

The Personal, Bodily, Second Coming Christ Response to Rebuttal

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The point of my paper was really rather simple, despite Frost's muddying the waters with many unrelated comments. At Jesus' ascension, the angels promised that *"This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."* That's pretty straightforward. Frost went on and on about Jesus' having hairy arms, a big nose, and occupying space "floating" in heaven in my theology. But, such mockery of the things of God proves nothing except that Frost is unwilling to believe what the Bible plainly says. He seeks to dodge the problem by claiming that the theologically important point is that Jesus took on human nature, rather than human flesh. Frost writes, *"Jesus took upon himself "human nature" (natura). He was not a human person. Chalcedon explicitly denies this. The Logos is the Person, the Second Person, of the Trinity. The Second Person has Two Natures, Human and Divine. But, there is only one Divine Person, the Logos. Clearly, the Logos has not "arms and hands." He is equal ("of the same essence of") with the Father. That is, Jesus is Fully God. God has no arms. He does not have a big nose, either. Jesus, in his incarnation, had human arms. But, this is to do with his human nature. It is not at all clear that Jesus, upon his Ascension and exaltation, retained his actual hairy arms. The point of theology has always been that Jesus retains for eternity his **human nature.**"* [underline mine]

The **I**ncarnation of the Logos (Word)

Frost has failed to take into account that there was no "Jesus," is no "Jesus," and will be no living "Jesus" without His physical flesh received from Mary at His incarnation. While the Logos existed as a divine member of the Trinity prior to the incarnation, the "incarnation" itself brought together both the divine nature and the human nature in one person. The human nature of Jesus inherently includes human flesh. The word "incarnation" is derived from the Latin, and means "in flesh." The name "Jesus" is NOT synonymous with the title "the Logos." "Jesus" is NOT merely a spirit or divine person. He is a whole person, the God-man. "Jesus" is the personal name of the WHOLE person born from the womb of Mary – a flesh and blood person, *"God manifested in the flesh."* *"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins"* (Matt. 1:21 NKJ). The name "Jesus" is the name of Mary's divine son. Yet, Frost claims, *"He was not a human person."* Frost is simply mistaken on this point. Jesus is called a "man" in many passages of Scripture; eg. Rom. 5:15, 1 Tim. 2:5. The prologue of John's Gospel gives us the most detailed explanation of the "incarnation." There, John does not discuss "substance" or "essence." He discusses "**flesh.**" *"And the Word (Logos) was made **FLESH**, and dwelled among us"* (John 1:14). Jesus' "flesh" was not merely a vehicle for the "Christ spirit." His "flesh" was and is an essential part of who He is.

The Excarnation of Jesus Christ (according to Frost)

Frost would have you believe that the incarnation of Christ was a temporary state. Yet, the resurrected Jesus Christ said of Himself, *“I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore”* (Rev 1:18 NKJ). In what sense was Jesus “alive” in this passage? To answer that, all we need do is answer the contrasting point. In what sense was He “dead?” Was it not his human body of flesh alone that died? Did Jesus not refer to His resurrection in this verse? Of course! His resurrection was of the body. His “spirit” or “soul” did not die, nor were such resurrected. Therefore, when He said, *“behold, I am alive forevermore,”* He clearly meant that **His resurrected state** (in contrast to His formerly being dead) is something that He retains forever. In order for Frost to dodge the implications of this passage, he must apply Jesus’ becoming “alive forevermore” to something other than His bodily resurrection. Jesus Himself indicates that His state of being “alive forevermore” is in direct contrast to His former state of being “dead.” So, if being “alive forevermore” refers to something other than Jesus’ resurrection in the body, Frost is now forced to say that Christ’s “death” is something other than the death of the body. This is the problem with preterism. To maintain it, you have to accept heretical notions about the person of Christ and the Gospel.

