

“Practical Eschatology: The Coming Kingdom and Final Judgment”

For the week of April 25, 2021

The Millennium

The millennial kingdom will sum up all that God has said about the heart of man during the various periods of history. It will be a reign of law, and yet law will not change man's sinful heart. Man will still revolt against God. The Millennium will be a period of peace and perfect environment, a time when disobedience will be judged swiftly and with justice; and yet in the end the subjects of the King will follow Satan and rebel against the Lord. A perfect environment cannot produce a perfect heart.

Read Revelation 20:1-6. The Millennium refers to the 1,000-year reign of Christ over the earth. Now refer to the attached **“Comparison of Christian Millennial Teachings.”** Matt used this in his sermon. Read through a quick summary of each position stated below:

1. Post-tribulational Premillennialism

This view sees the rapture as occurring simultaneous to the return of Christ at the end of the Tribulation. The rapture refers to the event of both dead and living believers being “caught up” together in a moment to meet Jesus in the air.

2. Pre-tribulational (dispensational) Premillennialism

This view believes the second coming of Christ and the subsequent establishment of the millennial kingdom, is to be preceded by a seven-year-long period known as the “Tribulation,” which is the earthly activity of the Antichrist as well as the outpouring of God's wrath on mankind. During this time, the nation of Israel will be saved and restored to a place of preeminence in the millennium. This means that Israel will have a special function of service in the millennium that is different from that of the Church. This view holds that the rapture of the church occurs before the tribulation.

3. Amillennialism

The 1,000-years is symbolic of a long period of time. This view interprets Old Testament prophecies of a millennium as being fulfilled spiritually now in the church. The prefix “a” in amillennialism means “no” or “not,” so no millennium following Christ's return. Amillennialists believe that Christ is now sitting on the throne of David and that this present church age is the kingdom over which Christ reigns.

4. Postmillennialism

This is the belief that Christ returns after a period of time, but not necessarily a literal 1,000 years. Those who hold this view believe the kingdom of God is being extended in the world now through the preaching of the Gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of individuals, and that the world eventually is to be Christianized and the return of Christ is to occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace, commonly referred to as the millennium.

Which millennialist view of Christ's 1,000-year reign do you support? Why?

The Removal of Satan

Reread Revelation 20:1-3. What is the purpose of bounding up Satan for 1,000 years? Now take a step back and ponder what this earth will be like with the removal of Satan. Describe your thoughts.

The Reign of the Saints

Reread Revelation 20:4-6. John gives us an exhilarating view of one of the aspects of the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on earth for you and me: as saints, we will reign with Christ. What are your thoughts on what we will be ruling here on earth?

The Release of Satan

Read Revelation 20:7-10. What will happen when the thousand years are over? What will Satan do and how many people does he gather? What is their strategy and how does God deal with them?

What is the purpose of the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ here on earth? And...what could be the reason that in a perfect world, governed by Jesus and free of temptation, many people will align with Satan? When given a choice they opt to not serve the Lord. Are you surprised? Discuss in your community group.

Where will the devil be cast? What will happen to him and how long will this last? Read Isaiah 14:12-19. Who is referenced by this passage? Now read Ezekiel 28:12-19. How does the Lord describe Satan before he rebelled? Why did Satan's heart become proud? How does it end for the devil?

The Resurrection of the Unjust

There will be a second resurrection, and the unsaved will be raised and will stand before God's judgment. Don't confuse this Judgment at the Great White Throne with the Judgment Seat of Christ, where believers will have their works judged and rewarded. At this judgment, there will only be unbelievers, and there will be no rewards. Heaven and earth will flee away, and no place will be left for sinners to hide. All must face the Judge. And the Judge is Jesus Christ, for the Father has committed all judgment to Him. These lost sinners rejected Christ in life; now they must be judged by Him and face eternal death.

Read Revelation 20:11-15. Describe in your own words what occurs in this passage. How are the dead judged? Read Romans 1:18-20. Is there anyone with a valid excuse? Or righteous?

Reread verses 12-13. Why do our actions in this life matter? Is this a conflict with the understanding that we are saved by grace, and not by works (Ephesians 2:8-10)? Explain.

Why is Revelation 20:15 the saddest verse in all the Bible? Was it avoidable? How?

Judgment Seat of Christ for Believers

The Great White Throne Judgment is for unbelievers and will result in being thrown into the Lake of Fire for eternity. Believers have eternal life but will be judged separately at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Read Romans 2:6-8, 14:10-12; and 2 Corinthians 5:10 and describe this judgment and how believers will be rewarded.

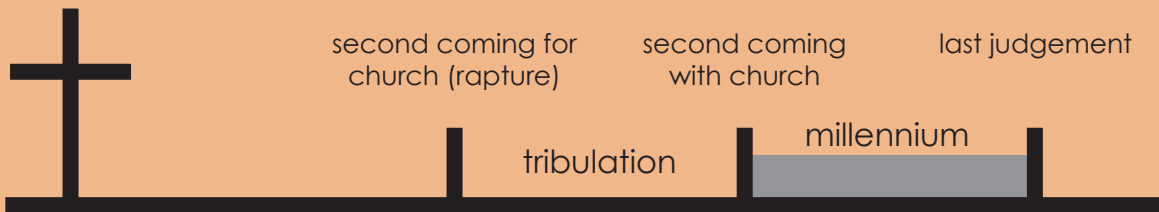
COMPARISON OF CHRISTIAN MILLENNIAL TEACHINGS

First Coming of Jesus

Eternity



1. Post-tribulational Premillennialism



2. Pre-tribulational (dispensational) Premillennialism



3. Amillennialism



4. Postmillennialism