



Magnolia Bible Church Men's Group - Prophecy Series

Lesson #5: Key Concepts Overview (3/3)

Dispensations, Israel, the Kingdom, the Bema, the Tribulation Period, **the Millennial Reign, and Eternity**

Thursday, October 6, 2016

People need to be reminded more often than they need to be instructed.

Samuel Johnson, 18th century English poet

This is the third of a 3-part series dealing with “key concepts” that serve as the foundation for much of this Prophecy Series. In this particular lesson we will be addressing the Millennial Reign (aka “1,000 Year Reign”) and Eternity. In addition to the debate surrounding The Tribulation, the Millennial Reign is a contested subject among Theologians. The Romans Catholics and Reformed Churches (i.e., Presbyterians and Lutherans) generally reject the 1,000 Year Reign; a viewpoint known as the amillennial position (the prefix “a” meaning “not”). Shown in **Figure 1** is a chart detailing the major positions held among Believers regarding End Times views, while **Figure 2** provides a graphical representation related to the Millennial Reign. The **premillennial position** assumes that Jesus will return before the 1,000 Year Reign, whereas the **postmillennial position** assumes that Jesus will return after the 1,000 Year Reign.

The position held by most Bible churches and taught at Dallas Theological Position is the premillennial position. However, it should be noted that we have brothers and sisters in Christ who hold to the other positions and use Scripture to support their positions. The postmillennial position was popular in the early 1900s, but after two world wars and the restoration of Israel as a recognized sovereign nation in the 1940s, its popularity has diminished significantly. Proponents of the postmillennial position taught that the Church would usher in the Kingdom based on our conversion of the nations and ability to bring about change in the world.

As in everything I have presented in the series, let's be careful picking sides. If we are going to argue about something, let's pick something worth the investment of our energy; weighty matters like sharing the Gospel with a lost world and saving the lives of unborn children. The position I take is a premillennial position where Jesus returns prior to the Millennial Reign, literally rules on earth for 1,000 years, and that Satan is bound (i.e. restrained) during this time period. Provided below is further explanation as to why I hold to this position, along with thoughts related to eternity. I encourage you to study and seek the position you best believe is reflected in the Scripture.

Further, please review the information provided in **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**, and specifically the End Time Chart provided in **Figure 1**. Listed below are some of the distinct features of the premillennial view:¹

- (Dispensational View) Israel and the church: views church and Israel as two distinct identities with two individual redemptive plans.
- Christ will return at the end of the Great Tribulation to institute a thousand-year rule from a holy city (the New Jerusalem). Those who come to believe in Christ during the Tribulation Period, including the 144,000 Jews, will go on to populate the earth during this time. Those who were raptured or raised previous to the Tribulation Period will reign with Christ over the millennial population.
- At the end of the Millennium, the "White Throne" judgment will occur after which Satan and all unbelievers will be thrown into the lake of fire. Christ and all saints will proceed into eternal glory.
- Major proponents of the premillennial position include John Walvoord, Charles Ryrie, Louis Sperry Chafer, J. Dwight Pentecost, Norman Geisler, Charles Stanley, Chuck Smith, and Chuck Missler.

¹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/mill.cfm>

	Dispensational Premillennialism	Historical Premillennialism	Amillennialism	Postmillennialism
Will Jesus return physically?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
When will Jesus return?	After a 7-year tribulation; before the millennium.	After tribulation; before the millennium.	Anytime; a detailed time frame is not important.	After the millennium.
Do the rapture and second coming of Christ occur at the same time?	No, they are events separated by either 7 years (pre-tribulation rapture) or 3½ years (mid-tribulation rapture).	Yes	Yes	Yes
Will there be a great tribulation?	Yes	Yes	The tribulation occurs any time Christians are persecuted or wars and disasters occur.	Tribulation is either the first-century Jewish-Roman War or the ongoing conflict between good and evil prior to millennium.
Will Christians suffer during the tribulation?	Christians are either raptured before the tribulation (pre-tribulation rapture) or 3½ years into the tribulation (mid-tribulation rapture).	Yes, Christians will go through the tribulation and endure suffering and persecution for the cause of Christ.	Yes, Christians will suffer and endure persecution until Jesus returns; persecution will increase in the end.	Yes, Christians are called to share the gospel, and tribulation will occur when that gospel is opposed.
Will there be a literal 1,000-year millennium?	Yes, after the 7-year tribulation, Christ will return and reign for 1,000 years.	Yes, after the tribulation, Christ will return and reign for 1,000 years.	No, the millennium refers to the reign of Christ in the hearts of his believers.	No, the millennium refers to a period of peace when the gospel reaches all people.
Who is saved?	Christians only	Christians only	Christians only	Christians only
Is the modern state of Israel relevant to the prophecies in Revelation?	Yes	No	No	No
When was this view most held?	Became popular about 1860. Has increased in popularity.	The earliest view of the end times, emerging at the end of the first century.	Popularized in AD 400. Continues to be accepted today.	May have been popular as early as AD 300. Less popular today.

