a mountain and then just staying there forever.

Right. Anti-climactic, right? But John is saying, no, there's more to come. What we experience now is just a taste, a preview of the fullness that awaits us.

So the joy and the hope that we experience as believers now actually fuel our longing for what's to come. Precisely. It's like when you catch a whiff of something delicious baking in the oven; that aroma makes you anticipate the meal even more eagerly.

I love that analogy. Suddenly, inaugurated eschatology doesn't seem so abstract and confusing. And that's what I appreciate about John's approach.

He's not just laying out a bunch of theological jargon. He's inviting us into an experience. He's saying this is what it looks like to live with the future in mind, allowing that hope to shape our everyday lives.

So it's not just about what happens when we die. It's about how that future reality impacts how we live right now. Exactly.

And that's why Dr. Turner stresses the ethical implications of life eschatologized. It's not just an intellectual exercise. It's a call to action.

So believing in this already-not-yet reality should actually change how we treat others, how we make decisions, how we view the world around us. It's not just a private, internal thing. You're getting it.

And remember that quote from Eichten that Dr. Turner shared? Hmm. Not ringing a bell. Refresh my memory.

He said, By far the most crucial revolution in man's relationship to God has been achieved by Christ. Without some conviction of this kind, the gospel would be relatively small beer. Wow.

That's a bold statement. So he's basically saying that because of what Jesus has already accomplished, our future hope is practically guaranteed. Is that too strong of a word? Maybe not.

The idea is that if the decisive victory has already been won, then the future isn't something to be anxious about. It's something to confidently anticipate. Hmm.

I'm starting to see the logic here. It's like knowing that your favorite team has already won the championship. You can relax and enjoy the rest of the season, knowing the outcome is certain.

That's a great way to put it. It's not that the future becomes unimportant. It's that it's viewed through a lens of victory and assurance.

Okay. This is making so much more sense now. It's definitely more nuanced than those end-time sermons that leave you feeling terrified and confused.

That's precisely why exploring these different perspectives is so valuable. It challenges us to move beyond simplistic interpretations and embrace the richness and complexity of the Bible. But I imagine not everyone agrees with this idea of inaugurated eschatology.

What about the scholars who think the future in John is already completely realized? How does Dr. Turner respond to them? He acknowledges that certain teachings in John emphasize the present fulfillment of things we typically think of as future. For example, the idea that Jesus has already overcome the world, that believers already possess eternal life, or that Satan has already been judged. Right.

There are those powerful statements like, I have overcome the world or whoever has the Son has life. Exactly. However, Dr. Turner points out that this focus on the present doesn't negate the reality of a future consummation.

John also talks explicitly about events that haven't happened yet, like the second coming of Christ and the final resurrection. So it's not an either-or situation. It's about recognizing that both realities are present in John's writings.

That's right. It's about holding that tension between the already and the not yet. And Dr. Turner critiques both the extreme realized view and the strictly futurist view, arguing that they miss the full picture of John's teaching.

So what are those extreme views missing? What's the problem with focusing solely on the present or the future? Well, he argues that strictly futurist eschatology, the kind that's obsessed with predicting future events, actually diminishes the impact of what Christ has already done. It downplays the power of his death, resurrection, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Right.

It's like they're so focused on the finish line that they missed the beauty and significance of the race itself. Exactly. On the other hand, he argues that strictly realized eschatology, which says everything's already fulfilled, undermines the biblical teaching about God's future work in completing what he started in Christ.

So it's like saying, we've already arrived; there's nowhere else to go, which kind of kills the whole idea of hope and anticipation. Precisely. And remember, John is all about hope.

He wants us to live in that tension, recognizing that what we experience now is just a glimpse of what's to come. This is making me wonder about my own understanding of the end times. Do I lean too heavily on predicting future events, or do I maybe downplay the future, focusing solely on the present? That's an excellent question to reflect on, and it's something Dr. Turner encourages us to do.

He wants us to wrestle with these ideas and see how they challenge our own assumptions. This whole concept of inaugurated eschatology is definitely a game changer for me. It's like a new lens for understanding the Bible and even my own life, but I have to admit, it's a lot to take in.

It definitely is. But I think that's the beauty of a deep dive like this. It's not about giving easy answers or settling debates.

It's about wrestling with these big ideas and allowing them to shape how we understand God, ourselves, and the world around us. You know, one thing that keeps coming back to me is that John seems less interested in what will happen and more interested in how the future shapes our understanding of the present. That's a brilliant observation.

