

Lesson # 3

Axiom of the Future

Can We Know?

Is it possible to understand the future? This is first question we should answer in the pursuit of our destiny and to understand the future. Many have simply taken the position that no one can know the future and have simply thrown up their hands in an expression of futility saying, “Why bother?” But seeing into the future is simply another way of describing vision, and as we know, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Prov. 29:18 KJV). Therefore, seeking to understand the future is far to important to ignore.

Admittedly, no one sees the future completely. By nature, it is difficult to discern because the future has many twists and turns based on the decisions we make. But God sees the future clearly and has promised to reveal the future to us it to us to guide us along the way. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, “He will tell you things to come” (John 16:13). “Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). So the answer is clearly “Yes!” It is possible to understand the future. In fact we should expect to.

The Importance of Understanding the Future

Understanding the future always seems to be a hotly debated topic. There is no shortage of confusion and differing opinions. As George E. Ladd has observed, it is a topic that unfortunately tends to “*generate more heat than light.*” Many avoid this topic for that reason, but we should not simply ignore it because of a fear of stirring up controversy.

In theology, eschatology is the term given to the study of the future or end time events. The Zondervan Bible Dictionary says this about eschatology:

*Eschatology is not designed to satisfy curiosity but to provide an intelligent comprehension of the future as a guide for a present program, and a sure ground for hope.*¹

Therefore, we see that understanding the future is actually quite relevant to the present. Understanding the future guides us and helps us function properly in the present. It is the foundational to hope.

Why the Battle?

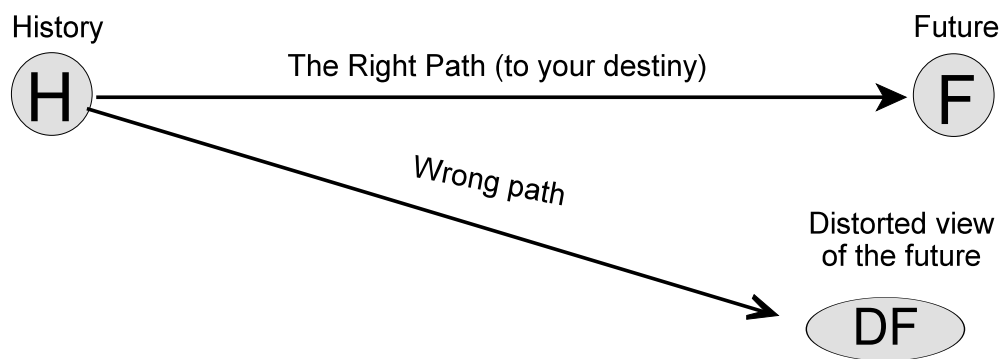
There is a reason for the confusion and the controversy surrounding eschatology. If a proper view of the future can help provide a sense of destiny and direction in the present, then it stands to reason that

¹Z.ondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, p. 259

an improper view of the future would cause a lack of purpose and misdirection. For this reason, we should not be surprised if we learn that Satan works double time to create multiple smoke screens in this area. He knows a simple fact; everyone makes plans based on their perception of the future. Therefore, if he can distort our perception of the future, he can more easily manipulate and misdirect our present plans and actions. When a Christian is effectively diverted off course he may have eternal life but be ineffective in God's strategy to bring His Kingdom to earth as it is in Heaven. This is why there is a spiritual battle against our understanding of the future.

Destiny Diagram #2

Destiny Diagram #1 showed how an accurate view of history (H) and an accurate view of the future (F), helps us plot a course for our present plans and actions. The diagram below illustrates very simply how a distorted view of the future can cause us to miss our destiny. We can have an accurate view of history (believe in God, creation, the Bible, etc.), yet with a distorted view of the future (DF), our plans in the present will be on the wrong path. But as we build an understanding of God's strategy for the appearing and establishment of His kingdom, distortion disappears, vision becomes clear and the future comes into focus. As our study continues, we will continue to add to and modify our diagram.



Destiny Diagram 2

Again, Jesus said, "My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going" (John 8:14). Because He understands both history and the future, He had, and continues to have, absolute confidence in His plans and actions.

Axiom of the Future

A man lives in a home near the ocean. It is hurricane season and he has been glued to the television as the weather service tracks a tropical storm developing off shore. The announcement comes that the storm has increased to hurricane strength and is expected to come ashore where he lives in 4 days. Immediately the man sat down with pen and paper and made a list of supplies. Then he drove to the lumber yard to buy supplies so he could board up his windows and prepare his home for the storm.

What just happened? This man apparently understood the history of hurricanes and the damage they can do. His understanding of history, along with the weather prediction, formed his perception of the future. Therefore he made a plan and took action in the present.

History may affect our perception of the future, but concerning the future and planning we should remember this axiom of destiny called *The Axiom of the Future*:

We all make plans and take action in the present based on our perception of the future.