

Sunday School, 5/8/22

Series: *New Testament Church History*

Lesson 90: "Christianity & Post-Modernism, Part 5:
Four End-Times Views Review"

Text: **Deuteronomy 10:14-18; 30:5-8**

Differing Views of the Millennium

1. Post-millennial: defined as a view of a "thousand years" (**Rev 20:4-6**), being a non-literal, long era of time, described as the "golden age" of Christianity; that Christ's return will come personally & visibly after the church has ushered in a world of righteousness with Christ as enthroned in heaven, reigning in His people on earth. Savoy Declaration (**1658**) contains one of the earliest creedal statements of postmillennial eschatology: "...we expect that in the latter days, antichrist being destroyed, the Jews called, and the adversaries of the kingdom of his dear Son broken, the churches of Christ being enlarged, and edified through a free and plentiful communication of light and grace, shall enjoy in this world a more quiet, peaceable and glorious condition than they have enjoyed."
 - a. adherents: John Owen (**1616-83**); Jonathan Edwards (**1703-58**); B. B. Warfield (**1851-1921**); Lorraine Boettner (**1901-90**); R. J. Rushdoony (**1916-2001**)
 - b. difficulties: [1] time for beginning, or when it has begun; [2] does the NT anticipate a future Christianized world? (**Matt 24:37-39; 2 Tim 3:1-5**); [3] the identity of the church as "suffering" is ignored or dismissed (**Matt 5:10-12; 2 Tim 2:12**); [4] how does one pray for this golden age to appear, which dismisses our praying for Christ's imminent return (**Titus 2:11-13; Rev 22:20**) [5] if beast & antichrist are spiritualized as systems & not personalities (**Rev 13**), casting them into lake of fire (**Rev 20:10**) is unnecessary, or at the very least, problematic.
2. Amillennial: a form of *chillegorism* (chillia + allegoria) holds an allegorical belief of Christ's reign upon earth, prior to Christ's return physical & visible return to earth for the final judgment. Puritan adherents presented Christ's kingdom as an "already/not yet" reality.
 - a. adherents: Augustine (**354-430**); Martin Luther (**1483-1546**); John Calvin (**1509-64**); R. C. Sproul (**1939-2017**); Kim Riddlebarger (**1954-**)
 - b. difficulties: [1] **Isaiah 11:6-10; 65:17-25** cannot be reconciled by a consistent literal or allegorical interpretation in the amillennial view; [2] binding of Satan (**Rev 20:1-2**) is problematic (**2 Cor 4:4; 1 Pet 5:8**); [3] loosing of Satan (**Rev 20:3**) problematic; [4] same difficulty as post-millennial difficulty #5
3. Dispensational Pre-millennial: generally believes that Israel & the Church are distinct entities, with different destinies. It also widely holds to an appearance of Christ before a 7-year worldwide tribulation, whereas the church is raptured (Greek, *harpazo*) prior to this tribulation in order to facilitate a continued fulfillment of OT promises to Israel by salvation through the Messiah. This worldwide tribulation will be followed by the

physical return of Christ with His saints, which will, in turn, mark the beginning of a literal 1,000-year reign upon the earth.

- a. adherents: John N. Darby (1800-82); J. Dwight Pentecost (1915-2014); Cyrus I. Scofield (1843-1921); Lewis S. Chafer (1871-1952); Hal Lindsey (1929-); John F. MacArthur (1939-); Ray Comfort (1949-)
 - b. difficulties: [1] inconsistent "literalism" (Rev 1:1, KJV; 4:1-2); [2] rigid insistence upon separate purposes, peoples, & destinies of Israel & the church (Acts 28:20; Rom 9:6; Gal 6:16); [3] presents restoration of temple/animal sacrifices in the millennial kingdom on earth (Heb 10:11-14); [4] four "stages" of 1st resurrection; because [5] Christ is not now seated upon His throne (Acts 2:30; Rev 5:13); [6] 144,000 Jewish evangelists are literally 144,000s (Rev 7); [7] if rapture not same as 2nd coming, how does Christ's return imminent? (1 Thess 4:15); [8] no post-millennial resurrection addressed.
4. Historical Pre-millennial: is a form of premillennialism that is generally post-tribulational, having many similarities to amillennialism, in that Israel and the church are not viewed as completely distinct at all times. The millennial kingdom is not restricted to 1,000 years, having begun in heaven at Christ's first coming and continues beyond His second coming. This view typically takes a stricter, chronological interpretation of Revelation.
- a. adherents: Papias (60-130); Justyn Martyr (100-165); John Bunyan (1628-1681); John Gill (1697-1771); George Müller (1805-98); C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892); D. A. Carson (1946-); John Piper (1946-); Albert Mohler (1959-)
 - b. difficulties: Entire pre-mil position (both historic & dispensational) rests upon the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. If there is a 1,000 year separation between the resurrection of the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead, then this view stands above the rest. If not, its greatest strength is its ultimate weakness.

Devilish, Post-Modern, Liberal View

1. Preterist: comes from the Latin, *praeter*, which is a prefix denoting something is "past" or "beyond." The two schools of preterism are partial and full. Full preterism is not considered orthodox, but in this post-modern era, is becoming more popular among liberal, post-modern theologies, i.e., the Emergent Church.
Full preterism's downfall: **2 Tim 2:16-18** *But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness,^{v17} and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,^{v18} who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.*

Determining a Faithful, Biblical Response