

# Eschatology

Millennialism

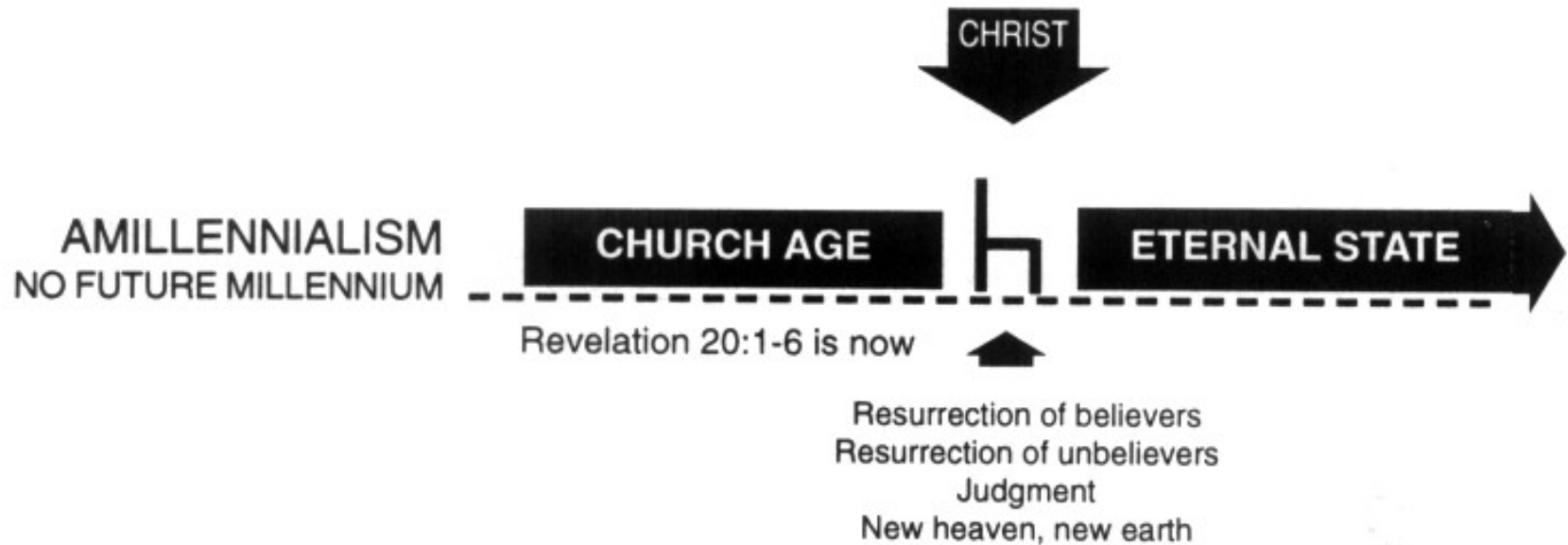
# LBC Statement of Faith

We believe in the coming of Christ: that His return will be personal, visible, pretribulational, **premillennial**, and glorious – a blessed hope, the time being presently unrevealed, yet always imminent; that when He comes, He will first remove His church from the earth by resurrection and translation, then pour out God's righteous judgments on the unbelieving world during the tribulation period, **afterward descend with His church and establish His glorious Kingdom over all nations for a thousand years**, at the close of which He will raise the unrighteous for their final judgment.

