

**>>>>>> Lesson 07 <<<<<<<**

One comment I want to make before we jump back into our Rapture / Tribulation / Millennium discussion is –

Do NOT make up your mind on what is the correct millennialist view for you until we have completed our study and you have all the events and circumstances revealed.

As we continue thru our study, try to weigh the events against these different millennialist views, come up with questions, and we will try to answer them – in context and in scripture.

We may try to answer some questions this evening but there is no way we can possibly answer them all without the New Testament context and the Revelation context combined.

- 1) Let's get started with a quick review of ***Rapture and Tribulation***.
- 2) Again, the word rapture is not found in scripture.
- 3) It is a term that has been applied to the second coming and the events that will take place when it happens.
- 4) To be specific, the “rapture” is the term that has been applied to how Christians who are living and dead will be taken to heaven.
- 5) There are scriptures that mention what has commonly been called the “rapture”:

1 Thess 4:13-18 (NIV)

- 6) We also read two other scriptures that apply here, 1 Cor 15:51-55 and John 14:1-4
- 7) We also noted that none of these scriptures says anything about those who are not Christian.
- 8) Next the ***“Tribulation”***
- 9) Here are facts regarding the “hour of trial” or “Tribulation”
  - a) **First**, it is a future event or series of events.
  - b) **Second**, the tribulation is for a definite, limited time.
  - c) **Third**, it is a test or trial that will expose people for what they really are.
  - d) **Fourth**, the tribulation is universal in scope since it will come upon the whole world.
  - e) **Finally**, and most significantly, its purpose is to test “those who dwell on the earth.”
    - i) That phrase “those who dwell on the earth” and the phrase “inhabitants of the earth” are used many other places in Revelation. (cf. 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8,12,14; 14:6; 17:2,8).
    - ii) The phrase is generally understood to refer to unbelievers
  - f) Unbelievers will either pass the test by repenting, or fail it by refusing to repent.
    - i) Rev 6:9-11; 7:9-10,14; 14:4; and 17:14 describe those who repent during the Tribulation and are saved, thus passing the test.

## ***Revelation – NOTES – 2021***

---

- ii) Rev 6:15-17; 9:20; 16:11; and 19:17-18 describe those who refuse to repent, thus failing the test, and are damned.

(from The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Copyright © Moody Press and John MacArthur, Jr., 1983-2005.)

10) Going back to our verse in the letter to Philadelphia

### **Rev 3:10 (NIV)**

- 11) Some believe that the verse refers to times of great distress in general, the church's suffering through the ages.
- 12) Others interpret "***keep from***" here to mean that the church will go through the time of tribulation and that God will keep them strong during it, providing spiritual protection from the forces of evil.
- 13) The other way of looking at this promise is that it means there will be a future time of great tribulation from which true believers will be spared – "RAPTURE".
- 14) **Finally**, getting back to the **millennium**. This is the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth. We read about it in Rev 20.

### **Rev 20:4-8 (NIV)**

- 1) Now, back to the chart.
- 2) This chart attempts to layout the major parts of the end times as presented in Revelation and the current beliefs across the Christian world regarding how they will occur.
- 3) Obviously, each depiction begins with the cross on the left and eternity on the right.
- 4) Between the two, are the major events.
  - a) Tribulation
  - b) Millennium
  - c) Rapture
  - d) Second coming
  - e) Last Judgment – beginning eternity.
- 5) In this chart
  - a) **PRE** – means the second coming occurs **before** the 1000-year reign of Christ.
    - i) **Two Types!**
  - b) **POST** – means the second coming occurs **after** the 1000-year reign of Christ.
  - c) "**A**" (as in amillennialist)
    - i) "A" in this usage normally means no or not.
    - ii) Many amillennialists would prefer non-millennialist instead where non means NOW.
- 6) So, let's break the chart down further:
  - a) **Post-tribulational Premillennialism** – simply put,
    - i) Here,

- (1) The tribulation will occur
  - (2) Followed by the second coming
  - (3) Then the millennium,
  - (4) Then judgment and eternity.
- ii) If we apply this model to the promise to the Philadelphia church, it says that Christ meant that the
- (1) church **would** go through the time of tribulation
  - (2) that God will keep them and us strong during it
  - (3) providing spiritual protection from the forces of evil.
- iii) One other note here is that in order for this to work as described, there would possibly not be a “rapture” associated with the second coming.
- iv) Or, the rapture would occur and the millennium would begin immediately with the church as part of the rule.

