

Jesus & The End Times

Lesson 2 – Different Perspectives of the End Times

1. Understanding the Four Major Perspectives looking at the End Times

A. Each unique perspective is an “End Times” lens people wear to understand how events may unfold in the future.

- There are very godly, highly educated people who wear each lens about the End Times.
- Those that wear a different lens than you are not heretics.
- All different lenses agree on the work of Jesus on the cross and His second coming.
- The differences are the details in between these two events: The Cross & The 2nd Coming.
- Each view seeks to describe the timing of Jesus’ Second Coming and the biblical description of His thousand-year reign on earth. This is where we get the term “Millennial Kingdom” This is why each view has the word “millennial” in it. It is all a millennial perspective.

All have listed in their Millennial views:

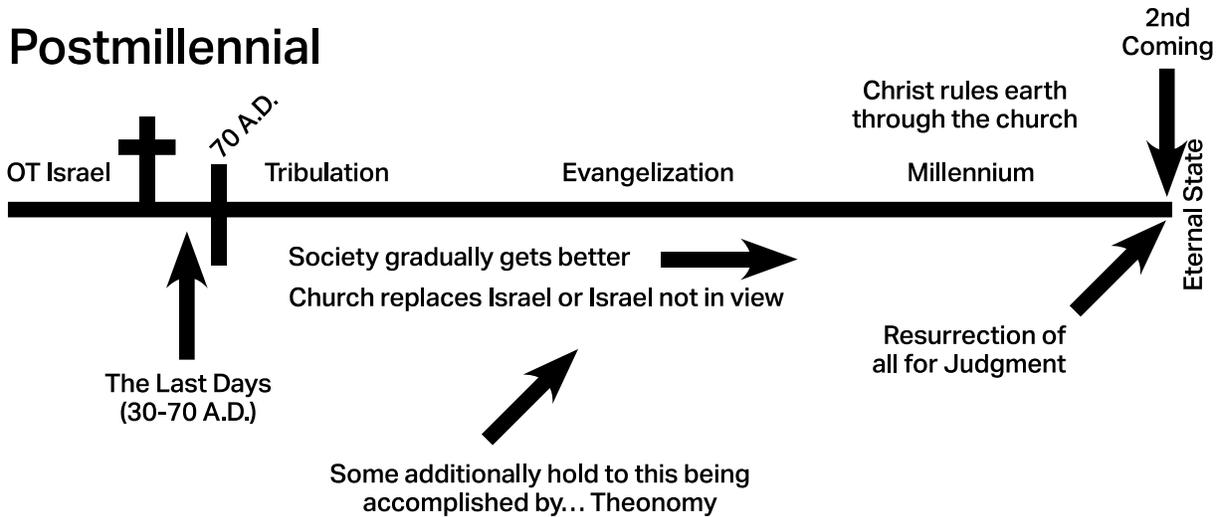
- Christ’s first Coming
- N.T. Church Age
- Satan Bound and cast out
- Millennial Kingdom
- Great Tribulation
- Israel converted to Christ
- Satan Loosed to lead Gog & Magog
- Antichrist & Armageddon
- Christ’s Second Coming
- General Resurrection
- Final Judgement
- Eternal Kingdom (beyond)

2. Understanding the four end times perspectives

Postmillennial / Amillennial / Historic Premillennial / Dispensational Premillennial

Postmillennialism

Postmillennial



Definition: *Postmillennialist believe that the Kingdom of God is now extended through teaching, preaching and evangelization, and missionary activities. The world is to be “Christianized”, and the result will be a long period of peace and prosperity called the Millennium. This will be followed by Christ’s 2nd Coming.*

Pros: This is the foundation to the New Testament hope, which Jesus promoted — and taught his disciples. In the Kingdom Parables, we see that the kingdom will grow incrementally to world dominance (Matthew 13:31–33). It also puts a very high emphasis on the power of the Gospel to transform the world.

