



New Barna Data: Young Adults Lead a Resurgence in Church Attendance



~ At a Glance

- ***A historic reversal:*** *For the first time in decades, younger adults—Gen Z and Millennials—are now the most regular churchgoers, outpacing older generations, who once formed the backbone of church attendance.*
- ***Why it matters:*** *This shift signals a new opportunity for ministry. Younger adults are showing spiritual curiosity and a desire for belonging—but even as they attend more often than older adults, they still attend less than half the time, so every touchpoint matters.*
- ***The leadership challenge:*** *Weekly rhythms can no longer be assumed. Church leaders will need to reimagine discipleship pathways, relational connections and volunteer engagement in ways that resonate with a younger majority.*

New research from Barna Group, as part of their ongoing State of the Church initiative with Gloom, reveals a surprising shift: Millennials (1981 and 1996) and Gen Z (1997 and 2012) are driving a resurgence in church attendance. As reports emerge of spiritual interest, rising faith activity, signs of revival—including Barna’s analysis of the recent rise in commitments to Jesus—churchgoing frequency is another improving trend among Millennials and Gen Z in the U.S. While overall church attendance trends have been flat in recent years, the return to church among the next generation stands out as a powerful sign of rising openness to faith.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Introduction

> The author of *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* is John the Apostle, who authored The Gospel According To John, 1st, 2nd, 3rd John.

> Date Written: **A.D. 95**

> **Title:** **REVELATION** - in Gk. *apokalupsis*, from which the English word “apocalypse”- which is *disclosure of that which was previously hidden or unknown*. A better title comes from the first verse *Apokalypsis Iesou Christou*, “Revelation of Jesus Christ.”

> **Four Separate Interpretations of Revelation:**

#1- The **Spiritual (symbolic or idealist) view** maintains that Revelation is not a predictive prophecy but a symbolic portrait of the cosmic conflict of spiritual principles. In this way the book is divorced from the realm of history and placed exclusively in the realm of ideas.

#2- The **Preterist view** (the Latin word *praeter* means “past”) also denies the prophetic aspect of the Apocalypse, limiting it solely to the events of the first century. It is a symbolic description of the Roman persecution of the church, emperor worship, and the divine judgment of Rome.

#3- The **Historicist view** approaches Revelation as an allegorical panorama of the history of the (Western) church from the first century to the Second Advent. The lack of objective criteria combined with the changing historical climate from one generation to another has led to a wide range of conflicting interpretations within this school.

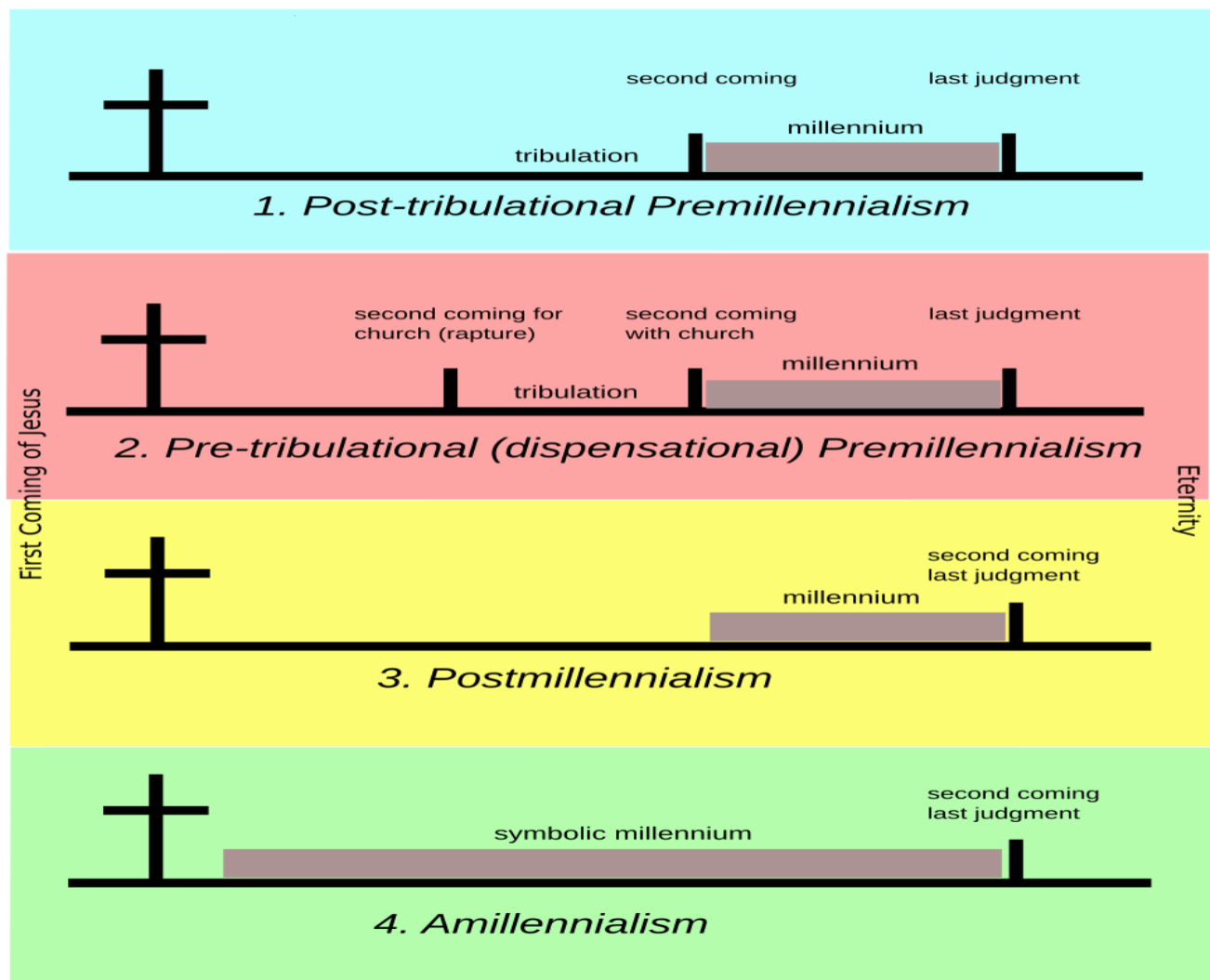
#4- The **Futurist view (this is the right view - Calvary Chapel)** acknowledges the obvious influence that the first-century conflict between Roman power and the church had upon the themes of this book. But it also accepts the bulk of Revelation (chapters 4—22) as an inspired look into the time immediately preceding the **Second Advent** (the “Tribulation,” seen as seven years 6—19), and extending from the return of Christ to the millennial kingdom on earth, then all believers go to the new heavens, new earth, and the new Jerusalem (19—22).

