

## **Proposal Sample**

**Title** – The Atomic Age and the Apocalypse: How the Nuclear Age Influenced the Eschatology of W.A. Criswell and Prominent Leaders of the SBC

**Program of Study** – History

**Presentation Type** –PowerPoint

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**Category** –Textual

**Abstract example:** It is vital to establish the specific tenets of Criswell's eschatology, or beliefs concerning the end times, in order to outline exactly what he believed about the earth's final days. Criswell identified himself as a member of the futurist school of interpretation. Members of this group believe that starting in the fourth chapter of Revelation an apocalypse is described. This apocalypse entails Jesus Christ coming in great power and glory to establish himself as ruler of the world. Christ will bind Satan with an iron chain and will create a new heaven and new earth that includes a new Jerusalem. This kingdom will serve as the eternal home for Christians to dwell together with Christ as their ruler. In order to fully explain his eschatology and demonstrate that Christ was rapidly approaching, Criswell incorporated current events into his sermons that he believed directly related to the book of Revelation. Criswell boldly preached that the end of time would result in judgment for works that individuals committed during their time on earth. His belief in an eventual judgment inspired him to give Cold War era Americans specific instructions on how they could live out their final days for Christ. Criswell clearly serves as a representation of prominent SBC leaders that preached eschatology and urged people to turn to the Lord during the Cold War. After establishing what Criswell believed regarding the end times and the ultimate fate of the Soviet Union, it is important to outline the general eschatological beliefs of the SBC.

**Christian worldview integration:** This research provides me with the opportunity to preserve and analyze the gospel-centered sermons of a prominent pastor. My Christian worldview was supplemented by the reading and analyzing of his sermons that are nearly seventy years old, yet still contain great Scriptural truths. Not only does my research commemorate the ministry of W.A. Criswell, but I am also able to examine his contributions in order to discuss the mission efforts and ministries of other typical Southern Baptist pastors during the Cold War. I have been provided with the unique opportunity to not only write on a historical topic that investigates how the Soviet Union influenced eschatological interpretations, but I am also able to trace how these influences impact ministers today. This research topic has permitted me to incorporate my religious beliefs into a scholarly paper. As I scrutinize the work of Criswell I am provided with the opportunity to also share how Southern Baptists believe the world will end and that Christ provides the only answer for true eternal security. Throughout the research process of studying what beliefs defined the SBC fifty years ago, I have been encouraged to examine my own beliefs regarding the end times and ensure that they align with the Scriptures and not simply reflect what the culture deems to be correct. Criswell dedicated over sixty years of his life to serving the Lord. He stated that he would choose the same career path if he could start his life over again. Witnessing his commitment to the Lord has encouraged me to wisely spend my years by dedicating them to the Lord and his causes.