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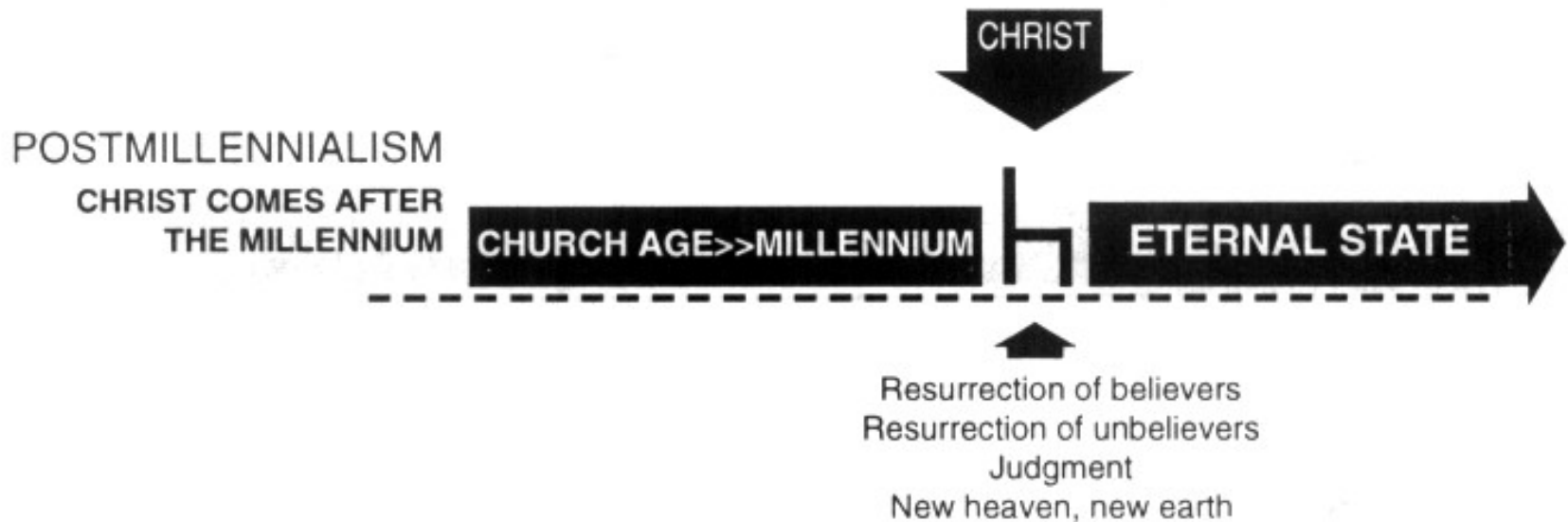
# Explanation of the Three Major Views