Slight of Hand

In his attempt to dodge the problem in Acts 1, Frost has subtly switched “this same Jesus” for “this same Logos.” Frost writes, *“This same Jesus’ it says. I agree wholeheartedly. This same Jesus, the Logos, the Human and Divine Natures, appeared again ‘a second time’ in A.D. 70. You mean, ‘the same hairs and arms that he had.’ I don’t see that spelled out in the text, Tim. How you can get that from the word ‘same’ is beyond me.”* It is only “beyond you,” Sam, because you refuse to see, and actively try to obscure the text so others will not see as well. Since Sam is having difficulty “seeing” what is in plain sight in the text, I’ll try to explain as simply as I can – for him – since I am sure that the rest of you probably see it clearly already. As stated above, “Jesus” is a reference to **the man**, not to some divine essence or spirit. And a “man” is not a “man” without a body. Therefore, *“this same Jesus”* refers to the man born from the womb of Mary. This man, not some mystical fog, is whom the angels said would come again.

But, there’s more. The angels did not merely say *“this same Jesus will come again.”* Nor did they say *“this same Jesus will come again in like manner.”* Nor did they say, *“this same Jesus will come again in like manner as He went into heaven.”* If any of these were what the angels said, then Frost might have a toothpick to stand on when he tries to equate “in like manner” with merely the invisible force (power of God) that carried Jesus up. The problem is, the phrase, “in like manner” refers, not to the means of defying gravity (“the power of God”) that carried Jesus up. It refers to what the disciples SAW. They did not see an invisible force. Here is what the angels actually said: *“this same Jesus ... will come again **in like manner as you saw** Him go into heaven.”* The words, “in like manner” refer exclusively to the **APPEARANCE** of Christ’s ascension that the disciples **OBSERVED**. The promise is that his second coming will be the same in appearance as His ascension. This begs the question, what did the disciples actually observe? That is answered explicitly in the text. *“After he said this, **he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They***

were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them” (Acts 1:9-10 NIV). It is all very simple and straightforward provided we do not seek to “wrest the Scriptures.” They SAW “this same Jesus,” who was born of the virgin Mary, ascend into the sky until He was obscured from their sight by a cloud. And, “this same Jesus,” whom they watched ascend, will come again “in like manner” as they “saw” Him ascend. To deny this is to flatly deny the promise of God. It is not a matter of “interpretation.” It is a matter of faith vs. unbelief.

Frost writes, “*In the same manner’ (hon tropon – Greek) is found in the context of passive verbs. Passive verbs in Greek, as in English, means the subject of the verb is being acted upon and not producing the action. Jesus was “taken up” and a “cloud” received him. These are passives. What took Jesus up? In what manner was Jesus taken? Obviously, He ascended by the power of God. So, in like manner he shall return by the power of God. That’s all these verses assert.*” No, Sam, I’m afraid that is NOT at all what these verses assert. There is nothing said about the “power of God” here. Nor is there anything about “cause.” What caused Jesus to defy gravity was of no real concern to the disciples. It is about “manner.” You are reading ideas into the text.

Frost attempts to use the passive voice to imply that the real import here is an invisible power, working against gravity. But, as stated above, “in like manner” refers to something the disciples saw. The passive voice is expected in such a narrative, because the disciples (and Luke) did not observe the cause of Jesus’ defying gravity. The text simply leaves the question of whether Jesus ascended of His own power, or was acted upon by the power of the Father or Holy Spirit, unaddressed. From the disciples’ perspective, Jesus “was taken” up into the sky. The cause is not named. Had Luke used the active voice, He would be implying that Jesus was performing the action of the verb on another object. Had he used the middle voice, he would be saying that Jesus caused Himself to ascend. But, the disciples could not have known this from their observations. Therefore, the only proper way to describe the ascension by eyewitnesses would be in the passive voice. This in no way implies that “in like manner” refers to the force that carried Jesus upward. In the text, it refers ONLY to what the disciples actually saw. In whatever “manner” they observed His ascending into heaven He will come again in precisely the same observable manner. That means visibly through the clouds of water vapor, because those are the details (manner) that the disciples observed.

