

VIDEO: -OLOGY INTRO

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INTRODUCTION

Good Morning! Welcome to Fox Valley Christian Church!

We are coming to the end of our series on what we believe. We are going to be stepping into Eschatology. The study of the end times.

We are going to spend three weeks here. This week we are going to look at the Millennium, what is that and what does it mean for us now.

Next week we will look at Jesus' second coming.

Then the final week we will look at heaven and hell.

Here is what you need to know.

- What we are going to spend three weeks talking about is shown to us through the lens of prophecy. That makes it really difficult to have full certainty on the details. So we are going to do our best.
- Great scholars have dedicated their lives to studying this and they have come to different conclusions. All sides thinking they are right. We are going to do our best.

- God is victorious. No matter what anyone disagrees on, every agrees that God is victorious.

So, this week we are going to look at the Millennium. This is one of the most debated/disputed parts of the End of Times. Where you fall in your belief of the millennium decides how you view the end times. So ... we are going to look at the different views of the millennium and then I am going to break down Biblically why I believe what I believe. But remember, we are just doing our best to understand. The most important thing is that God is victorious.

THE MILLENNIUM

Revelation 20:1-6

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¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain.

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²And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,

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³and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

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⁴Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God,

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and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

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⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.

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⁶Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

This 1000 year period is referred to as the Millennium. Here is where we need to take a little caution. We see that the Bible specifically tells us 1000 years, BUT it is telling us 1000 years in the midst of prophecy. Which is most typically very figurative. We are also told in

2 PETER 3:8-9

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⁸But 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.

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⁹The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

So then, is it one day? What I am trying to say is that the exact amount of time is not what is important here. God is figuratively speaking about a long period of time, and we refer to it as the Millennium. Well, when does this Millennium occur and what is going to happen during it?

Here is where we see differences.

POSTMILLENNIALISM

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This view says that Jesus will return after the millennium. So the millennium will occur during the Church age. What starts the Millennium according to this view? The Church will grow the kingdom of God slowly but surely until most of the world is won. When this happens, then Satan will be bound and Christ will reign for long time (1000 figurative years). Christ will not physically come down and reign, it will be a heavenly reign awaiting His second coming. This long period of time will be an earthly paradise of sorts.

The problem, in my opinion, with this view is that we do not see evidence that the Church is going to have significant spiritual progress at any one point. We instead see Jesus telling us that few will respond and be saved.

MATTHEW 7:13-14

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¹³"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.

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¹⁴For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

In His parable, Jesus seems to be telling us that both good and evil will be together in considerable strength until the very end.

MATTHEW 13:24-30

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²⁴He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field,

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²⁵but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also.

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²⁷And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?'

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²⁸He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' So the servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them.'

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³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

For me, I have a hard time accepting that there will come a time ... before Christ's return ... where we will lead the World to a point where most of the World is won over for Christ.

PREMILLENNIALISM

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This says that Christ will return prior to the Millennium occurring and that His return will initiate the Millennium.

Those that defend this view, see the prophecy as being more literal than figurative. The belief is that Christ will return to Earth physically, bind Satan, and there will be a 1000 year period where Christ reigns on Earth. Upon His return there will

be the bodily resurrection and we who believe in Him will be in our glorified resurrection bodies, but living among the unresurrected lost. At the end of this 1000 year period, Satan will be loosed for a short time. Then, this will result in a war, the final defeating of Satan, and the second resurrection.

One of the problems with this view, is the purpose of it? Why would Jesus return and reign on Earth for a thousand years? Why would He not just take those that have been resurrected into their resurrection bodies and end it? Why just bind Satan?

Also, the New Testament does not talk about 3 ages, it only talks about the present age and the age to come. There is a transition from the current age, to the return of the Christ and the age to come. It is immediate and there is not an intermediate period.

DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM

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I have the hardest time accepting this one. This is the view you will see in the Left Behind series.

This view tries to take the most literal view of prophecy as it possible can. In this view there is a secret rapture that occurs to start the end of times. This is unbiblical. There will be a rapture, but it will not happen secretly. It will occur when Christ comes again. And when He comes the world will know. We are going to talk more about this next week.

There are way too many things wrong with this view. The way that Israel is viewed, the kingdom of God is viewed, and the way the Church is viewed are all very unbiblical. Of all the views this is the one that I would most adamantly say is false.

This view also, being premillennial, puts the 1000 year reign after Jesus return, but it has Jesus returning twice in His second coming.

AMILLENNIALISM

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This word means “no millennium” ... which is not an accurate representation of what is believed. Amillennials believe that there is a millennium, but it is believed to be a figuratively long time.

Amillennials, like Post Millennials, believe that the Millennium occurs prior to Christ’s second coming. The difference is when the Millennium begins. Where Post Millennials believe that it begins when the Church makes such progress that most of the known World is saved. Amillennials believe that the millennium began with the return of Christ and that the Millennium is now, the Church age.

Of all of them, this is the one that I am most aligned with. So I am going to explain why I believe what I believe and what that would mean for us now.

BINDING OF SATAN

The first thing with the Millennium that we have to deal with is the binding of Satan. What is this, how does it occur, and what will the world be like when Satan is bound?

Revelation 20:1-3

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¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain.

