

4-22-07: Already but not yet -Between Here and Eternity

For 20 centuries Christians have lived in a strange suspended state between the promises that Jesus clearly made and the coming fulfillment when we all see Christ. Believers are certain that Jesus put the order right but things are sure not finished.

We live with the knowledge that we have been redeemed but the world order has not been set right, not yet. Theologians call this "Already but not yet";

This odd term tries to describe the idea that we know where we're going and are certain we're going to get there but we haven't gotten there yet. Imagine that someone bought you an all expenses paid adventure trip to travel to Europe to climb and hike in the Alps. You would probably read all about the place you're heading and know a lot about it. You'd have your itinerary well planned, you'd be really excited and ready to go. Then you are informed that to get the full benefit of the trip you will need to train, get the right equipment and learn French and Italian. You do all of those things and then you wait. You wait until the appointed departure time.

In the case of our walk with Jesus, God's paid for our ticket and given us some idea what we're waiting for. We know that a lot of other people are taking the same trip and we are excited. In God's economy, the waiting is a time of training and discipline. We have to get in shape for this trip and, if you will, learn the language so we can know what we are talking about. So we wait and watch and prepare, growing and learning as we go. The time will come to take the trip, by that time we will be prepared travelers. A huge part of the trip is getting where we're going but a big part of the trip is preparing for what lies ahead of us. Watch and wait and enjoy the training!