“Resurrected” Christ vs. “Apparition” of the Christ - Ghost

Frost continues to deny the plain statements of this passage: “*This is not a prooftext to demonstrate the “visible, bodily” second coming of Christ. It is not plain at all that everyone could “see” Jesus. I have read it several times that if a non-disciple was looking at the disciples on the mount, they would have seen a bunch of men looking at nothing. The Greek interchange of the verb for “see” here can most certainly imply that they were seeing an appearance of the Resurrected Christ, as they had before.*” So, now Frost resorts to an “apparition” of Christ ascending into heaven. He read this several times? Is he kidding? What is the basis for this assertion? Certainly not the Bible! Apparently, Frost thinks Jesus discarded His resurrected body sometime between His resurrection and ascension. Taking this line of reasoning (or perhaps “denial” is a better term), we must ask, what was the purpose of His proving to the disciples that He

had risen from the grave in the flesh? Why did He take great pains to prove to them that He was not a “ghost?” Why eat in their presence? Why show them his hairy hands and bony feet, with the scars from the nails? Why invite Thomas to *“reach hither thy finger, and behold my [hairy] hands. And reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing?”*

The bodily resurrection of Christ is an embarrassment to preterists, like Frost. They cannot openly deny it, because that would instantly bring the charge of “heresy.” Yet, they cannot maintain that Jesus continued in His resurrected state after proving to the disciples that He was still “flesh and bone” because that means He ascended bodily into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father, and will come again “in like manner,” something incompatible with their mythical, imaginary “coming” in AD70!

Mysticism in Historical Narrative

Next, Frost attempts to give the “clouds” a mystical interpretation, by claiming that this is verbal “imagery” in order to equate Jesus’ ascension to Daniel’s prophecy in Dan. 7. Frost writes, *“The imagery here, as many scholars are suggesting, is Luke pointing to Daniel 7. There, “the son of man” comes “with the clouds of heaven” to the Ancient of Days and receives all dominion, power and glory. It has long been asserted in the church that Daniel is seeing the Ascension of Christ. The “coming on the clouds” is not from the Father to the earth, but from the earth to the Father (the Ancient of Days). Thus, Luke’s “clouds” are the heavenly “clouds” of Daniel, receiving from the “world below” and ushering him in to the “world above” from where is he from (John 17).”*

Can you see what Frost and the “many scholars,” whom he says agree with him, are doing? It is not enough that they take prophecy in a mystical fashion. Now he is asserting that Luke’s historical narrative is something not observable to the eye, but is mystical. That is, when Luke recorded that they “SAW” Jesus ascend into the sky until a “cloud” obscured Him from their sight, he was not reporting what actually happened, but was seeking to portray a kind of “imagery” so that you would interpret his words with a mystical meaning, and allegedly make the connection to the mystical clouds in Daniel 7. In making this historical narrative “mystical,” Frost has crossed the line from dangerous to deadly interpretation of Scripture. This is precisely the methodology of the early Gnostics. I could cite many examples from Irenaeus to show their mystical handling of historical narratives in Scripture. This is beyond “slippery slope” stuff. This is “over the cliff” stuff.

I do not deny that there is an apparent linkage to Daniel 7. Nor am I denying that this whole experience and promise of the angels was meant to remind them of Daniel 7 and other OT passages that prophesy the second coming of Christ. But the direct linkage is not with his ascension, but with His promised coming again “in like manner.” Daniel 7 says that the “Son of Man” comes with the “clouds of heaven” and is given a Kingdom. The narrative text in Acts 1 will only permit a “cloud” of water vapor, because this is the only interpretation of “cloud” that explains how He was obscured from their sight. The point of the clouds being mentioned is that this is what they saw, Jesus ascending up into the sky until He was obscured by a cloud. And the angels’ promise that Jesus will come again *“in like manner as you saw Him go”* implies that He would come again

through the same kind of clouds that obscured Jesus from their sight at His ascension! Certainly, Daniel 7 has a prophetic connection to the promise. But, Frost has it exactly backwards. He first assumes that the “clouds” in that prophecy are not literal clouds of water vapor, but something mystical. But, when he takes Daniel 7 in a mystical fashion, and makes the obvious connection to this passage, he is forced to turn a historical narrative into something mystical. So then, not only can we not trust prophecy to be understood at face value, but now we cannot even trust a historical narrative to be properly understood at face value. If that methodology is acceptable to Frost, there is no limit to what one can overturn in Scripture, including, the “virgin birth,” the incarnation of the Word, et. al. Mysticism has won over orthodox Christianity!