And it's something Dr. Turner highlights throughout his lecture. So maybe it's less about decoding cryptic prophecies and more about letting the reality of eternity inform our daily choices, our relationships, our priorities. You're hitting the nail on the head, and that's such a liberating perspective.

It frees us from the anxiety of trying to figure out the future and empowers us to live in the present with purpose and joy. This is giving me a lot to think about in terms of my own life. It's not just abstract theology.

It's about how I live, how I love, how I interact with the world around me. Exactly. And remember those key characteristics of life eschatologized that we talked about earlier.

Abundant life, authentic worship, love for God and others, obedience to Jesus, unity among believers, and anticipation of transformed life after death. Those should be visible in the lives of those who embrace this perspective. It's about aligning my actions with my beliefs, living out this hope in a tangible way.

Precisely. It's not just about believing the right things. It's about living in a way that reflects that belief.

One thing that really stood out to me was the emphasis on unity among believers in John's eschatology. Dr. Turner mentioned that it's not just about getting along. It's about being united for the sake of mission, for sharing the good news of Jesus.

That's a crucial point, and it's something that's often misunderstood. So it's not about creating a homogeneous Christian bubble where everyone thinks and acts the same way. Not at all.

John recognizes the diversity within the body of Christ, but he also highlights the importance of unity in purpose and in mission. We're called to work together, despite our differences, to bring light into the darkness. It's about recognizing our shared identity in Christ and letting that overshadow our differences.

Exactly. And that unity is essential for carrying out the mission Jesus gave us. It's almost like a foretaste of the ultimate unity we will experience in the future when all believers are gathered together in God's presence.

What a beautiful thought. And it reminds us that our efforts to build unity now are not in vain. They are a reflection of the future reality we're moving toward.

This is making me rethink my priorities. Am I living in a way that reflects the hope of the future? Am I actively seeking unity with other believers, even those who are different from

me? Those are powerful questions to ask ourselves. And that's what makes this deep dive so valuable.

It's not just about acquiring knowledge. It's about applying that knowledge to our lives in practical ways. Okay, ready for the final stretch of our deep dive.

What else does Dr. Turner highlight about this idea of life eschatologized? He emphasizes that this way of life isn't about escaping this world, but about living in it with the hope of a future world. It's about finding meaning and purpose in the present, grounded in the reality of our secure destiny in Christ. So it's not about being so focused on heaven that we become useless here on earth.

Exactly. It's about finding that balance between being grounded in the present while also being anchored in the future. And I remember Dr. Turner connected this idea of life eschatologized to the concept of new creation.

Yes. He argued that John's prologue hints at this new creation theology that we often miss. He pointed to the connection between the Logos, the Word, and both the original creation and the renewal of creation through Jesus.

Right. And all that imagery of light and darkness suggests that believers are being drawn into the light, experiencing this new life. Exactly.

It's like we're taking part in the ongoing work of God's creative and redemptive power. I think I'm finally starting to grasp the bigger picture of John's vision. It's not just about predicting future events.

It's about understanding the interconnectedness of the past, present, and future. It's about recognizing that what God has done in Christ has huge implications for how we live today and for what we can confidently expect in the future. That's a fantastic summary.

And it captures the essence of what Dr. Turner is trying to convey. It's about living in the already and the not yet, embracing the tension, and letting the hope of eternity shape our reality. This has been such a rich and thought-provoking conversation.

I feel like I need to reread the Gospel of John with this new understanding of inaugurated eschatology in mind. That's a great idea. Approach the text with fresh eyes and an open mind, and see what new insights you discover.

Okay. We've definitely covered a lot of ground in this second part of our deep dive. What are your final thoughts on this whole concept of life eschatologized? What should our listener be taking away from all of this? Well, we're back.

And I have to say, after that last part, my brain is still buzzing. This whole life eschatologized concept, it's like a puzzle that keeps getting bigger the more you try to solve it. I know what you mean.

It's definitely one of those topics that makes you go, huh, I never thought about it that way before. But that's the beauty of it, right? It's challenging us to think outside the box, to go beyond those surface-level interpretations of what the future holds. Absolutely.

And I think that's one of the things Dr. Turner does so well in this lecture. He's pushing us to see how this future reality, this hope we have in Christ, actually impacts how we live right now. So it's not just about what happens after we die.

