

Sermon Quotes
May 4th , 2008
End Times Series- The 4 Views

2 Peter 3:8 ESV “But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

4 Major End Times Views:

Historic Pre-millennialism.
Dispensational Pre-millennialism.
Amillennialism.
Post-millennialism.

Historic Pre-millennialism – First 3 Centuries

Historic Pre-millennialists believe in the literal return of Christ after the gospel is preached to all nations.

Chaotic events on the earth will increase: lawlessness, wars, famines, disease and earthquakes.

The evil always present on earth will become much greater and widespread, concentrating in the appearing of an evil “superman,” known as the Anti-Christ. He will lead with demonic power and wisdom and bring terrible persecution on the church.

There will be a great falling away, as many “professing” Christians abandon Christ when times get tough.

God will bring a Great Tribulation on the earth, such as the world has never seen.

The battle of Armageddon will occur and Christ will defeat the Anti-Christ and all who oppose Him.

After this the dead in faith are resurrected and true believers are raptured, to meet Christ in the air.

Jesus sets up His rule on earth for a thousand years (the millennium). During this time the earth will experience an unprecedented time of blessing.

At the end of this millennium, Satan will be loosed for a brief time, to test those still willing to rebel against the Son of God. After this rebellion is defeated, God brings the millennial age to a close.

Then comes the final judgment, where the Devil and all who have rejected Christ are thrown into the Lake of Fire.

All remaining believers are given glorified bodies. God creates the New Heaven and the New Earth.

The Earth is finally restored and brought into its created purpose, a place filled with men and women, now re-made in the image and likeness of God. All sin, death, and evil are gone forever.

Dispensational Pre-millennialism – 1800's to Present

Similar to Historic Pre-millennialism with two very major differences: The timing of the Rapture and the role of Israel.

Dispensational Pre-millennialism creates a 2-step process for Christ's return.

First, the Rapture, a secret appearing where saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Then after the Tribulation 7 years later, a dramatic appearing in the clouds to defeat the Anti-Christ and all His enemies.

This concept that separates the Rapture from the Second Coming only appears in this view.

Also, Dispensational Pre-millennialism views the Church and Israel as having two distinct identities with two individual redemptive plans.

This is the Church age. When the Church is raptured, Israel takes center stage during the Great Tribulation.

In this view, the Tribulation is much about the redemption of Israel, as many come to Christ through the preaching of the 144,000.

As in Historic Pre-millennialism, when Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation, he sets up a literal thousand-year Kingdom in Jerusalem.

After this, comes the Final Judgment and the New Heavens and New Earth.

Amillennialism – From 300 to 1500 AD

Amillennialism agrees with Historic Pre-millennialism, up until the point where Christ reigns *physically* on earth for a thousand years.

They interpret Revelations 20 to be more figurative and symbolic than literal. They see the millennium as a figurative period of long duration, but it is **taking place now**. How?

The "millennium" began when the Lord ascended and will end when He returns. He is not expected to literally reign on earth for a thousand years after He returns. He is reigning now *through the Church* and over the saints in Heaven.

After the "birth pangs" (wars, famine, etc.) the Anti-Christ appears, the falling away, the Great Tribulation, Christ will return in the clouds. God will usher in the Final Judgment and the New Heavens and New Earth.

Post-millennialism – 1600 to 1700's

This view is radically different from all the other views.

The postmillennialist believes that Christ will reign over the earth in a millennial period, but not in person. Instead he will reign through the Church, through the gradual increase of the Gospel and its power to change lives.

The Gospel will not just be preached to all nations but, essentially we will "Christianize" the globe. The world will experience a "millennium" of blessing during this time.

After this gradual Christianization of the world (hence...“post-“), Christ will return and immediately usher the church into the eternal state, after He judges the wicked. It is called *postmillennialism* because Christ will return *after* the millennium.

In order to believe this view, postmillennialists have had to address the Scriptures regarding the terrible times predicted in the New Testament, such as the “birth pangs” of Matt 24, the Anti-Christ, and the Great Tribulation.

They believe these prophecies are true, but were all fulfilled in and around AD 70, during the destruction of Jerusalem. In this view, things get better and better, not worse and worse.

“I don't wish to force anyone to believe as I do; neither will I permit anyone to deny me the right to believe that the last day is near. The words and signs of Christ compel me to believe this. For at no time in the history of the centuries since the birth of Christ do we see conditions like those at present. There has never been such building and planting in the world. There has never been such gluttonous eating and drinking as now...Who has ever heard of such commerce as we now see throughout the earth? There have arisen all kinds of art and sculpture, embroidery and engraving, the like of which has not been seen during the whole Christian era. In addition men are diving into the mysteries of things so that a boy of twenty knows more than twenty doctors formerly knew. There is such a knowledge of languages and all manner of wisdom...There was never such accuracy, understanding and judgment among Christians in earthly things as now—I forbear to speak of the new inventions, printing, firearms, and other implements of war...This compels me to believe that Christ will soon come to judgment...it must soon break in upon them.”

—Martin Luther,
400 years ago