Frost’s assumption, that Daniel 7 is mystical, is not supported from the text. Frost wrote, “*The “coming on the clouds” is not from the Father to the earth, but from the earth to the Father (the Ancient of Days).*” But, once again, Frost has missed the bus. It is true that Dan. 7:13 indicates Jesus will come to the “Ancient of Days” when He comes in the clouds of heaven. “*I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.*” (Dan. 7:13 NKJ). At this point Jesus receives His Kingdom, and the saints possess the Kingdom. But, where will the “Ancient of Days” be at that time? Daniel recaps: “*I was watching; and the same horn [Antichrist] was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, **until the Ancient of Days came**, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and **the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.***” (vss. 21-22). The “Ancient of Days” will be coming here, present or at least visible, when Jesus comes with the clouds of heaven, and when He is given the Kingdom.

Frost’s interpretation, that Christ receives the Kingdom upon His ascension, is flatly contradicted by Hebrews. “*But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. **Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool,***” (Heb 10:12-13 NIV). This is a clear reference to Psalm 110:1. This passage is referenced by Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, as being fulfilled at the time of His ascension. That is, Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Father immediately after ascending to heaven. And Hebrews tells us that this time of being seated is to WAIT for His enemies to be subdued. Therefore, Jesus did NOT begin to reign in His kingdom from the time of the ascension. His receiving the Kingdom, and the saints possessing the Kingdom, awaits His “*coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*” (Matt. 24:30) when “*every eye shall see Him*” (Rev. 1:7). Matthew 24 says, “*they shall see*” His coming in the clouds. This is in agreement with the promise of the angels, “*this same Jesus... will come again in like manner as you saw His go into heaven.*” Even Revelation, written decades later, puts Jesus’ reign in the future (Rev. 11:15-18).

Several second coming passages refer to the presence of “clouds,” (Dan. 7:13, Matt. 24:30, 26:64, 1 Thess. 4:17, Rev. 1:7). Obviously, that the ascension of Jesus was through the clouds, and His coming again will be in like manner, we should expect the clouds to play a part in His coming.

Miscellaneous Points

Frost brought up a plethora of points that have little bearing on my opening argument. Some of these were dealt with in the last round of the debate. It is simply not possible for me to address every point without writing many more pages than you are probably not willing to read. But, there are a couple of points that I believe must be mentioned.

1. Frost wrote, *“Human nature, which Our Lord took upon himself, also involved taking on ‘flesh.’ But, according to Paul, ‘we no longer regard Messiah according to the flesh.’”* This is a gross misrepresentation of Paul’s point, which is clear from the context, but not from Frost’s snipped excerpt. Frost would have you think that this verse means Christ Himself no longer possesses His body of flesh shown to His disciples the day of His resurrection. But that is not what Paul was speaking about.

2 Cor 5:14-17

14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;

15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

(NKJ)

Paul’s point is that the bond of unity between Christians and Christ is such that surpasses mere human relationships. Since Christ died on our behalf, our lives are no longer our own. To *“know ... according to the flesh”* means to have a normal human relationship. Those who are *“in Christ”* should not view their relationship with Christ as merely a human one, as when we *“know”* a friend, etc. Rather, this relationship far surpasses human relationships. Since Christ died in our stead, our lives now belong to Him. Therefore, Christians *“should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”* Paul then says that, as Christians, we no longer regard our relationships with the brethren as *“according to the flesh.”* He then said that once we knew Christ *“according to the flesh”* but no more. His point is NOT that Christ no longer possesses His flesh body that came out of the tomb, but rather, once we are saved, our relationship with Christ is much more than merely a human kind of relationship. If Paul meant that Christ no longer possesses His body of flesh, then the sentence immediately before indicates that Christians also no longer have bodies!

2. Frost wrote, *“Salvation could not accomplished through earthly, fleshly means. Salvation must be accomplished solely ‘from above.’ Jesus is from heaven, he came to earth, he ascended back to heaven, and accomplishes salvation. From ‘beginning to end’ salvation was removed from the sphere of Fallen Man and accomplished through the ‘heavenly man’ as Paul called him.”* Contrary to Frost’s mystical gospel, the Bible is abundantly clear that our salvation was purchased by the physical sufferings of Christ, through His blood and broken body. I can cite many passages, but the following will suffice. *“who Himself **bore our sins in His own body on the tree**, that we, having*

died to sins, might live for righteousness-- by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Pet 2:24 NKJ). The whole point of communion is to remember Christ’s “body, broken for you.” Contrary to Frost’s above statement, our salvation was most definitely accomplished through “fleshly means.” It was through the literal flesh and blood of Christ being offered as the atoning sacrifice for our sins that our salvation was provided. Without the offering of this human “flesh,” we cannot be saved.

