



FIRST BAPTIST
MERIDIANVILLE
REAL. FAMILY.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

THE
BAPTIST
FAITH &
MESSAGE
2000

Acts 1:6-11

.... And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Baptist Faith and Message 2000

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Key Texts

Isaiah 2:4

He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Key Texts

Matthew 16:27

For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 18:8-9

And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

Key Texts

Matthew 24:27, 30, 36, 44

For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ... Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ... But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. ... Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Key Texts

Mark 8:38

For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

Luke 12:40

You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Luke 17:22-37

And he said to the disciples, “The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, ‘Look, there!’ or ‘Look, here!’ Do not go out or follow them. For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man...

Luke 21:27-28

And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

John 14:1-3

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Philippians 3:20-21

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Colossians 1:5

Because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel.

Colossians 3:4

When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.



1 Thessalonians 4:14-18

For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Titus 2:13

Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9:27-28

And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

James 5:8

You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

1 John 2:28

And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

1 John 3:2

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

Revelation 1:18

And the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

Revelation 3:11

I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.

Revelation 20:1-22:13

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years ... And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.

HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM



What is historic premillennialism?

Historic premillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will precede the millennium and that the church has replaced the nation of Israel as God's covenant people. Also known as "covenant premillennialism," historic premillennialism treats the millennium as a literal future event. Most historic premillennialists believe that Christians will remain on the earth during the great tribulation. The tribulation will purify the churches by rooting out false believers.

According to historic premillennialists . . .

- God's promises of land and blessings to Abraham and his offspring were conditional promises, based on obedience. Israel's persistent disobedience negated God's covenant with them.
- God has maintained a covenant of grace throughout the Old and New Testaments with all who trusted in Him. These believers—embodied today in the church—are the true Israel (see Rom. 9:6-8; Gal. 6:16).
- Most references to "Israel" in Revelation refer symbolically to the church.

What Scriptures seem to support historic premillennialism?

- The revealing of the Antichrist precedes Christ's return—2 Thess. 2:3-4.
- The tribulation will root out false members from the churches—Rev. 2:22-23;
- The saints are on earth during the tribulation—Rev. 13:7
- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were conditional—Gen. 22:18; II Chron. 33:8; Is. 1:19-20; Jer. 7:6-7.
- The New Testament frequently uses "Israel" and "the twelve tribes" to refer to Christians—Rom. 9:6-8; James 1:1.

When has historic premillennialism been popular? Historic premillennialism seems to have been the earliest view of the end-times among post-apostolic Christians. Many early church fathers—including Lactantius (240-320), Irenaeus (130-200), Justin Martyr (100-165), and probably Papias (60-130), a disciple of the apostle John—embraced historic premillennialism. Modern supporters include scholars such as John Warwick Montgomery, George R. Beasley-Murray, David Dockery, Robert Gundry, and George E. Ladd.

AMILLENNIALISM



What is amillennialism?

Amillennialism is the belief that the millennium symbolizes Christ's reign in the lives of His people from the beginning of the church until His second coming. Rev. 19:11-21 portrays Christ's triumph over Satan through His death and resurrection. This triumph restrained the power of Satan on the earth (Rev. 20:1-3). The "first resurrection" (Rev. 20:4-6) symbolizes either the eternal life experienced by persons who die in Christ or the spiritual resurrection experienced by persons when they become Christians. When Christ returns, He will immediately defeat the powers of evil, resurrect the saved and the unsaved, judge them, and deliver them to their eternal destinies. According to amillennialists . . .

- The great tribulation represents calamities and persecutions that have occurred throughout church history.
- Most references to "Israel" in Revelation are symbolic references to the people of God on earth (compare Rom. 9:6-8; Gal. 6:16).
- In apocalyptic literature, numbers represent concepts, not literal statistics. For example, six symbolizes incompleteness, seven represents completeness, ten indicates

something that is extreme but limited, twelve represents the perfection of God's people, and one thousand symbolizes a great amount or long period of time.

What Scriptures seem to support amillennialism?

- The Bible frequently uses the number 1,000 figuratively—Ps. 50:10; 90:4; 105:8; 2 Peter 3:8.
- The first resurrection (Rev. 20:4) could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ—Rom. 11:13-15; Eph. 2:1-4.
- The Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of the saved and the unsaved will occur at the same time—Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:28-29.
- The saints are on earth during the tribulation—Rev. 13:7.

