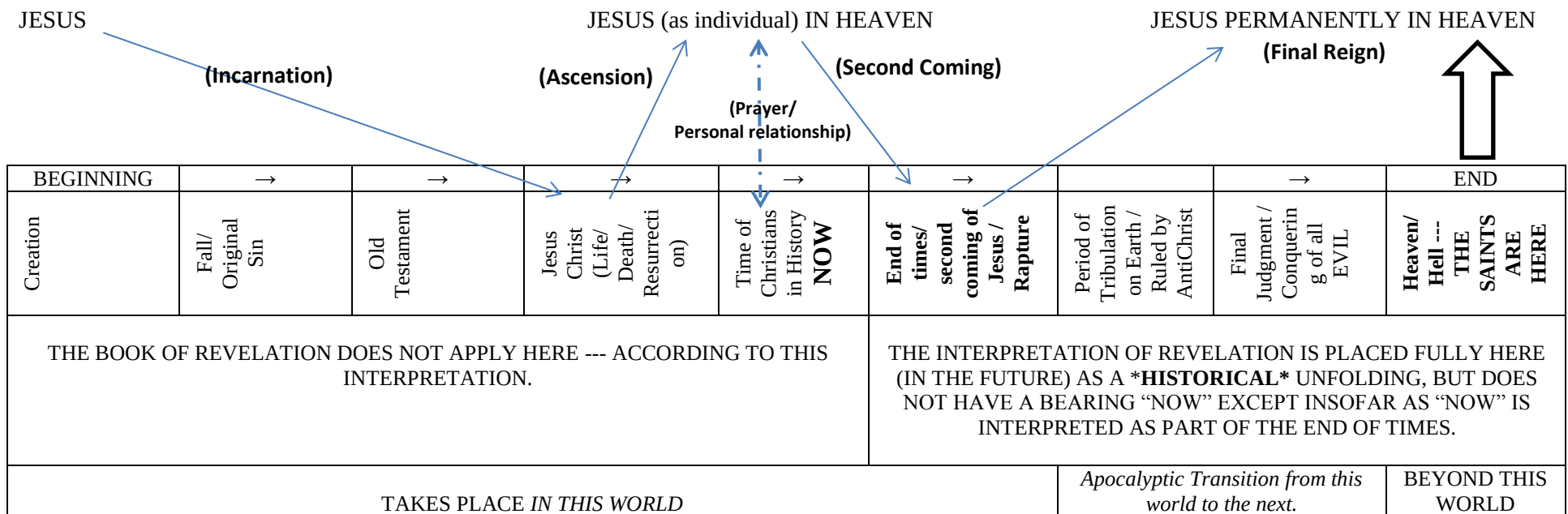


	(1) Historical	(2) Allegorical	(3) Analogical
Who believes this?	the first applies to the fundamentalist interpretations of recent protestant movements, like evangelicals, etc.	the second applied to some people in the early Church, like Origen of Alexandria in the 3rd century, and those who came after him.	On the whole, the Catholic interpretation, which combines the historical AND the allegorical, is the analogical.
What does this interpretation entail?	(1) historical interpretation: the historical interpretation says that God's final victory and thus the true determination of God's glory in the world takes place in the future, in history. This means that the "end of times" takes the leading role, and what Christ already did in history takes the back-burner role. And then the book of revelation, which is written symbolically, is interpreted literally and historically, since they're looking forward to what God will do in the world, rather than to what God has already done. For this interpretation: evil will rise and God WILL conquer evil - in the future - but it is still entirely in the future. And this includes the idea that this war will take place externally on the world scene, panned out in history. That's the "rapture" reading; that's these "end of times" movements. etc.	If Jesus Christ is the center of history, and Christ *already* conquered death and defeated Satan by his death and resurrection, THEN the book of revelation must be allegorical metaphors for every Christian's life. So, the struggle that it describes is the struggle between good and evil that we experience NOW, since we are experiencing a struggle in ourselves as we become configured to Christ's body, in which good has already conquered evil. And so, rather than seeing the "end of the world" as in the future, the end of the world is your own death, since that cosmic battle takes place in your very life, according to how you live the Gospel. Evil can't be conquered in the future IF Christ already conquered it by his death and resurrection. Therefore, the talk of future must represent our struggle to live the Christian life.	For Catholicism, Christ's death and resurrection is the heart of human history, and the heart of the world. There is NO future event that can eclipse or take the place of that; there is nothing in the future that could ever speak a louder word than what has already been spoken in Jesus Christ. And for that reason, it cannot accept the first interpretation. So Catholicism says this: Christ's death and resurrection is the center and heart of history. In him, all evil has been conquered. And thus, Christ then ascends to the right hand of the Father and sends forth his Spirit, *in order that* what has been achieved in him may play out on the world scene. This means that for Catholicism: the resurrection of Christ (in Christ's individual time) = the resurrection of the dead (in the world time). The dot at the top center represents Christ's death and resurrection taken as the heart and center of history.
Assessment:	But here is the problem with it. It makes the heart and determination of history *the future* AND NOT what God did in Jesus Christ. If the heart of history is the death and resurrection of Christ, then that cannot be subordinated to some future event. Also, the book of revelation is entirely expounding the "Lamb as though slain who sits upon the altar." It is an extended meditation upon Jesus Christ, as crucified and Risen --- NOT about just some future event. That is why interpretation 2 arose historically, that	PRO's: 1) It maintains Christ's death and resurrection at the heart and center of all of history 2) It believes that evil and death is already conquered in Christ, which means that what Christ achieved cannot be surpassed by some future event, like the second coming. 3) It is much more faithful to the majority of the book of Revelation which has overlapping symbols with no precise historical order. For example, the "unlocking of the seven seals" does not have a chronological ordering, but overlaps, which means that they happen at the same time	

