

Mercy Chapel Eschatology Course

- **A VERY BRIEF OVERVIEW**

WEEK 1

- POSTMILLENNIALISM/ AMILLENNIALISM
- PREMILLENNIALISM
- What they all teach and the history of each belief
- Scriptural accuracy of each belief
- Pros and Cons

Eschatology

- **Greek word “ESCHATOS” meaning “last”**
- **OLOGY meaning “the study of”**

The Millennium is only
mentioned **ONCE** in the bible
yet it is one of the most
vehemently debated doctrines
in all of scripture!

Postmillennialism

- ~Post millennialism is an end Times view that focuses on the progressive victory and expansive influence of Christianity.**
- ~They believe that we are currently living in the “millennium” and that during this indefinitely long period of time, Christians are tasked to extend the kingdom of God in the world through the preaching of the gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of individuals.**

Postmillennialism timeline

- **The “figurative” millennium that we’re in currently.**
- **Second coming of Christ after the “golden church age”.**
- **General resurrection/rapture of the church, rewards judgement. (Bema seat judgement. Rom 14:10, 2Cor:9-11)**
- **Judgement of the Devil, demons, and the unsaved. (White throne Rev 20:11-14)**
- **New heavens new earth, and lake of fire.**

POST MILLENNIALISM IS THE MOST OPTIMISTIC

- It believes that Christianity will triumph over evil in this world. Believers will continue to win the world over by the power of the Holy Spirit, and we will usher in the millennium at which time Christ will return and judge.**

AMILLENNIALISM

- **A-millennialism (no millennium) understands the “Kingdom” preached by Christ and His disciples to be **SYNONYMOUS** with Revelation 20.**
- **Satan bound: Satan is already bound NOW, not during the “millennium”.**
- **Strong man BOUND (Matt 12:28),**
- **Judgment has come, prince of this world is driven out (John 12:31),**

- **Jesus disarmed principalities and powers at the cross (Col 2:15)**
- **. Jesus saw Satan fall from heaven, thereby giving all authority to the Apostles and the church (Luke 10:18-19).**
- **Heb 2:14- Christ destroyed the power of the devil.**
- **1st John 3:8 Christ appeared to destroy the work of the devil.**

- **They believe that Satan's influence is limited right now, and he won't be released to deceive the nations until AFTER the "thousand years".**
- **They see the battles in Revelation 16:12-14, 19:19-20, 20:7-10 as the same "literal" battle mentioned 3 different times all resulting in the same outcome.**
- **They believe that Satan will only be released ONCE to make war with the saints, deceive the nations, and make war with Christ. After his loss, he's judged once and The Lord ushers in the New heavens and New earth. The eternal state, where we reign with Him.**

- **AMILLIENNIALISM TAKES A STRICTLY “PRETERIST” VIEW ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION AND O.T. PROPHECIES OF THE COMING KINGDOM.**

PRETERISM

**~one who holds that the prophecies in the bible regarding the future of Israel have already been fulfilled historically.
(AD 70)**

~FROM THE LATIN “PRAETER” meaning in the past or beyond.

- A general belief that most of the future prophecies in the book of Revelation are allegorical and the 7 churches in Revelation 2 and 3 are historical.**

REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

- **Replacement theology (aka “supersessionism”) teaches that the church has “replaced” Israel in God plan.**
- **It teaches that the Israelites/ Jews are no longer “God’s chosen people” and God does not have any specific plans for the nation of Israel.**
- **This belief teaches that many of the promises made to Israel in the OT are fulfilled in the Christian church and not the Nation of Israel. (They could never see Israel a nation again after 70)**
- **The promises concerning the restoration of the the nation of Israel, and Israel returning to the promised land are spiritualized and allegorized.**

HISTORY OF AMILLENNIALISM/ POSTMILLENNIALISM

- **All of the early protestant reformers believed that the millennial kingdom was strictly figurative. Why? Because they were reformed Catholics, and that's what the Catholic church still teaches today.**
- **They were reformed in terms of their "SOTERIOLOGY" (doctrine of salvation), but they still held to a preterist belief regarding ESCHATOLOGY (end times).**

Some of the early “Amillennials”