When has amillennialism been popular? Amillennialism became popular in the fifth century. Amillennialism has remained widespread throughout church history. Prominent amillennialists include the Protestant reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, as well as evangelical theologians such as E.Y. Mullins, Abraham Kuyper, G.C. Berkouwer, Herschel Hobbs, Stanley Grenz, and J. I. Packer. Many students of church history believe that the church father Augustine of Hippo was the first amillennialist.

DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM



What is dispensational premillennialism?

Dispensational premillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will precede the millennium and that God will still give the nation of Israel the land described in Gen. 15:18.

Dispensational premillennialism treats the millennium as a literal, future event. Most dispensational premillennialists are pre-tribulationists; they understand Rev. 4:1-2 to refer to "the rapture," when Christ removes Christians from the earth before the great tribulation begins. Some dispensational premillennialists, known as mid-tribulationists, believe the rapture will occur during the great tribulation. According to the dispensational premillennialists, . . .

- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional; therefore, the Jews will still receive the land described in Gen. 15:18.
- During the great tribulation, many Jews will turn to Jesus Christ.
- All references to Israel in Revelation refer to the nation of Israel.

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- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional—Gen. 15:7-21.
- God will keep Christians from the outpouring of His wrath during the tribulation—I Thess. 5:9; Rev. 3:10.
- The church is not specifically mentioned between Rev. 4 and 19.

When has dispensational premillennialism been popular? This view emerged in the 1800's among the Plymouth Brethren. Dispensational premillennialism increased in popularity in the late 1800's and has remained widespread throughout the 20th century. Proponents have included J. Nelson Darby, C.I. Scofield, Harry A. Ironside, Gleason Archer, Donald G. Barnhouse, Hal Lindsey, Chuck Smith, John MacArthur, Charles Ryrie, Charles Stanley, Norman L. Geisler, and Tim LaHaye.

POSTMILLENNIALISM



What is postmillennialism?

Postmillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will occur after the millennium. The millennial reign described in Rev. 20:1-6 represents a long time period when, through the preaching of the gospel, most of the world will submit to Jesus Christ. During this time, Satan will have no power over the earth, and evil regimes will collapse (see Rev. 19:19-20:3). A period of great tribulation may precede the millennium. According to postmillennialists . . .

- During the millennium, Christ will rule the earth through His Spirit and through His church; He will not, however, be physically present on the earth.
- The resurrection depicted in Rev. 20:4 represents the spiritual regeneration of people who trust Jesus Christ.
- The Second Coming of Christ, the final conflict between good and evil, the defeat of Satan, the physical resurrection of all people, and the final judgment will occur together, immediately after the millennium (Rev. 20:7-15).

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- Every ethnic group will receive the gospel before the Second Coming—Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10.
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- The Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of all people, saved and unsaved, will occur at the same time—Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:28-29.

When has postmillennialism been popular? The earliest postmillennialist writer was Joachim of Fiore (1135-1202). Postmillennialism became popular in the 19th century, partly because of that era's optimism about the future. Prominent postmillennialists include early church leaders such as Eusebius and Athanasius; preachers such as Jonathan Edwards and Charles Haddon Spurgeon; and theologians such as B. B. Warfield, Augustus H. Strong, Charles Hodge, R.L. Dabney, Loraine Boettner, and R.C. Sproul.

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Postmillennialism	Amillennialism	Historic Premillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Truett, former pastor of FBC Dallas • B.H. Carroll, the founder of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herschel Hobbs, former SBC President, Pastor, and Theologian. • Sam Storms Pastor, Author, Professor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Spurgeon • Al Mohler, President SBTS • Jason Allen, MBTS • Clint Pressley, SBC president 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W. A. Criswell, FBC Dallas • Danny Aiken, President SEBTS • Most Popular view since WWII

Key Points

The BF&M accentuates the purposeful meaning of history.

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end.

Key Points

Personal and visible return of Christ as the central core of Last Things teachings.

According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth;

Key Point

Bodily resurrection of all persons.

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Key Points

The returned Christ is judge of all.

; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness

Key Points

Briefly details 2 eternal destinies. Heaven and Hell.

The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.