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²And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,

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³and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

What does the devil do that needs to be bound?

John 8:44

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⁴⁴You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

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When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Hebrews 2:14

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¹⁴Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

So Satan, the Devil, is the father of lies, a murderer from the beginning, and he has the power of death. When Satan is bound he will no longer have the power over death, he will no longer have the tremendous influence that he has in his lies.

Okay then, how does Satan's binding occur?

1 John 3:8

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⁸Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil; to destroy his lies and deal a death blow to death.

So Jesus came to testify to the truth and He has already

2 Timothy 1:10

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abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

So Jesus came so that through His death He might destroy Satan. The word used here for destroy can mean annihilate or abolish completely. But that same word can also mean “to set aside, to make ineffective, to render powerless.” So then, Hebrews 2:14 could be read that Jesus’ death render Satan powerless. It bound Him.

Listen to what Jesus says about binding:

Matthew 12:28-29

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²⁸But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

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²⁹Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Jesus says that the strong man, Satan, must be bound so that then his house can be plundered, and that is what Jesus was doing when He first came.

So then, the deathblow to Satan occurred during the incarnation, the life, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus. Satan is bound now.

But then ... why is there so much hurting in the world? Why is there suffering in the world? Why is there killings in the world? Why do we feel as if we are living in dangerous horrible times, if we in fact are living in a time when Satan is bound?

Because a perfect physical earth is not the purpose of Satan's binding and it is not the result of Satan's binding. The world is still under the curse of sin. The world and all that is in it is still in need of restoration. To be made new. That does not come with Satan's binding, that comes with the return of our Lord.

So then, what is the purpose of Satan's binding?

Revelation 20:3

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³and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, **so that** he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

His binding was SO THAT he might not deceive the nations any longer. Up to this point in history the nations of the world were engulfed in Satan's lies and deceptions and God was pulling Israel, pushing Israel, prodding Israel to get them to the point where Jesus came ... and what happens when Jesus comes?

2 Timothy 1:10

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¹⁰and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

Jesus abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, through the truth. Jesus when talking to Paul, describes Paul's mission to the Gentiles, to the nations ...

ACTS 26:18

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¹⁸to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

This does not mean that Satan has no effect on us. He still roams like a lion seeking to devour us. Sin is still active in this World. BUT, but, Christ has established a haven from death and Satan's lies. Christ has established the Church.

Jesus has bound the strong man, and when we (the Church, His body) preach the gospel and convert individuals, we are in effect plundering the strong man's house and carrying off his property. The millennium is now.

FIRST RESURRECTION

Revelation 20:4-6 talks about the first resurrection. We see in this, two categories of people 1) the martyrs beheaded because

of their faith 2) those who had not worshipped the beast or his image.

REVELATION 20:4-6

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⁴Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God,

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and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

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⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.

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⁶Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

The first group is a resurrection of those that are already dead. We see this because John refers to seeing the souls of those that have been beheaded. The second group are not shown as

souls, or being dead. They are those who had not worshipped the beast. The ones that are faithful to God.

Verse 6 tells us that those who have a part in the first resurrection will escape the second death, hell.

These are the ones saved from eternal punishment. So there seems to be redemptive power in the first resurrection.

John 5:24-29

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²⁴Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

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²⁵"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

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²⁶For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

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²⁸Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹and come out, those who have

done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

There are two resurrections being talked about here. The first resurrection, the one that brings redemption and restoration and the second resurrection when the tombs, the physically dead, will be resurrected to eternal life and eternal judgment. The second and final resurrection.

So the first resurrection that we see is when Jesus gave us life through His resurrection.

Romans 8:10-11

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¹⁰But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

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¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

When one believes in God and trusts Him, they are born again, made new, redeemed, restored, regenerated ... We who were dead are now alive.

REIGNING WITH CHRIST

The third thing we see in the millennium is reigning with Christ.

Revelation 20:6

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⁶Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

Jesus is reigning now, and we who are in Christ, reign with Him ... over Satan, and sin, and death.

Ephesians 2:5-6

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⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Colossians 3:1-4

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¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

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²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Revelation 5:10

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¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.

So then, reigning with Christ refers not to some future heavenly glory, but rather to sharing in Christ's victory over sin and death now. Satan's power over us as Christians is limited ...

1 John 4:4

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⁴Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

1 Corinthians 10:13

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¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

The Christian no longer fears death, it has lost its terror.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

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⁵⁵"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Christian has victory because we now know that

Romans 8:1

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¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

CHALLENGE

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Here is the big point.

Jesus bound Satan, he bound the strong man. But He didn't just bind the strong man. He raised us from the dead. He gave us new life and He empowered us. We are able to reign right now with Him, by realizing that death, and sin, and Satan's lies have no power over us. He has been rendered ineffective for us.

We must now plunder his house and we do that by making God known. By bringing God glory through speaking His truth to a world that is now able to hear Him and know Him.

I don't know about you, but this emboldens me and excites me. I do not look at this world and see a world that Satan is ruling victoriously. I see a world where Satan has limited power and it is our responsibility, as the body of Christ, to rise up with full force and strike while we have the chance. To make God known to as many people as we possibly can, while we still can.

PRAY

COMMUNION MEDITATION

Something here