3. Frost wrote, *“Jesus is the “firstborn out of the dead.” Which “birth”? Mary? Or Resurrection? Clearly, as Man, Jesus was “born” out of the dead (the realm held in power by Satan and the Death – Hebrews 2.9). Are believers not also “made alive” and “born” from the “power of the Death” like Jesus? Paul emphatically states this in Romans 6. We have **died** in the likeness of His Death, and also shall be made alive in the likeness of his resurrection. Now, did the Roman Christian really die when they accepted Christ? In what sense did they die in the likeness of Christ’s death? Physically? So also, in what sense were they being made alive by the Spirit in the likeness of Christ’s resurrection? Physically? The parallel does not work in the traditional view because they view Jesus’ resurrection merely in terms of “flesh” and from a “this world” perspective. In short, the birth Jesus bore “out of the dead”, of which he was the “first”, is also the same birth he gives to those ‘dead in sins’. We are the “Church of the firstborn.” Tim requires physical death, then some intermediate time before resurrection, then physical re-birth, again. Therefore, we are “born again” spiritually, die physically, born again-again physically! How can this nonsense be?”* It is not “nonsense.” It is precisely what the Bible teaches. Paul frequently used death and resurrection as a metaphor, as in the above passage. But this does not negate real physical death and resurrection.

4. Frost writes, *“It is refreshing in the Preterist view to realize that I don’t have to physically die in order to enjoy the presence of God dwelling in the ‘one body’ (the ‘body of Christ’). I don’t have to wait anymore in order to have full communion with God as directed by the Scriptures. I don’t have to wait anymore to have full access to the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies, Jesus Christ, has descended to the world through the Spirit and “dwells” in the Church: he is our God, and we are his people, and he shall dwell with us forever and ever.”* What Frost is actually telling you is that you already have all that Scripture promises right now as you live in that decaying aging body of flesh. There is no basis for a future “hope.” What you have now is all you get. This present world, where sin abounds, and the guilty persecute the innocent, is all there will ever be. Preterism demolishes “hope,” because it takes away the object of our hope. Paul wrote, *“For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance” (Rom. 8:24-25 NKJ).* In preterism, there is no “hope.” Therefore, there is no incentive for perseverance.

5. Frost also mentioned briefly the “soon” passages of Scripture. Space does not permit me to address this here. At the bottom of the index page are links to articles I have written on this topic. Similar language was used in the Old Testament of events that were hundreds or thousands of years in the future as well. And Peter, in 2 Pet. 2, explains how such language is to be properly understood.

6. Frost briefly mentioned the first part of my opening argument, which was a word study on the Greek word “parousia.” He denied that this Greek word actually required Jesus’ personal presence. Yet, as I proved by my examination of every single case where the word is used apart from Christ’s second coming, there are no exceptions in Scripture. Frost says there are exceptions, but did not provide a single example. I guess you are supposed to just accept his word on that.

Orthodoxy vs. Heresy

Frost takes offense at my use of the term “heresy” to describe some of the points he affirms. He writes, *“Tim calls this ‘heresy.’ He calls me a ‘heretic’ and one who is ‘outside Christianity.’ I don’t know how telling folks about the Eternal Son of God who became Man and took upon Himself Human Nature in order to die as our substitution and be raised on the Third Day according to the Scriptures so that all those who drink freely of the living waters located in the New Jerusalem Community of God’s Holy People, having been made acceptable to God through Christ, by the Spirit, blessed Trinity, is heresy, but Tim says it is. It’s amazing.”* Paul wrote that we are not “ignorant of [Satan’s] devices” (2 Cor. 2:11). Satan has many different “devices” for making the lie appear to be the truth. One of them is to change the meaning of theologically significant biblical words. That is, foist his heresies onto the unsuspecting Christian by redefining the terminology of Scripture using mysticism. The Gnostics were masters at this. And Frost is not far behind. In the above quote, Frost attempted to use “orthodox” language so that his ideas sound “Christian.” But they are anything but “Christian,” as we shall show.