It's about how that future shapes our present. That's the heart of it. And that's why he emphasizes those key characteristics of life eschatologized.

Remember, we talked about abundant life, authentic worship, love for God and others, obedience to Jesus, unity among believers, anticipation of transformed life after death. It's like those qualities aren't just something we hope for in the future. There's something we can experience and live out today.

Exactly. And that's what makes this whole concept so exciting and challenging. It's not about passively waiting for heaven.

It's about actively bringing heaven to earth, so to speak. You know, it's like we've been given a glimpse of the future, and that glimpse is meant to change how we live in the present. That's a great way to put it.

And remember, this way of life isn't just for our benefit. It's about being a witness to the world, showing others what the kingdom of God looks like through our actions and relationships. It makes me think of that quote from Gandhi, be the change you wish to see in the world.

It's like we're called to embody this future hope, not just talk about it. Absolutely. And that's what makes this whole concept so compelling.

It's not just a theological framework. It's a way of life. Right.

It's about being a beacon of hope in a world that often feels dark and uncertain. I agree. One thing that really struck me was that idea of unity among believers.

We touched on this earlier, but it seems like such a crucial part of John's eschatology. It is. And it's something that's often misunderstood or even weaponized, sadly.

Yeah, I can see that happening. So let's be clear. It's not about uniformity, right? It's not about creating a Christian bubble where everyone thinks and acts exactly the same way.

Not at all. John recognizes the diversity within the body of Christ, but he also highlights the importance of unity in purpose and in mission. We're called to work together, despite our differences, to bring light into the darkness.

It's about recognizing our shared identity in Christ and letting that overshadow our differences. Exactly. And that unity is essential for effectively carrying out the mission that Jesus gave us.

It's like a beautiful mosaic. Each piece is unique and different, but together they create this stunning masterpiece. I love that analogy.

It makes me wonder if we sometimes get so caught up in our own little corner of Christianity that we forget about the bigger picture. The call is to be one body, working together to bring God's love and hope to the world. That's a powerful reflection.

It's easy to get distracted by our differences and forget about the things that unite us. But John's vision calls us to something greater, to a unity that transcends our personal preferences and theological nuances. It's like that scene in Revelation where John sees this vast multitude from every nation, tribe, and tongue all gather together in worship.

It's a beautiful picture of unity and diversity. It really is. And it reminds us that our present efforts to foster unity among believers are not in vain.

They are a foretaste of the ultimate unity we will experience in God's presence. Man, this is making me rethink my priorities. Am I living in a way that reflects this future hope? Am I actively seeking unity with other believers, even those who are different from me? Am I sharing this incredible truth with those who haven't heard it? Those are excellent questions to ask ourselves.

And that's what makes a deep dive like this so valuable, right? It's not just about gaining knowledge. It's about applying that knowledge to our lives in practical and transformative ways. So where do we go from here? How do we take these incredible ideas about life eschatologized and actually put them into practice? Well, I think the key is to remember that this isn't about following a set of rules or achieving some kind of spiritual perfection.

It's about allowing the reality of God's kingdom, the reality of eternity, to shape our hearts, our minds, and our actions. So it's less about doing and more about being, about allowing this future hope to transform us from the inside out. That's it, exactly.

It's about cultivating a deep awareness of God's presence in our lives, living each moment with eternity in mind. It's about allowing that hope to fuel our love, our service, and our witness to the world. You know, it's like we've been given this incredible gift, this glimpse of what's to come, and now we're invited to live in light of that reality.

And that's a pretty amazing invitation, isn't it? To live each day with the confidence and joy that comes from knowing that we are part of something bigger than ourselves, something that will ultimately be fulfilled in God's perfect timing. This has been such an eye-opening and inspiring conversation. I feel like I need to sit with these ideas for a while and let them really sink in.

I encourage you to do just that. Reread the Gospel of John, ponder these ideas, and see what fresh insights and challenges you discover. I know I will.

And to our listeners, we encourage you to do the same. Don't just listen and move on. Wrestle with these ideas, talk about them with others, and see how this understanding of life eschatologized might transform your own faith in life.

This deep dive has been about challenging our assumptions, expanding our understanding, and ultimately inspiring us to live more fully in light of the future hope we have in Christ.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We hope you found it as enriching and thought-provoking as we have.

Until next time, keep seeking, keep growing, and keep living life eschatologized.