## 1. Amillennialism: There is no future millennium.



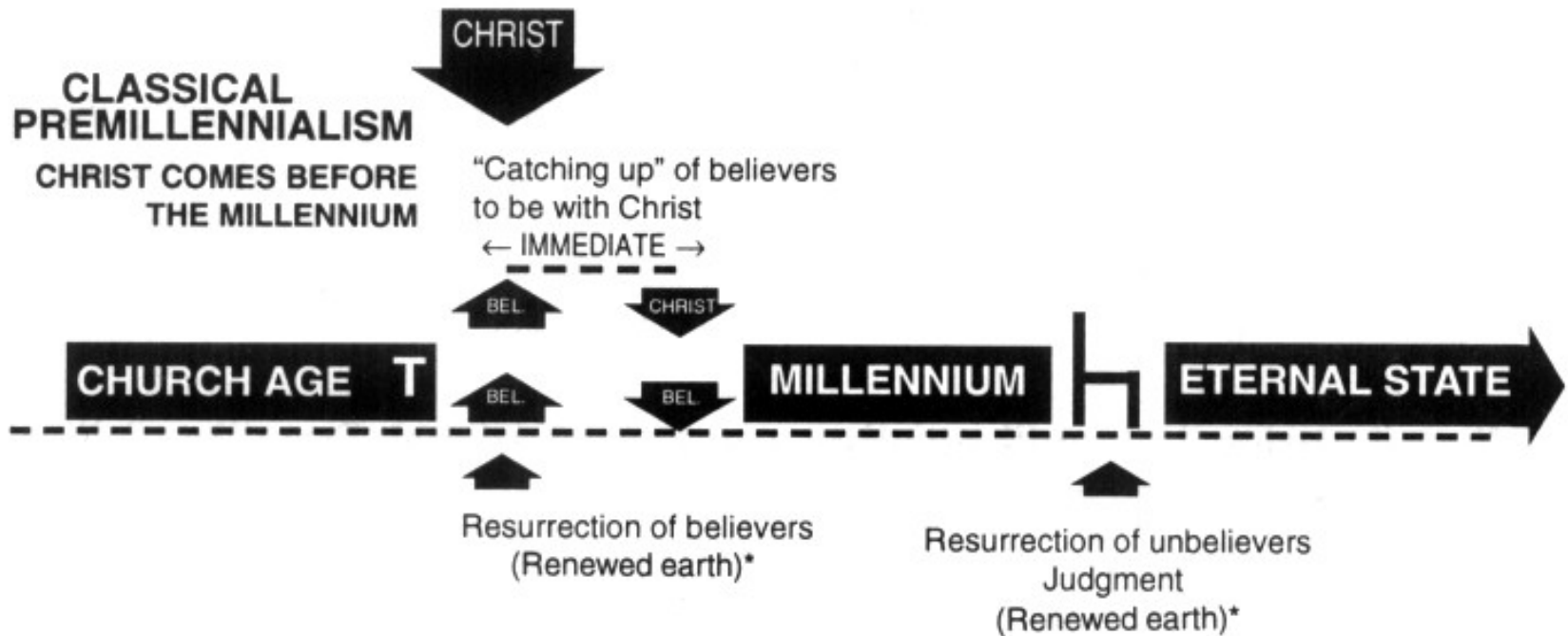
# Explanation of the Three Major Views

2. **Postmillennialism:** Christ will return after the millennium.



# Explanation of the Three Major Views

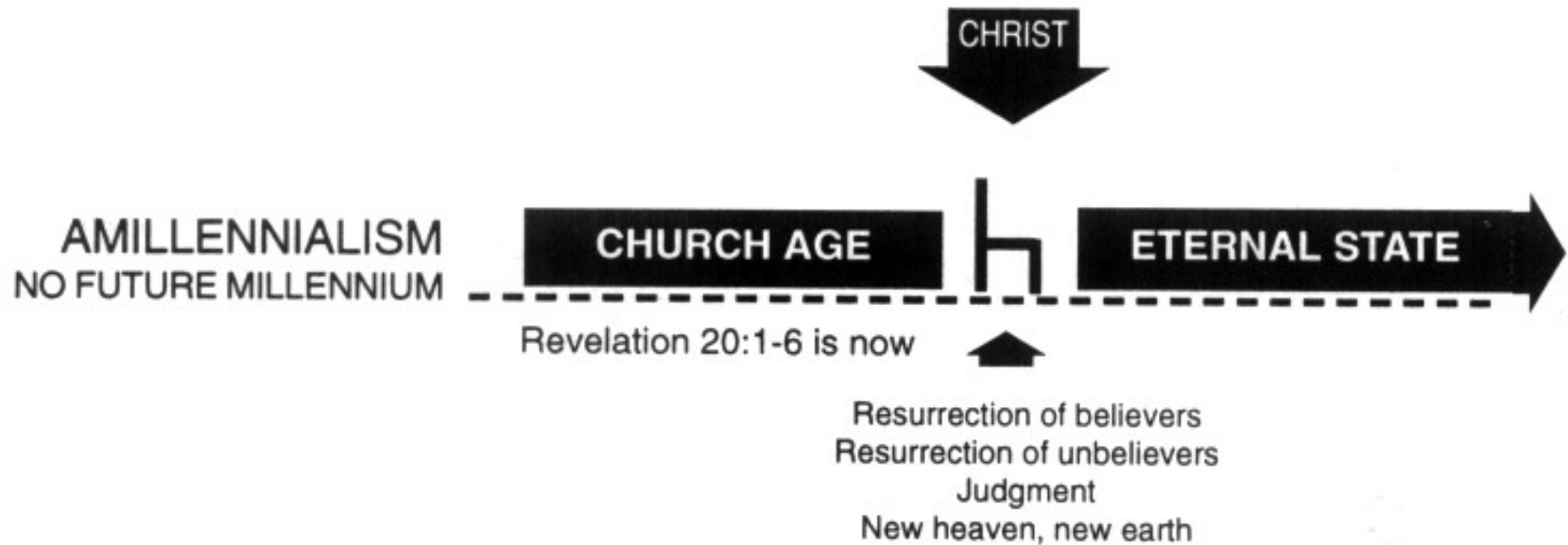
## 3. Premillennialism: Christ will return before the millennium.