b) **Pre-tribulational (dispensational) Premillennialism**

- c) In this view,
- (1) Second coming occurring with Rapture
  - (2) Tribulation
  - (3) Christ returns again – with the church
  - (4) Then the Millennium
  - (5) Then judgment and eternity.
- ii) In this view, the church will be spared going thru the tribulation entirely.
- iii) As the chart shows, then, there will be a second “Second Coming” :>)
- (1) With or without a rapture????
- iv) Followed by the millennium and the final judgment.
- v) This would obviously fulfill the promise to the Philadelphia church.
- vi) However, it does leave some other questions to deal with – in particular, the “second” second coming?
- vii) Another question to ponder – why would there be a second rapture or would there be?

d) **Postmillennialism** –

- i) In this scenario
- (1) The tribulation is not usually considered

- (a) There may be no tribulation
- (b) The tribulation could possibly be pre-millennium – i.e., happening now.
- (c) One comment I read indicated that it might be considered by some postmillennialists to occur at the end of the 1000-year reign before Christ's second coming.

- (2) The Millennium occurs.
- (3) Then the Second Coming
- (4) Finally judgment and eternity

e) **Amillennialism** –

- i) here we have a view that there is
  - (1) No millennium or,
  - (2) It is symbolic, and we are living in that time.
- ii) In this scenario, the second coming will occur when it occurs, and the last judgment will occur at that same time.
- iii) Again, the tribulation is not really addressed here.
- iv) I would assume the same comments regarding it that we just discussed in the Postmillennialist theology could be applied here.

- 7) As you may recall, I made the statement that I was told that the Churches of Christ did not believe in the (literal) 1000-year reign. i.e. they have the amillennialists point of view.
- 8) Now, before I open this up for discussion / questions, let me relay to you what I have found in regard to the Churches of Christ views.
- 9) I did some research on the subject and will say, there is (or was) some of truth in the statement that was made.
- 10) This is another one of those “debate” issues that used to split churches.
- 11) Here is what I have learned with the disclaimer that it may not be complete since I did not spend a lot of time researching many sources on this.
- 12) A major part of the information came from a fellow Mark Harris.
  - a) Lives in Dallas and claims to be “a student of the bible.”
  - b) Looking at other facts about him he seems to be able to speak to this reasonably
- 13) All this premillennial / postmillennial / amillennial debate seems to have started around the time the Churches of Christ split from the Disciples of Christ (Christian Churches) in 1906.
- 14) Before that, there were probably only postmillennial and premillennialist views as the predominant views – I base this on

## ***Revelation – NOTES – 2021***

---

- a) Alexander Campbell was postmillennial, as was the original stand of the Church.
  - b) However, Barton Stone was premillennialist. – 2001 article Restoration Quarterly.  
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/212872787.pdf>
  - c) As one would expect, they did not see this as a salvation issue and the two views appeared to coexist without problems.
- 15) Just prior to WW1, the view of many C of C leaders had changed to premillennial.
- 16) Prior to the split in 1906, one leader, R.H. Boll was advocating a premillennialist view and his writings were quite prevalent.
- 17) Starting in about 1918, many churches began to advocate the amillennialist view.
- a) This view says we are living in the non-literal 1000-year reign.
- 18) This became a topic of debate throughout the first half of the 20th century.
- 19) It came to a head in the 1930's when several leaders and one in particular by the name of Foy Wallace became "singularly opposed" to Boll's views.
- 20) The word HERESY was used to brand the premillennialist view and this all came to a head with a split in the Churches of Christ.
- a) Heterodox vs. Heresy comments!!!!
- 21) The debate raged and finally resulted in a split – premillennial and amillennial churches of Christ.
- a) There was actually a listing of premillennial Churches of Christ separate from amillennial Churches of Christ.
  - b) This ended in the 2000 edition of the directory Churches of Christ in the United States, published by Mac Lynn, congregations holding premillennial views were no longer listed separately.