Figure 1: Chart showing four views regarding End Times

Comparison of Christian millennial teachings

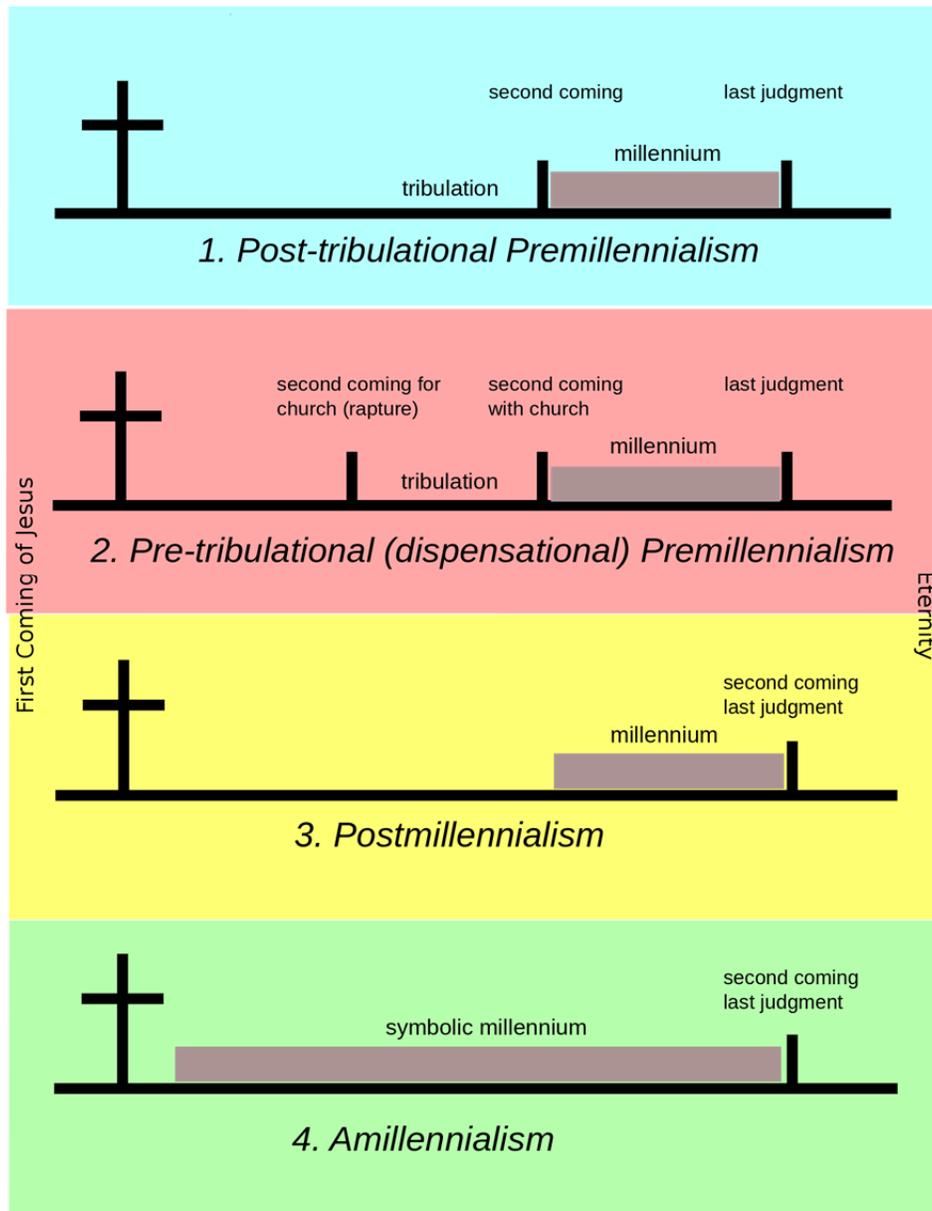


Figure 2: Four views regarding the timing of the Millennial Reign (pre, a-, and post)