- **Martin Luther- (1483–1546) the originator of the reformation. (1517) Author of the “95 theses”. Stating (in short) The Word of God is “closed” and salvation is by Grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.**
- **John Calvin- (1509–1564) “calvinism” predestination and election.**
- **Huldrych Zwingli- (1484–1531) A principal figure in the Reformation in Switzerland and Europe.**
- **William Tyndale-(1494–1536) was one of the first people to print the Bible in English. He worked on translating the Bible into English even when it was deemed to be an illegal act.**

Modern Amillennialists

- **Charles H. Spurgeon**- The prince of preachers! (1834-1892)
- **R.C. Sproul**- Presbyterian pastor, and one of the finest biblical and theological minds of our time. (1939-2017) He and most all who adhere to reform theology are amillennialists.
- **Allistair Begg**- Cleveland Parkside Church, Truth For Life radio.
- Some Acts 29 churches. SOME (not all) Pentecostal church movements.
- Any of the more common liberal church movements do not believe in a literal future millennial kingdom. They believe that the “kingdom is now” therefore a literal thousand year reign will not happen.

The Start of Amillennialism and Preterism

- **Saint Augustine of Hippo- (354-430 AD)**
Known as the father or “Doctor” of the Catholic church.
- He began to spiritualize and allegorize all the prophecies regarding Israel, and the scriptures in Revelation 20 that spoke of the coming future kingdom.

Amillennialism (“A-mill”) is that view which holds that Jesus is presently ruling in Heaven where proponents claim He is seated on the throne of David. (Rom 8:34, Isa9:7)

~According to the amillennial view, Jesus will at NO time rule on the earth. The thousand years recorded by John in Revelation 20 is suggested to be symbolic of Jesus’ present HEAVENLY reign, that extends from the Resurrection of Christ into the Eternal Age.

IN Short: Amillennialists believe there WILL be literal thousand year reign with Christ along with all the resurrected saints, but it won’t be on this earth. The thousand years mentioned in Rev 20 is metaphorical and is strictly speaking of a heavenly state.

~They believe in what’s called a “realized millennium” or a present day millennium that involves ALL believers, particularly those who have already died in Christ.

~The Church will go throughout the world declaring The Kingdom and bringing the gospel and have an ongoing positive impact on the world.

~John Calvin “It’s the church’s job to declare an invisible kingdom to a visible world.” Acts 1:6-8 ...”will You now restore the kingdom?”

ONE FINAL AMILL POINT

- **Modern A-millennialism, or “Realized Millennialism” DOES believe in a final “apostasy” as spoken of in 2nd Thess 2:3, in which the church will fall away. The true church will be persecuted by Antichrist through the tribulation. Be raptured at the end of that time and Christ will then usher in the “Eternal State”, while still holding to a future plan for “ethnic Israel”.**
- **The church will have to endure the Antichrist.**
- **But all of this will happen over a “period of time” (after the cross) and not a literal 1000 year period.**

**How long did the church
believe in A-mill?**

**From the mid to late 300's to
the 1870's-1890's**

CLOSE TO 1600 YEARS!!!

PREMILLENNIAL VIEW

DISPENSATIONAL AND HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM

- **Dispensational Pre-mill- states we are in the “Church age”.**
- **A parenthetical time period between the crucifixion and the “Kingdom age”.**
- **The coming of the Kingdom is completely future.**
- **It believes that the teachings of Christ throughout most of the book of Matthew, and ALL of the “Sermon on the Mount” is strictly a kingdom ethic. It has no bearing on the “church age” and is simply for Kingdom application.**

- **Views 2 distinct programs in redemptive history:**
- **One plan for ethnic Israel and another plan for the “church”.**
- **It believes that the “Church” will be raptured before the “7 year tribulation” and Israel will establish a rebuilt temple.**
- **At that time (3.5 years) The Antichrist will declare himself as a God in the rebuilt temple.**
- **The Jews will be persecuted, killed, and driven into the wilderness. (Matt 24:16)**
- **After such time Christ will return, after the “Great Tribulation”, with the already raptured church (bride) and redeem the Nation of Israel.**

- **Dispensationalism/ Futurism** began in the early to mid 19th century.
- **John Nelson Darby-** (1800-1882) He started in the Church of Ireland (anglican) and left in 1827. He started a group called “The Brethren” in Dublin and it grew to reach Great Britain.
- **1828** he published a pamphlet called “THE NATURE AND UNITY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST”.

