

Initial Conclusions from the last two classes (prior to looking at the "Millennium"):

1. The Bible speaks of a singular return of Jesus Christ.
2. The Bible speaks of this singular return of Jesus Christ including the resurrection of both the just and the unjust.
3. The Bible speaks of this singular return of Jesus Christ ushering in the Day of Judgment in which all shall be judged.
4. The Bible speaks of this singular return of Christ ushering in the new heavens and the new earth.
5. The Bible Speaks of this singular return of Christ ushering in the eternal state.
6. Christ's return is the culminating event of history in which He and His cause shall be vindicated once and for all.
7. Christ's return is the "blessed hope" of Christ's church - of every true child of God. We shall be vindicated with Christ and shall enter into glory and eternal rest.
8. The Bible's teaching on Christ's return is often accompanied with urgent exhortations to watchfulness and eager expectation.
9. The Bible's teaching on Christ's return presents a fearful prospect for the wicked, for those not trusting now in Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Christ's Return in Relation to the "Millenium"

Two Broad Positions on the Timing of Christ's Return

1. Christ will return _____ the "millennium."
2. Christ will return _____ the "millennium."

Everything hinges upon how we interpret Revelation 20:1-10, specifically, how this passage relates to the rest of Revelation, the rest of the New Testament, and the rest of the Bible.

Two Specific Schools of Thought within Each of These Positions

Before the "millennium"

1. Historic (classic) pre-millennialism***
2. Dispensational pre-millennialism

After the "millennium"

1. Post-millennialism
2. A-millennialism

Historic (classic) Pre-millennialism

1. Sketching out the Position

A. Historically this is a well represented position - the 2nd and 3rd century church; many solid men in the 19th century church; modern day proponents: G. Ladd, R. Gundry, D. Moo, D.A. Carson, W. Grudem, R. Mounce. While not the predominant position throughout the last two millennia, this position has had ample support in the history of the church.

B. Graphically

2. Biblical Support for the Position

- A. Revelation 20:1-10 in relation to:
 - (1) Revelation 19:11-21
 - (2) Revelation 20:11-15
- B. "This is the first resurrection" (20.5)
- C. Progressive revelation embraced

3. Positive Contributions of this Position

- A. There is the desire to take the Bible seriously, authoritatively and literally.
- B. There is only one return of Jesus Christ.
- C. There is only one people of God without distinction between Israel and the church.
- D. Recognition that the Kingdom and Rule of Christ has come.

4. Biblical and Theological Challenges to this Position

- A. Does Christ's return merely usher in a provisional state of affairs? How does this align with the dozens of other NT passages which contradict this?
- B. What is the millennium? It does not seem to be either "this age" or "the age to come," but some sort of "in-between age."
- C. Who inhabits the earth during the millennial reign of Christ? How do glorified saints dwell in a sin-cursed earth? What of marriage and propagation? Whom will Satan deceive at the end of the millennium?
- E. Revelation 20 is the only explicit reference to the millennium in the Bible. This passage is found in an apocalyptic book known for its profuse symbolism. Are we to take Revelation 20 (the less clear) and force all of the other NT passages (the more clear) on Christ's return through this grid? This is not using good rules of biblical interpretation.
- F. Augsburg Confession, 2nd Helvetic Confession