	is, that is why the allegorical interpretation came about. In response to precisely that problem of eclipsing Christ's centrality.	somehow, which implies a reading of them that represents the struggle for the Christian life, rather than a chronological or historical unfolding of these events. CON'S: 1) It doesn't do justice to those dimensions, though definitely in the minority, to historical references and unfoldings in the book of Revelation. It completely de-historicizes the book. And the fact that it does that so radically is a problem. Why must it be ONLY historical or ONLY allegorical? 2) It doesn't explain how what was achieved in Christ is then achieved at the level of the Church's history or the World's history. It leaves that question blank.	

INTERPRETATION 1 – HISTORICAL



NOTE 1: For these protestants, if you ask *where is Jesus NOW*? The answer is twofold: (1) He is in heaven and will come back “soon” at the end of times. And (2) He is in “our hearts.” **But** there is no sense of his abiding presence in the world, or his *body* remaining in the world. Jesus is “out there” and goes directly from the “out there” of heaven to the “in here” of the heart, without anything in between --- Jesus present in the world during this period – the “Now” – does not depend on his *bodily* presence, nor does it even depend on the incarnation (or his death and resurrection), it only depends on Jesus “coming into the heart of the believer,” in which they form a “personal relationship with Jesus (who is “out there” in heaven) through their heart and feelings. Notice how Jesus’ *presence* skips over the “NOW” period of Christians in history. It jumps from the Resurrection to the Return.

NOTE 2: Where, in this schema, does God conquer evil and reveal his full glory? The question is this: How does what God achieved in the death and resurrection of Christ *relate to* what God achieves in the conquering of evil in the end of times? This interpretation makes God’s *final and definitive Word* the END – the second coming of Christ – and not what God has already done in Jesus Christ. This means that what God did in Jesus Christ gives us “hope,” but the *true* conquering of evil is in the *future* – which is why these groups have such a big emphasis on the category of God’s “promise” as opposed to the category of God’s “presence.” Everything depends on this future “promise.” Since it is the future that is most important for this interpretation. This means, in terms of God’s revelation, although these protestants believe that God’s definitive “revelation” is the Bible, the true and definitive revelation of God is his second coming, and it is that second coming – or at least how they interpret it – that affects the interpretation of the Bible, and thus determines its revelatory value. The center of history is placed in the end, not in the incarnation: and thus

NOTE 3: This whole schema has huge implications for how the “saints” are understood. Notice how the *only* function of the saints in this schema is at the end of the story --- in Heaven. And thus, they are understood as the people of God, sanctified *after the end of history*, and as surrounding Jesus who is distinct from them. This means that any identification of Jesus – who sits in heaven outside of history – and the Church in history is only *metaphorical* (a *mere symbolic reference*), since Jesus is *either* in heaven *or* on earth; and once the saints are understood as Christ’s body *only metaphorically*, which means that they are not *truly* his body, but *other* than his body, then the final vision of heaven is depicted as Jesus on a throne, with the saints surrounding him. And therefore, the way that these Protestants imagine prayer is between “me” (below) and Jesus (above), without the saints since : (a) they are only in the storyline after the end of history; and (b) since they are understood as Christ’s body only metaphorically, they are distinct from Christ, and since they’re distinct from Christ, then they would become competitors with Jesus’ sole mediatorship. Why pray to the saints if I can go directly to Jesus? (This presumes that the saints are in fact *other* than Jesus – rather than presuming – as the analogical interpretation does – that they *are truly his body*, and so whether you mention their names or not, your prayer is interceded by them, since it is interceded by the *one Christ*, of which they are the members).