Paul stated that anyone coming to us with another Gospel than what He preached should be considered “anathema” (Gal. 1). Frost’s mystical gospel, that is allegedly connected to the destruction of Jerusalem, is “another Gospel.” He told the Corinthians that to deny “resurrection” necessarily means Christ did not rise from the dead. He carried this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion: the Corinthians’ faith was vain, and they were yet in their sins (1 Cor. 15:12-18).

Paul wrote of Hymenaeus and Philetus who taught that the “*resurrection was past.*” He said this would “*overthrow the faith of some.*” (2 Tim. 2:17-18).

Peter wrote in the closing verses of his second epistle that those who twist Paul’s eschatological passages do so “*to their own destruction.*” And he warns his readers to be careful or they too may “*fall from your own steadfastness.*” All this was stated in the context of those who scoff at the idea of a real second coming of Christ, and who do not comprehend the reasons for the delay, which Peter explained in this chapter.

Should Frost take offense with my use of the word “heresy?” Perhaps he is justified in doing so. I probably would be offended if someone spoke publicly about me this way. But for me, warning of the danger of such heresies demands strong language, and drawing clear distinctions between orthodoxy and heresy. I do not use language as strong as Paul’s. Yet strong language is necessitated because Frost attempts to portray his preterism as being within the realm of “orthodoxy.” He claims to hold to Reformed

theology on his church website. Nonsense! The Reformers affirmed the creeds of Christianity, which outline the minimum doctrines that define what Christianity is. Frost's views are in direct opposition to the statements of Jesus, the Apostles, the early orthodox Church Fathers, the creeds, and the Reformers. All of these fully embraced futurism and the resurrection of the body.

To highlight the contrast between preterism and orthodox Christianity, I have copied below the earliest known creeds of Christianity. Frost agrees with none of them. I have highlighted the things Frost has openly opposed in red.

Nicene Creed (AD325)

*We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and **is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead**, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. **We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.** Amen.*

Apostles' Creed (AD215)

*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and **sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty**; from thence **he shall come to judge the quick and the dead**. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; **the resurrection of the body**; and the life everlasting. AMEN.*

Irenaeus' Statement of the Universal Christian Faith (AD165)

*"The Church, though dispersed through our the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: [She believes] in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and **the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His [future] manifestation from***

heaven in the glory of the Father “to gather all things in one,” **and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race**, in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Savior, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father, “every knee should bow, of things in heaven,, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess” to Him, and that He should execute just judgment towards all; that He may send “spiritual wickednesses,” and the angels who transgressed and became apostates, together with the ungodly, and unrighteous, and wicked, and profane among men, into everlasting fire; but may, in the exercise of His grace, confer immortality on the righteous, and holy, and those who have kept His commandments, and have persevered in His love, some from the beginning [of their Christian course], and others from [the date of] their repentance, and may surround them with everlasting glory.”

Irenaeus immediately followed this creed with the claim that it was the universal (catholic) Faith of all the churches, from Spain, to Gaul, to Germany, to Libya. All teach these same points of doctrine, which were handed down by the Apostles and preserved independently by all the local churches. “*The Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points [of doctrine] just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth*” (Against Heresies, I, 10:1-2).