\*Classical Premillennialists differ over whether the renewed earth will begin in the millennium or the external state.

# Explanation of the Three Major Views

## 1. Amillennialism: There is no future millennium.



# Explanation of the Three Major Views

## **Amillennialism:**

1. Rev. 20:1-10 describes the present age.
  2. “Thousand years” is simply a figure of speech.
  3. The present church age will continue until the return of Christ when there will be a resurrection of both believers and unbelievers, and the new heavens and new earth will begin.
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Amillennialism

## Arguments for Amillennialism:

1. Only one obscure passage (Rev. 20:1-6) appears to teach the future earthly millennial reign of Christ.
  2. Scripture only teaches one resurrection, when both believers and unbelievers will be raised. (Jn 5:28-29; Ac 24:15)
  3. The idea of glorified believers and sinners living on earth together is too difficult to accept.
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Amillennialism

## Arguments for Amillennialism:

4. If Christ comes in glory to reign on the earth, then how could people still persist in sin?
  5. There seems to be no convincing purpose for such a millennium.
  6. Scripture seems to indicate that all the major events yet to come before the eternal state will occur at once.
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Amillennialism

## Responses to the arguments for Amillennialism:

### 1. *“Only one obscure passage”:*

- The Bible only needs to say something once for it to be true. (i.e. Tower of Babel). No biblical passage is obscure.
  - Premillennialists argue that several other passages require belief in a future period greater than the present age, but which falls short of the eternal state.
  - The amillennial interpretation of Rev. 20:1-6 has several difficulties.
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Amillennialism

## Responses to the arguments for Amillennialism:

### 2. *“Only one resurrection”:*

- This is hard to accept when Scripture speaks of “the first resurrection.”
  - Other passages don’t specify whether the resurrection of believers and unbelievers will be separated in time, but John 5 hints at the possibility of two. (Jn 5:28-29)
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Amillennialism

## Responses to the arguments for Amillennialism:

3. *“Glorified believers and sinners together?”*:
    - This does sound strange, but not impossible for God.
    - Jesus lived with his glorified body for forty days after the resurrection, as did some OT saints. (Mt 27:52-53)
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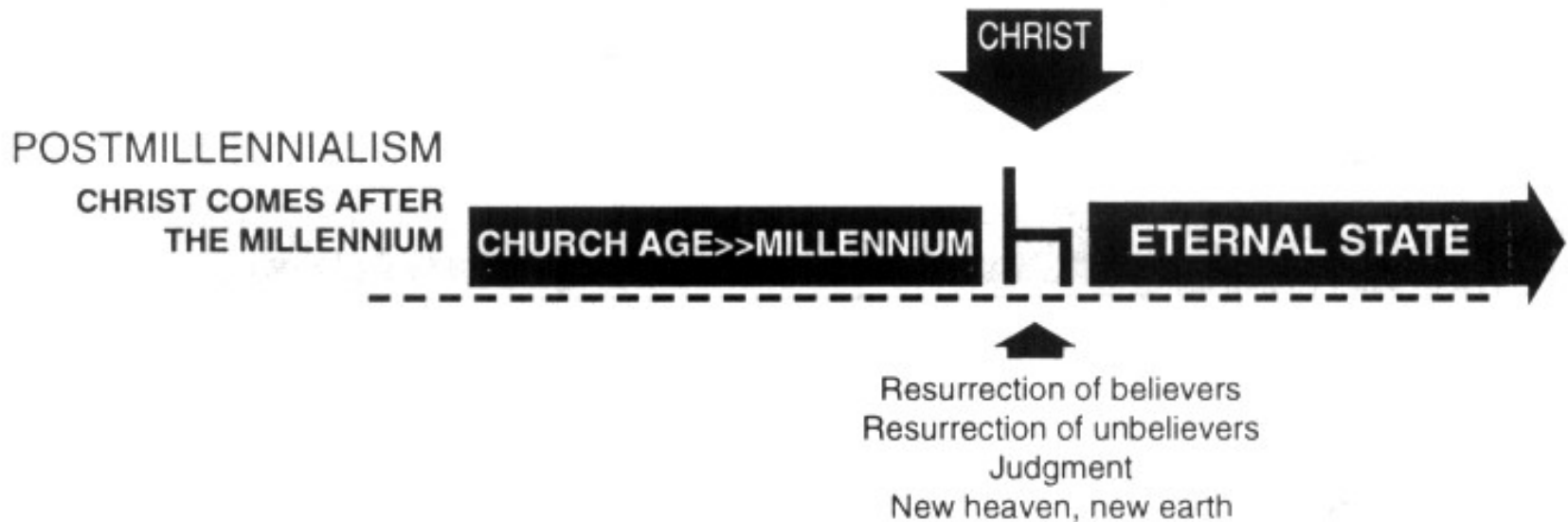
# A Consideration of the Arguments for Amillennialism