Key Scripture: Matthew 13:31-33; Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 21:1-3

Amillennialism

Amillennial Chart on page 3

Amillennial



Definition: *The denial that an earthly millennium of universal righteousness and peace will either precede or follow the second coming Christ. The Bible predicts a continuous, parallel growth of good and evil in the world between the first and second coming of Christ. The Kingdom of God is now present in the world through His word, His Spirit and His church.*

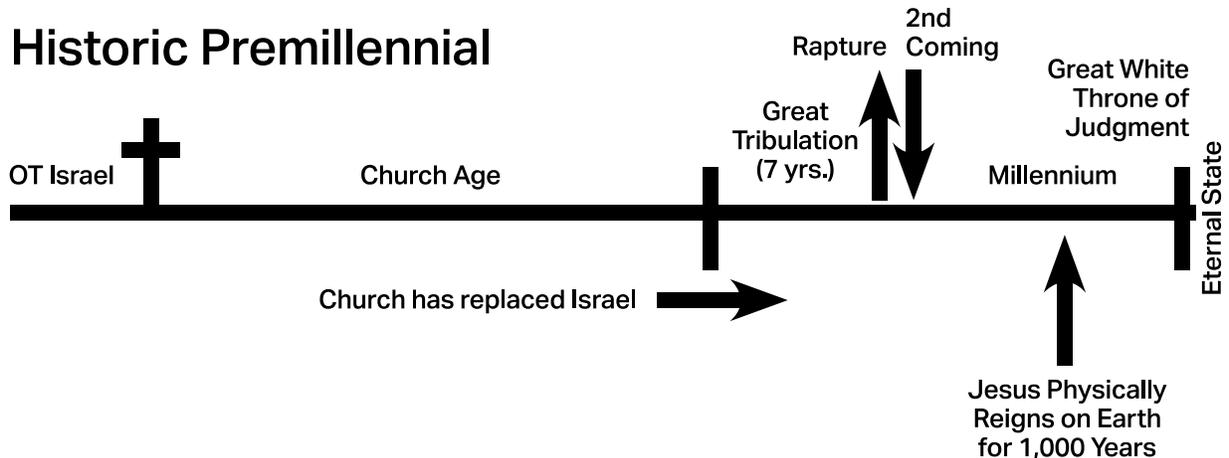
Pros: This view of eschatology maintains that the present reign of Christ (Revelation 20:4), began with His ascension to the throne of God, and that this is what the apostle Peter was speaking about in Acts 2:30-32. Christ instituted His kingdom reign by His death, resurrection, and ascension to the throne of David, and it will be fully realized and manifested in Heaven at His second coming.

Key Scripture: Revelation 20:4; Acts 2:30-32

Historic Premillennialism

Historic Premillennial Chart on page 4

Historic Premillennial



Definition: Historic Premillennialists hold that the return of Christ will be preceded by certain signs, then followed by a period of peace and righteousness in which Christ will reign on earth in person as King for one thousand years. Historic Premillennialists understand the return of Christ and the Rapture as one and same event happening simultaneously. They stand apart from dispensational Premillennialists, who see these events separated by the 7- year Tribulation.

Pros: This was the view held by two of the Apostle John’s disciples Polycarp & Papias. Difficult to “prove” with certainty the Rapture happening before the Second Coming of Christ. Creates a much more simple framework for the unfolding of future events and the Second Coming.

This was the prevailing view of the early church until after 300AD
 Historic premillennialism draws its name from the fact that many of the early Church Fathers (i.e. Irenaeus [140-203], who as a disciple of **Polycarp**, (69-155) who had been a disciple of the Apostle of John, Justin Martyr [100-165], and **Papias** [80-155])