NOTE 4: Since this Schema unfolds this way, placing the Saints at the *end of history*, rather than in the midst of history, there are a few consequences: When these protestants understand “Jesus” – this is an individual person, who is (somehow) God, became flesh from the year 0-33, then ascended into Heaven, is waiting in Heaven, until the second coming, in the year, say 2047 (or whenever), and then he will finally – at that point – conquer evil and bring all of the people who are saved into Heaven. And when he brings them into Heaven, they will surround him in his glory, and praise him. But notice what this does: in this way of seeing things, prayers to the Saints makes *no sense whatsoever!* First of all, in this schema, only Jesus as an individual sits in heaven now (above us), since the Saints only play a role in the distant future when *we are all saints*. And second, its conception of the saints is distinct from the person of Christ: Jesus and the saints are two different realities. And so to pray to them would be seen as a distraction (or worse, idolatrous!) to praying to Jesus. But this way of interpreting the Saints comes at a high cost: that of denying the rest of Scripture. For, Scripture describes the Saints as Jesus’ army that fights evil, not just after history, but before it. Scripture also describes the prayers of the Saints as rising before the Father like incenses *NOW* (not just in the future). And finally, Jesus himself identifies himself so closely with the saints *now in history*, that there is no way we could hear Jesus’ voice and believe that his identification with the saints is only metaphorical or figurative. We truly *die to ourselves and live in him*, and as St. Paul says, *It is not I – but Christ in me*. This is the work of the Spirit. Jesus Christ ascended into heaven *in order that* the Holy Spirit may be sent (John 16-19), and this was important, since it is precisely the work of the Holy Spirit to make us *into his body*, so that forevermore Jesus Christ is no longer an individual “I” – that is, Jesus of Nazareth – but Jesus now is the communion of I’s that are his body, and who live in him. It is this communion by his love that is celebrated whenever we pray through the saints – for it is Christ’s love that conquers the division of death, not just in the future, but *now*. When we pray through Jesus to the Father, this is not an alternative to the saints, since Jesus is his body, and his body is the saints. All prayer is through the saints. Just sometimes we make that more explicit than other times.

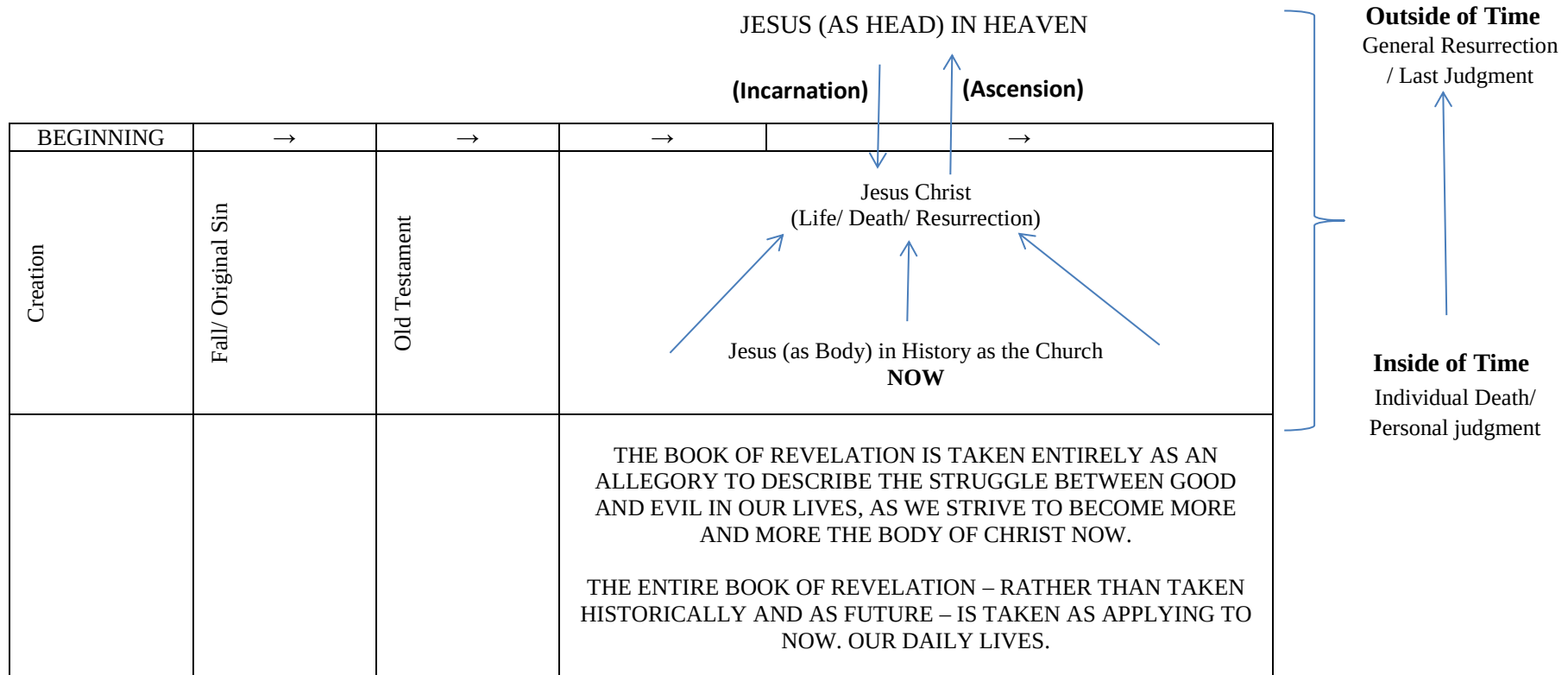
NOTE 5: Notice how this Schema prioritizes the horizontal-chronological approach over the vertical approach (of say, the allegorical interpretation).