According to this view, the Apocalypse centers around the second advent of Christ who will return in power and glory as the Judge of all who rejected His offer of salvation. Futurists attempt to discern the literal meanings behind the symbolism of Revelation whenever this is permitted by the context or by comparison with other Scripture.

> **Theme:** As GENESIS is the book of BEGINNINGS, REVELATION is the book of CONSUMMATION. In it, the divine program of redemption is brought to fruition, and the Holy name of God is vindicated before all creation. Jesus Christ is revealed in glory. In Revelation Jesus Christ is seen in relationship to time as He “Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come” (1:4). He is related to the Church (1:9-3:22), the tribulation (4:1-19:21), the millennial kingdom (20:1-10), and the eternal state (20:11-22:21).

Generally speaking, proponents of the first three views are postmillennial or amillennial, while futurists are premillennial. Postmillennialists believe that the spread of the gospel will lead to golden age of peace on earth followed by the return of Christ; amillennialists believe that the Christian’s present heavenly position in Christ is the true “millennium,” not an earthly kingdom. . .¹

Comparison of Christian millennial teachings



> **Key Verses:** Revelation 1:19-20- *Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.*

¹ C.I. Scofield, *Bible Commentary Notes*, p. 1526

Revelation 19:11-16 - *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

> **Revelation Outline:**

I) **The Things Which You Have Seen (1:1-20)**

- The Vision of the glorified Christ

II) **The Things Which Are (2:1-3:22)**

- Letters to the Seven Churches
(Counsel, Correction, Course of History)

III) **The Things Which Will Take Place After This (4:1-22:21)**

- Worship before God's Heavenly throne (4:1-5:14)
- The Tribulation (6:1-18:24)
- The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (19:1-21)
- The Millennium (20:1-10)
- The Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15)
- The Eternal State (21:1-22:21)

“The Things Which You Have Seen!”

Revelation Chapter 1

Introduction: In this chapter we have the **VOICE, VISION AND VICTORY** of our Lord and Savior JESUS CHRIST!

> **Chapter 1 outline:**

- (v1-3) *The Testimony of Jesus Christ!*
- (v4-8) *The Message to the Seven Churches!*
- (v9-20) *The Vision of Jesus Christ!*

> **(v1-3) The Testimony of Jesus Christ!**

(v1-2) John bore witness to three things: (1) The **WORD OF GOD**; (2) the **TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST**; (3) to **ALL THINGS** that John saw.

(v3) How can we get BLESSED? By **READING, HEARING & KEEPING** “the REVELATION.” *Blessed means Happy are you!*

> (v4-8) The Message to the Seven Churches!

(v4) The Biblical significance of the number “SEVEN”: Seven speaks of that which is COMPLETE and that which is REPRESENTATIVE.