- **Darby** was **one** of the first to take a **literal** view of the prophetic kingdom scriptures, and Revelation, thereby revealing a distinction between “ethnic Israel” and the “Church”.
- Showing TWO distinguishable economies in God’s plan for redemption.
- He was the first to promote the idea that the “rapture of the church” and the “second coming” were two separate events, for the two different economies (people groups) of God.
- **Hence...** being known as the Father of Dispensational Premill

- **Dispensational Premillennialism holds to a belief that the scriptures regarding the “End of the Age” should be understood LITERALLY with little, to NO figurative language in the book of Revelation.**
- **They also believe that the Book of Revelation should be viewed ALMOST ENTIRELY in chronological order.**
- **The OT scriptures that speak of “The Kingdom Age” are to be take LITERALLY.**

OT Kingdom Scripture include :

- **Daniel 2:44-** A Stone cut without hands destroys the image of Nebuchadnezzar. “...set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.”
- **Zechariah 8:22,23-** “ Yes many peoples, strong and weak shall come to seek The Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and pray before The Lord.
- **Zechariah 14:8,9-**“And in that day living waters shall flow from Jerusalem... in both summer and winter it shall occur.””...and The Lord shall be King over all the earth.”

- **Isaiah 2:2-4** - “ 2 ...in the latter days... all nations shall flow to it...”, “ 3- ... many people shall come and say ‘ Let us go to the House of The God of Jacob’...”, 4- “ He shall Judge between the nations, and REBUKE many people: They shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not rise against nation neither shall they learn war anymore.”
- **We see the same language in Micah 4:1-8**

- **Jeremiah 23:5-6** “ ‘Behold the days are coming’, says The Lord, ‘That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgement and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name b which he will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THEN WE HAVE DEBATES OVER VERSES...

- **JEREMIAH 29:11-13-** For I know the thoughts that I think toward you says The Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. THEN you will call upon me and go and pray to me and I will listen to you. And you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all you heart.

7 “DISPENSATIONS”

- **Innocence-** Adam to the fall.
- **Conscience-** Fall to flood.
- **Human Government-** Flood to Abraham
- **Promise-** Abraham to Moses.
- **The Law-** Moses to Crucifixion
- **Grace or “CHURCH”-** Resurrection , ascension, Pentecost ALL the way through the rapture, tribulation, to the Millennium.
- **The millennial reign**

Not a new work...?

- **Darby considered his work to be a continuation of the “early church fathers” from the 1st century, and was run out of town by some notable preachers.... Spurgeon.**
- **Noteworthy-** while the early church fathers were most definitely pre-mill they were **NOT**, repeat, **NOT PRE-TRIB.**

HISTORICAL PRE-MILL

- **BELIEVES** that the new testament church is an ADDITION to old testament Israel. Not a replacement. (Romans 11:17)
- It sees NO difference between a saved Jew or a saved gentile. (Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned...)

PRE-MILL CHURCH FATHERS

- **PAPIAS** (AD 60-130)- Heard John the apostle teach. Papias held to the reality “ there will be a millennium after the resurrection of the dead.”
- **POLYCARP** (70-155) Bishop of Smyrna. Direct disciple of John. Pre-millennial.
- **JUSTIN MARTYR** (100-165) “...assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned, and enlarged as the prophets Ezekiel, Isaiah, and others declare.”

- **IRENÆUS** (160-230) direct disciple of Polycarp. Had his early writings (Against Heresies) suppressed by the Catholic church. They were found again in the early 1600's. Staunch pre-mill.
- **TERTULLIAN** “ But we do confess that a Kingdom is promised to us upon the earth, although before heaven, only in another state of existence; inasmuch as it will be after the resurrection for a thousand years in the divinely built city of Jerusalem.”

Both historic and dispensational pre-mill hold to a LITERAL interpretation of the Bible and the prophecies thereof.

This is important because all of historic bible prophecy was fulfilled
LITERALLY ON EARTH!

However... Sometimes what takes place in the spiritual or heavenly realm, has a different appearance as it unfolds on earth.

e.g. David seeing an angel in 1st Chronicles
21:16

BUT REVELATION 20 DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE
FIGURATIVE ...

Why so many different beliefs?

- **Because this is man's best attempt at trying to understand GOD'S plan.**
- **1st Corinthians 13:12** "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known."