A general observation in this case would be this:

(1) Historical Interpretation: Horizontal > Vertical

(2) Allegorical Interpretation: Horizontal < Vertical

INTERPRETATION 2 – ALLEGORICAL



NOTE 1: In this case, the “last judgment” occurs at *your death*, since it is a transition from *individual death in time* to the *collective judgment and resurrection outside of time*. This means that the talk of the End of the World and all of its struggle of good vs evil, is taken as allegorical for the struggle of the Christian life, and how each of us relate to Jesus Christ, in whom evil has been conquered definitively.

NOTE 2: This places Jesus at the center of history --- you can never move *beyond* the death and resurrection, in this schema – unlike in the historical schema, where his death and resurrection are *relativized* by its understanding of the end of times.

NOTE 3: Notice how this one is more vertical than horizontal. Here: Vertical > Horizontal.

COMMONALITIES OF THESE TWO APPROACHES: THEY ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME “DIALECTICAL” COIN:

Modes of “reasoning” and seeing the world of the historical and allegorical views: dialectical → “either-or”

Other examples: *either saved or not saved; either it is by faith or by the sacraments; either faith or reason; either the Bible or tradition; either nature (creation) or grace (salvation); either Jesus is in heaven or he is on earth; either we pray to Jesus or to the saints; EITHER-OR*

Mode of “reasoning” and seeing the world in the analogical view: analogical-sacramental → “both-and”

Other examples: *both saved and not-yet-saved by the process of sanctification; both faith and the sacraments; both faith and reason; both Bible and tradition; both nature-creation and grace-salvation; Jesus is both in heaven and on earth, in his body that is mediated in the Church; We pray to Jesus, whose very body is the saints; Jesus Christ truly is both head and members, and this is not a metaphor. etc. BOTH-AND*

Tensions	Literal-Historical (1): Dialectic	Allegorical (2): Dialectic	Analogical (3)
Jesus in heaven vs on earth	Jesus in heaven	Jesus on earth in his body	Jesus as head in heaven; Jesus as body on earth.
Incarnation as center of history vs end as center of history	end of history as center	incarnation as center	incarnation is raised up to the level of meta-history, and thus the end is an unfolding of the incarnation through the work of the Spirit
Evil conquered in Jesus’ death vs resurrection or evil conquered at the end of time.	evil conquered at the end of time	evil conquered in the resurrection	The end is the dramatic unfolding in world-time of what has already been conquered in Jesus-time.
promise vs presence.	promise	presence	Presence is the mediation of his body; promise is the fulfillment of that body’s transformation of the world.
time vs eternity	happens in time	happens in eternity	Time has been brought into eternity by the incarnation --- Jesus is the intersection of the two.
vertical vs horizontal	horizontal	vertical	The horizontal is embraced within the vertical; and the vertical is affected by the unfolding of the horizontal.
End of world is future and historical vs end of world is a metaphor for our struggle as Christians	End of world is future and historical	End of world is metaphor for struggle as Christians	Since history becomes formed by the life of Jesus by the work of the Spirit, it is <i>both</i> the unfolding of Jesus life in world-time (and thus future and historical) <i>and</i> it is always the encounter of the Christian with Jesus in the world now, and thus, applies fully to the present.
Pray to Jesus vs Pray to the Saints	Only Jesus (since the saints are understood as his body only <i>figuratively</i>).	Jesus = saints	Jesus is the head; the saints are his members. All prayer is always through Jesus <i>and his body</i> .
the saints at the end of history vs the saints as his body now.	the saints only as the end of history	the saints as his body now	The end of history is precisely the unfolding of Christ’s life in world-time; and so the Saints are his body NOW, but that also means at the end.