Frost has attempted to portray himself and his fellow preterists as “orthodox” Christians. Yet, the real “orthodox” Christians, who received their traditions from the Apostles and their disciples, used much stronger language than I have to describe the very things Frost espouses! For example, Polycarp, John’s disciple, wrote of those who denied a future bodily resurrection, that they are “*the firstborn of Satan*” (Polycarp, Epistle to the Philippians, VII). Justin wrote that those who claim to be “Christians” but deny the resurrection of the flesh are “*godless, impious heretics,*” who “*teach doctrines that are in every way blasphemous, atheistical, and foolish.*” They “*blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say there is no resurrection of the dead, ... do not imagine that they are Christians,*” (Justin, Dialogue with Trypho, 80). And again in his work on the Resurrection, Justin describes these so-called “Christians” as “*ignorant, professing as they do in word that they are believers, yet by their works proving themselves to be unbelieving, even more unbelieving than the unbelievers*” (Justin, Frag on the Resurrection, V). Do I need to go on quoting Irenaeus, who was the chief opponent of the early “Christian mystics?” I think a brief excerpt from Tertullian reflects precisely the situation we see here. Of the early mystics who denied the resurrection of the flesh, Tertullian wrote, “*Happily, however, He who suffered ‘will come again from heaven,’ and by all shall He be seen, who rose again from the dead. They too who crucified Him shall see and acknowledge Him; that is to say, His very flesh, against which they spent their fury, and without which it would be impossible for Himself either to exist or to be seen; so that they must blush with shame who affirm that His flesh sits in heaven void of sensation, like a sheath only, Christ being withdrawn from it; as well as those who (maintain) that*

His flesh and soul are just the same thing, or else that His soul is all that exists, but that His flesh no longer lives” (Tertullian, On the Flesh of Christ, 24).

Finally, Tertullian described Frost’s and his fellow preterists’ tactics to a tee. “*Now this consideration of the phrase in question [“the resurrection of the dead”], and its signification — besides maintaining, of course, the true meaning of the important words — must needs contribute to this further result, that whatever obscurity our adversaries throw over the subject **under the pretense of figurative and allegorical language**, the truth will stand out in clearer light, and out of uncertainties certain and definite rules will be prescribed. For some, when they have alighted on a very usual form of prophetic statement, generally expressed in figure and allegory, though not always, **distort into some imaginary sense even the most clearly described doctrine of the resurrection of the dead**, alleging that even ‘death’ itself must be understood in a spiritual sense. They say that which is commonly supposed to be death is not really so, — namely, the separation of body and soul: it is rather the ignorance of God, by reason of which man is dead to God, and is not less buried in error than he would be in the grave. Wherefore that also must be held to be the resurrection, when a man is reanimated by access to the truth, and having dispersed the death of ignorance, and being endowed with new life by God, has burst forth from the sepulcher of the old man, even as the Lord likened the scribes and Pharisees to “whited sepulchers.” Whence it follows that they who have by faith attained to the resurrection, **are with the Lord** after they have once put Him on in their baptism. **By such subtlety, then, even in conversation have they often been in the habit of misleading our brethren, as if they held a resurrection of the dead as well as we.** Woe, say they, to him who has not risen in the present body; **for they fear that they might alarm their hearers if they at once denied the resurrection. Secretly**, however, in their minds they think this: Woe betide the simpleton who during his present life fails to discover the mysteries of heresy; since this, in their view, is the resurrection. There are however, a great many also, who, **claiming to hold a resurrection** after the soul’s departure, maintain that going out of the sepulcher means escaping out of the world, since in their view the world is the habitation of the dead — that is, of those who know not God; or they will go so far as to say that it actually means escaping out of the body itself, since they imagine that the body detains the soul, when it is shut up in the death of a worldly life, as in a grave” (Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh, 19).*

