

Millennialism

Post-Millennium

Christ comes at the end of one thousand years. The Church takes over the world and rules for the one thousand years.

1. The Kingdom of God is primarily a present reality.
2. Expects a conversion of all the nations prior to Christ's return.
3. An expectation of a long period of earthly peace termed the millennium.
4. The gradual growth of the Kingdom
5. At the end of the millennium there will be a time of apostasy and a flare-up of evil occurring in connection with the coming of Antichrist.
6. The millennium will end with the personal, bodily return of Christ.
7. The Lord's return will be followed immediately by the resurrection of all and the judgment of all.

Pre-Millennium

Christ comes before a literal one thousand years.

1. An earthly reign of Christ that is established by His second coming.
2. The earthly millennium will be dramatically and cataclysmically inaugurated by the second coming.
3. The millennium will be preceded by a deterioration, not an improvement, of spiritual, if not also social, conditions.
4. A "great tribulation" will immediately precede the millennium.
5. Christ's second coming will bring Satan and his helpers under control, binding them for one thousand years. Both resurrections are physical or bodily.

A-Millennial

There will be no earthly, thousand-year reign of Christ. It is now.

1. The second coming of Christ will inaugurate the final age and the final state for both believers and unbelievers.
2. The one thousand years of Rev. 20 are symbolical rather than literal.
3. Old Testament prophecies are less literal than most pre-millennialists consider them.
4. Does not anticipate a worldwide growth of righteousness that will extend to every area of society.
5. Believes in the imminence of Christ's second coming.

Kevin Earls

“Rapture” of the Church

Used mostly by pre-millennialists. (from the Lat. rapere, "to seize, caught up") 1 Thess. 4:15-17. The main differences center on the relationship of the time of the rapture (or translation from the earthly to the heavenly) to the tribulation period.

Post-tribulation rapture The whole Church will remain during the entire tribulation.

1. Elect will be gathered at end of tribulation. Mat 24:27, 29
2. Christians will be kept or guarded through the time of trouble.
3. Church meets Christ in the air and then returns with him.

Until the early nineteenth century (Darby) those believers who discussed the rapture believed it would occur in conjunction with the return of Christ at the end of the tribulation. (Held by George Ladd, Robert Gundry)

Pre-tribulation rapture The whole Church will be removed before the tribulation (3 1/2 or 7 years).

1. It will a "Great" tribulation; a period of transition while God deals with the Gentiles and prepares for the millennium; it is not for disciplining believers or purifying the Church.
2. A secret coming to snatch away the Church. Christ comes for his church before and then after comes with His saints. Resurrection of the dead in Christ also occurs.
3. Emphasis that the return is imminent. Lk 21:36; Rev 3:10

1 Thess. 5:9 "For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." Started in 1812. Started with 45 days but grew to seven years. First taught as a partial rapture.

This is "one of the major doctrines of dispensationalists, and leads them to adopt a negative attitude toward society. Those who hold this view have a narrow outlook toward the church and its mission, culture and education, and current events. Their version of Christ against culture has imparted to twentieth century evangelicals a spirit of withdrawal and of suspicion toward others." Rapture of the Church, article by R. G. Clouse in Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, page 910, W. A. Elwell; Editor.

(Held by: J. N. Darby, The Scofield Reference Bible, Dallas Theological Seminary, Talbot Seminary, Grace Theological Seminary, Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye.)

Mid-Tribulation Rapture The Church will be removed during the tribulation at a mid-point of 7 years after anti-Christ but before severe judgments. Based on a questionable interpretation of Daniel 9 and other passages. Otherwise similar to pre-tribulation comments.

Two-Part rapture A smaller representative portion of the Church (a group of overcomers) will be taken at the beginning of the tribulation with the rest of the church taken at the end. (Held by: George H. Lang, J. Leland Earls, Gordon Lindsey, Watchman Nee)

"There is a teaching abroad that everyone who is saved will participate in the rapture of the Church. The Scriptures, however, teach just the opposite. Jesus Himself said, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Lk. 21:36) Parable of the Second Coming, page 14, by Gordon Lindsey.

"the whole Church is not raptured at the same time: some will go in advance of others and some will follow afterwards," Come Lord Jesus, page 133, by Watchman Nee.

Kevin Earls