## Responses to the arguments for Amillennialism:

4. *“People persisting in sin in spite of Christ’s reigning presence?”*:
    - Judas lived with Christ for three years and betrayed him.
    - Many Pharisees saw Jesus’ miracles—even raising people from the dead!—and still did not believe.
    - Even some disciples in the presence of the glorified Lord Jesus doubted. (Mt 28:16-17)
    - Such persistent unbelief in the presence of Christ is hard to understand, but Satan himself fell.
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# Explanation of the Three Major Views

2. **Postmillennialism:** Christ will return after the millennium.



# Explanation of the Three Major Views

## Postmillennialism:

1. The progress of the gospel/growth of the church will increase; a larger portion of the population will be Christians.
  2. There will be significant Christian influences on society.
  3. Gradually, a “millennial age” of righteousness and peace will occur on the earth, and will last for a long time.
  4. At the end of this period, Christ returns to earth, raises believers and unbelievers, performs the final judgment, and establishes the new heaven/earth.
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Postmillennialism

## Arguments for Postmillennialism:

1. The Great Commission leads us to expect the gospel to go forth and result in a largely Christian world.
  2. Parables of the gradual growth of the kingdom indicate it will eventually fill the earth with its influence. (Matt 13:31-33)
  3. Postmillennialists argue that the world is becoming more Christian.
  4. In the NT the church and Israel are combined, and thus promises are fulfilled spiritually.
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Postmillennialism