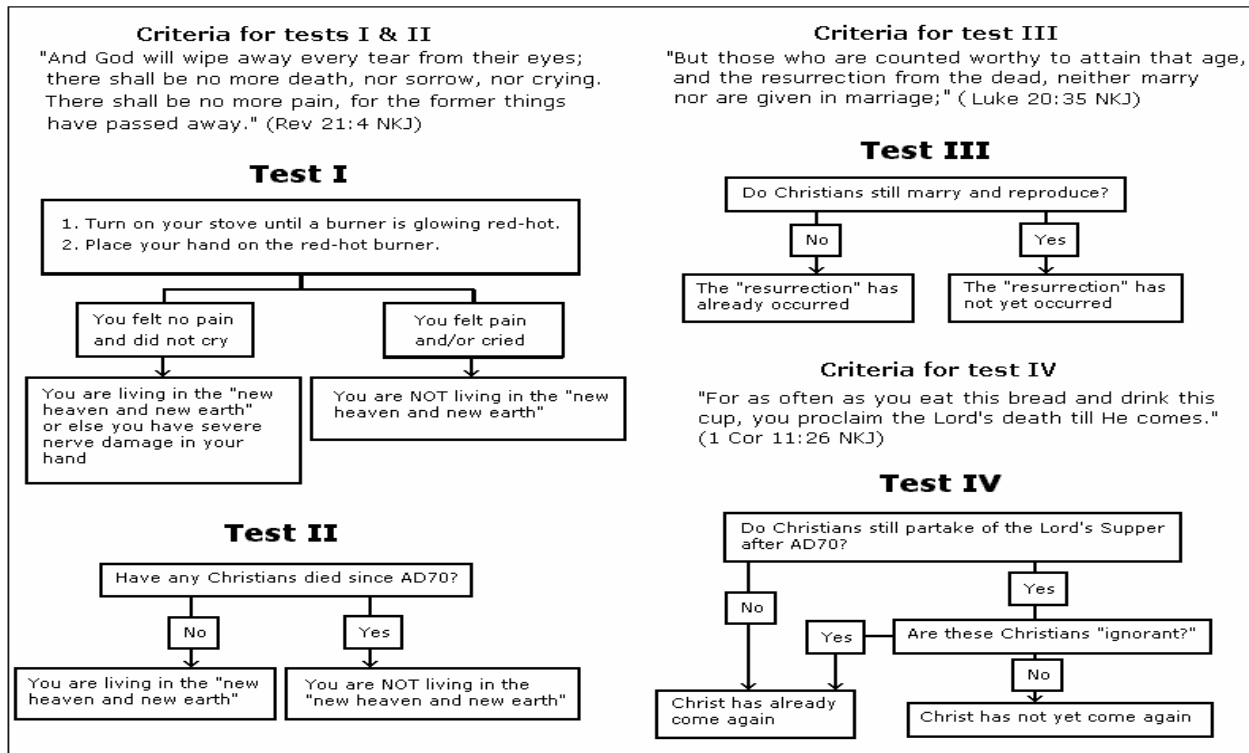
Frost sought to discredit Ignatius whom I quoted in my opening argument. He didn’t bother to tell you that the Epistle of Ignatius that I quoted was not one of the spurious works attributed to Ignatius, but one that is generally acknowledged to have been written by him. But, rather than defending Ignatius, I thought it more advisable to give the reader several quotes from a variety of the earliest writers over whose writings there is general agreement by scholars that they are authentic, and who also lived contiguous to the Apostolic age. The reader can see from the above quotes that I am not in the least being unfair to Frost or uniquely harsh by stating that his aberrant teachings are “heresy.” I am merely repeating what the orthodox Christians from the earliest times said of these false doctrines and those who espouse them.

According to the early orthodox Christians, those who espoused these heresies yet called themselves “Christians” were being deceptive. As Tertullian stated above, they use orthodox words, but put unorthodox (mystical) meanings on them. Through this ploy they are “*in the habit of misleading our brethren.*” This is a deceptive tactic. It is the “*wolves in sheep’s clothing*” who uses deceptive tactics (Matt. 7:15). Faithful Christian apologists have the unpleasant task of pulling back the wool and exposing the black fur beneath, even though this necessarily comes with charges of being harsh, divisive, and unkind. But, God knows my motives and will be my judge.

I have nothing against Sam Frost personally. My remarks are not personal. My (slim) hope is that he will see the errors of this false teaching and repent of it. Regardless of that, my first concern is for those reading this debate, who might be inclined to accept modern mysticism in the guise of Christianity unless someone clearly articulates the contrast to orthodox Christianity. I am determined to uphold the orthodox tradition of the early Christian apologists who earnestly contended for “*the Faith once for all delivered to the saints*” by the Apostles.

The Ultimate Test of Frost’s Preterism

Finally, there is a really simple way for all of our readers to find out which of us are espousing error. Frost’s preterism claims that we are now living in the “new heaven and new earth” and “New Jerusalem.” The resurrection and second coming have already occurred, and all “prophecy” has been fulfilled. I assert that all these things are yet future. The graphic flow chart below will take you through a series of simple tests to determine who is attempting to deceive and who is telling the truth.



Disclaimer: Test I is not meant to be actually carried out.