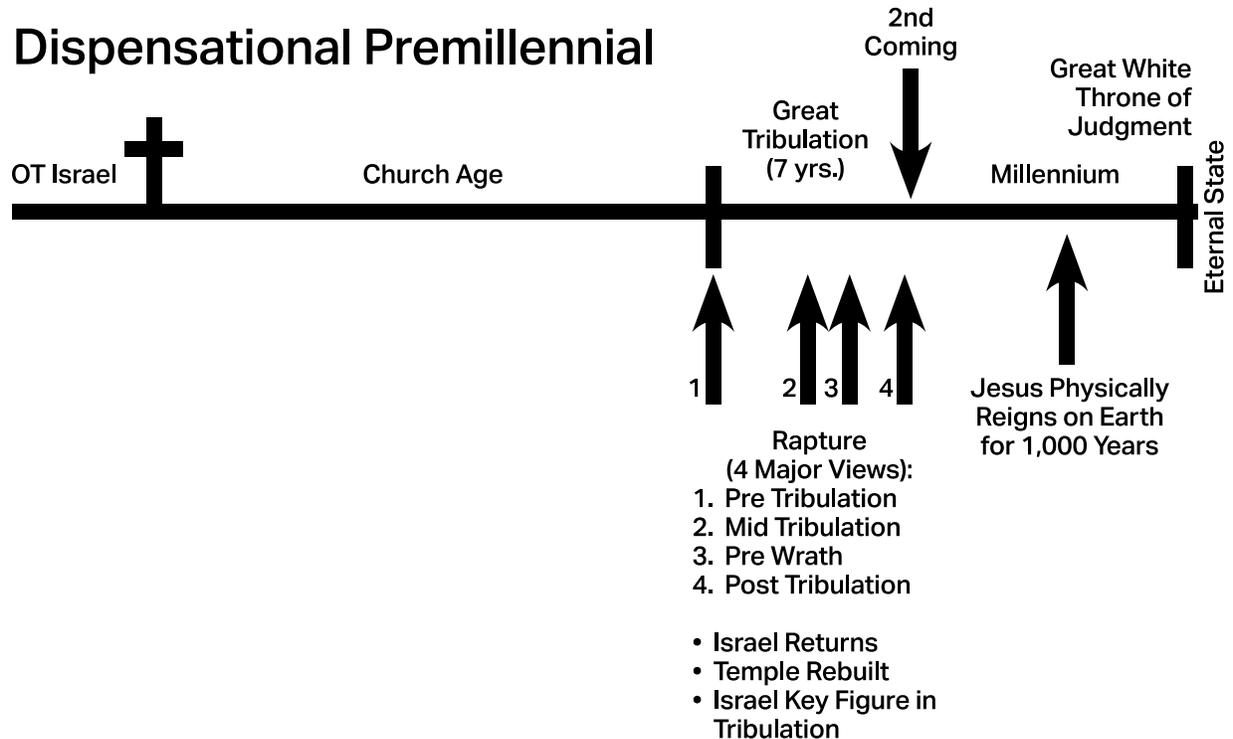
These two names are in bold because they were actual disciples of the Apostle John. We actually have writing from them. So think about it . . . the guy God used to write the book of Revelation – his disciples had this view. Were they right? We’re not here to debate. Just giving a Church history lesson.

Key Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

Dispensational Premillennialism

Dispensationalist: Basically believe God did unique things with mankind through certain time periods in history or in the future.

Dispensational Premillennial



Definition: *Dispensational Premillennialists hold to the idea of two stages in the coming of Christ. He will come first for His church (Rapture) and then with His church (Second Coming and 1000 year reign on earth). These two events are separated by a 7 year Tribulation of God's wrath on earth. They also make a very clear distinction between Israel and the church throughout history.*

Pros: This is the most literal reading of prophetic Scripture. The Millennial Kingdom is necessary so that all the promises to Israel can be fulfilled.

Key Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10;

Rapture Timing – In the dispensational premillennial point of view, there are several differing positions held concerning the **timing of the rapture and the tribulation.**

- **Pre-tribulation Rapture** – The church is raptured before the beginning of the tribulation.
- **Mid-tribulation Rapture** – The church is raptured midway through the tribulation.
- **Post-tribulation Rapture** – The church endures the tribulation and is raptured at the end.
- **Pre-wrath** – Popularized by Marvin Rosenthal, the church is raptured before the full brunt of God's wrath is released upon the earth in the tribulation.

PROPONENTS OF...

Historic Premillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism	Postmillennialism	Amillennialism
Irenaeus (AD 140-203)	John N. Darby (1850)	Jonathan Edwards	Augustine (AD 354-430)
Justin Martyr (AD 100-165)	C. I. Scofield	Charles Hodge	J. I. Packer
Papias (AD 80-155)	Lewis Sperry Chafer	George Whitefield	R. C. Sproul
Charles Spurgeon*	John Walvoord	A. A. Hodge	Tim Keller
George Eldon Ladd	Charles Ryrie	B. B. Warfield	Anthony Hoekema
Albert Mohler (SBTS)	Dwight Pentecost	Loraine Boettner	Sam Storms
James M. Boice	Tim LaHaye	John Calvin*	Jay Adams
John Piper	John MacArthur	James H. Thornwell	John Calvin*
Francis Schaeffer	Jerry Falwell	Doug Wilson	Louis Berkhof
D. A. Carson	David Jeremiah	Kenneth Gentry	Herman Bavinck
Bryan Chapell	Dan Anderson	William Perkins	Geerhardus Vos

*Pastors Charles Spurgeon and John Calvin were notoriously non-committal toward any one view. They were accused of advocating more than one view depending on the text they were expositing at the time. Instead, they emphasized, "Jesus is coming again... Be ready!"

Conclusions:

- No perspective answers all our End Times questions.
- They are all imperfect attempts to understand the End Times.
- They all attempt to interpret difficult biblical passages.
- They all have some things right as well as some things wrong.
- Are you committed to follow Jesus and remain faithful regardless how End Times events play out? Our faith and security is in Jesus not in our End Times understanding.