## Responses to the arguments for Postmillennialism:

1. Great Commission:
    - This passage does not necessarily imply Christ will bring about the conversion of the majority of the population.
  2. Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven:
    - These parables do not tell us the extent to which the kingdom will grow.
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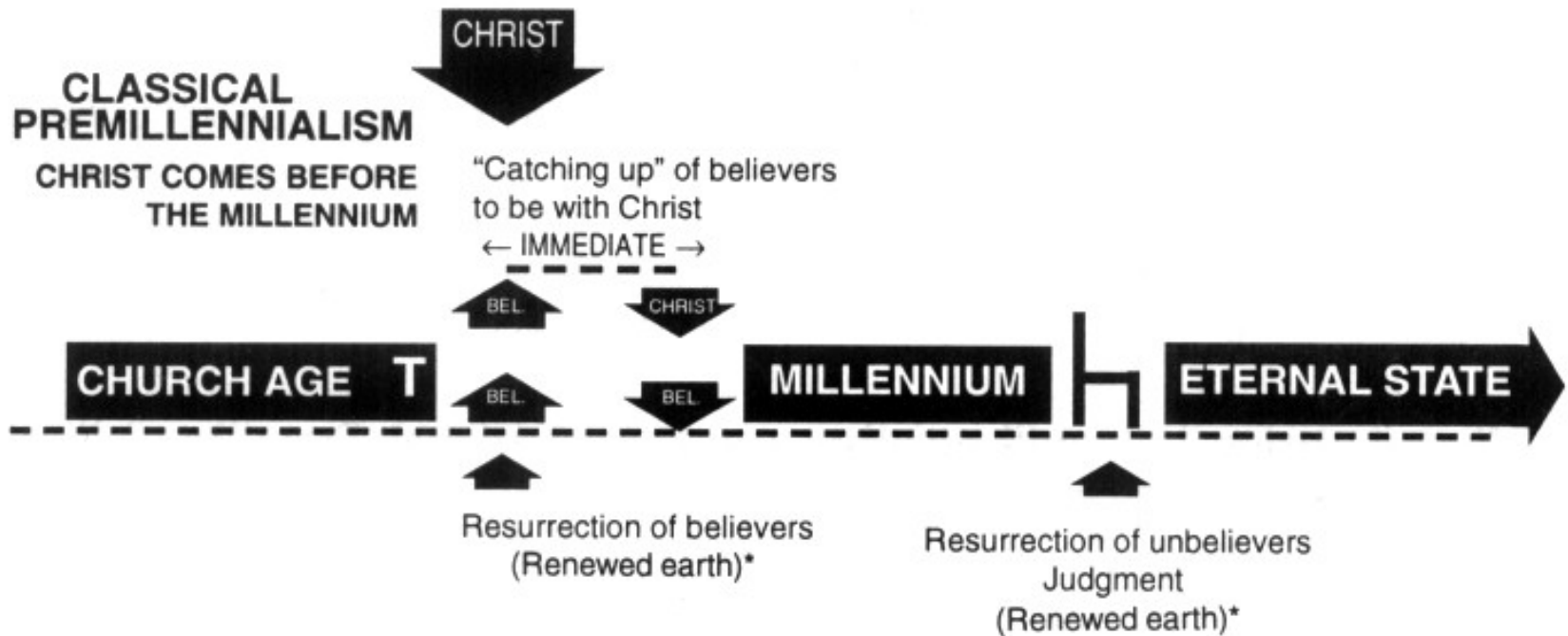
# A Consideration of the Arguments for Postmillennialism

## Responses to the arguments for Postmillennialism:

3. The world is becoming more Christian:
    - The world is also becoming more evil.
    - Even where Bible-believing Christians are large segments of population, nothing like a millennial kingdom occurs.
  
  4. Biblical Weight:
    - OT promises seem to be literal in fulfillment
    - Several NT Passages seem to give denial to the postmillennial position. (Matt 7:13-14; 24:21-30; Lk 18:8; 2 Thess 2:3-4; 2 Tim 3:1-5, 12-13; 4:3-4)
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# Explanation of the Three Major Views

## 3. Premillennialism: Christ will return before the millennium.



\*Classical Premillennialists differ over whether the renewed earth will begin in the millennium or the external state.

# Explanation of the Three Major Views

## **Premillennialism:**

1. The present church age will continue until a time of great tribulation and suffering comes on the earth.
  2. After that tribulation at the end of the church age, Christ will return to establish a millennial kingdom.
  3. During this time, Christ will be physically present on earth and will reign as king.
  4. The believers will receive glorified resurrection bodies, and will reign with Christ on earth for one thousand years.
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# A. Explanation of the Three Major Views

## **Premillennialism:**

5. At the beginning, Satan will be bound/cast into the bottomless pit; he will have no influence on the earth.
  6. At the end, Satan will be loosed, and will gather many unbelievers for battle against Christ. They will be defeated.
  7. Christ will raise from the dead unbelievers for final judgment, and believers enter into the eternal state.
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Premillennialism

## Arguments for Premillennialism:

1. Several OT passages fit neither in the present age nor in the eternal state (Isa 11:6-11; 65:20; Zech 14:5-17)
  2. NT passages besides Revelation 20 also speak of a future millennium. (Re 2:26-27; 1 Co 15:22-25)
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# A Consideration of the Arguments for Premillennialism

## Arguments for Premillennialism:

3. Revelation 20 seems to be best understood as referring to a future earthly reign of Christ prior to the judgment.
    - The binding and imprisonment of Satan imply a greater restriction of his activity than what we know now.
    - “Came to life” is best taken as a bodily resurrection as the next verse says, “This is the first resurrection.”
    - Reigning with Christ is something still future—consistent with the rest of the NT. (Lk 19:17; 1 Co 6:3; Re 3:21)
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