- “Seven Spirits” refers to the completeness of the Holy Spirit (O.T. ref. - Isaiah 11:1-2 - *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.*

1) *The Spirit of the LORD*

2) *The Spirit of wisdom*

3) *The Spirit of understanding*

4) *The Spirit of counsel*

5) *The Spirit of power*

6) *The Spirit of knowledge*

7) *The Spirit of the fear of the Lord*

(v5a) JESUS IS:

- “the faithful witness” – that trustworthy martyr (*witness - Gk – martus*);

- Jesus said in John 5:31-37 - *"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the*

Father has given Me to finish — the very works that I do — bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me.”

- the “firstborn from the dead” – *firstborn - Gk. Prototokos – first in preeminence;*

- FIRSTBORN defined: In Colossians 1:15, Jesus is described as the “*firstborn over all creation,*” indicating that He existed before creation and actually participated in the creation process (John 1:3). His unique birth to the Virgin Mary is depicted by the expression, “*brought forth her firstborn son*” (Matt 1:25). The phrase, “*firstborn from the dead*” (Col 1:18; Rev 1:5), refers to Jesus' resurrection, which assures victory over sin and death to all who trust in Him.

Paul's description of Christ as “*firstborn among many brethren*” (Rom 8:29) refers to His exalted position as head of the Church. Because of His atoning death and resurrection, Jesus Christ heads a new spiritual race of twice-born men and women (Col 1:18). The author of Hebrews foresees a joyful gathering of “*the church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven*” (Heb 12:23). (from Nelson's Bible Dictionary)

- “the ruler over the kings of the earth” (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev 17:14; 19:16 - *And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*)

(v5b-6) **JESUS LOVES us and has washed us from our sins in His own blood! JESUS has made us kings and priests to His God and Father. JESUS is to receive GLORY! JESUS has DOMINION! (Dominion – Man – Genesis 1:26-28; Daniel chapter 7)**

(v7) **Here is the mention of CHRIST 2ND COMING! – “coming with clouds” – speaks of all the saints returning with Christ to establish His Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 19:11-21); this event will be seen by the whole world and a repentant Israel (Dan. 7:13; Zech. 12:10-12 - "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem . . . also Matt. 24:30-31).**

(v8) God the Father is called **“Alpha and Omega”** in Revelation 1:8 and 21:6; this name is also applied to His Son in Rev. 1:11; 22:13; thus identifying Jesus as the second person of the Trinity.

- **Let’s understand the terms:**

(1) **“who is”** – at the present time, Jesus is **the glorified Christ!**

(2) **“who was”** – past time, the first coming of **Christ as Savior! (Lamb of God)**

(3) **“who is to come”** – future time, the **2nd coming of Christ! (Lion from Tribe of Judah)**



> **(v9-20) The Vision of Jesus Christ!**

(v9-11) John hears the VOICE of Jesus Christ!

- *John is our brother and companion in:*

- (1) tribulation;
- (2) the kingdom;
- (3) and patience of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:1-9);
- (4) receiving the word of God;
- (5) for the testimony of Jesus Christ!

- The *Isle of Patmos* was a rugged volcanic island off the coast of Asia Minor 10 miles long and 6 miles wide. (PATMOS VIDEO)

John was told, **“what you see, write it in a book and send it to the seven churches.”**

(v12-16) John receives the VISION of Jesus Christ! John sees seven golden lampstands and the Son of Man. These golden lampstands represent the churches and Jesus is in their midst.

~ **Observe the description of the Son of Man:**

- *“the gold band”* – Christ is our High Priest!
- *“white hair”* – Christ is eternal!
- *“eyes like a flame of fire”* – Christ is all seeing!
- *“feet like fine brass”* – Christ walks in judgment!
- *“voice as the sound of many waters”* – Christ is the final authority!
- *“out of His mouth went a two-edged sword”* – Christ is the Word of God!
- *“His countenance was like the sun shining”* – Christ is never changing, full of power!

(v17-20) John is touched by the VICTORY of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Jesus has the keys of hades and of death (Luke 16:19-31; Mt. 16:18).

~ **John is to:**

- ***“Write the things which you have seen”*** – Chapter 1

- ***“Write the things which are”*** – Chapters 2 & 3 (the things of the church present & future)

- ***“Write the things which will take place after this”*** – Chapters 4 – 22

(The Greek for *after this* is *meta tauta* which is found in Revelation 4:1 -

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

After this speaks of the events that will take place after the rapture of the church, in chapters 4 and 5 the church, the bride of Christ is found in heaven, then starts the 7-year tribulation on earth, which is described in Revelation chapters 6 – 19, fulfilling the 70th week of Daniel (Daniel 9:24 -27).