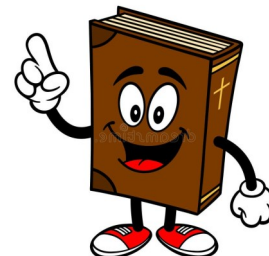


BYOB&B: Thinking Faithfully Out Loud

A Bible Study sponsored by: First Lutheran Church, First United Methodist Church, Faith Presbyterian Church, Monmouth College Chaplain's Office

Session 7: Think Faithfully Out Loud about the End Times

Tuesday, November 18



Scripture: Revelation 21:1-8

What imagery is John of Patmos using to describe what God is up to?

Why is John of Patmos conveying this message?

Connecting Scripture to today

What shapes your concepts of the End Times?

What informs your concepts of God's judgment of humanity?

What informs your understanding of when God will do something definitive to, as John says, make all things new?

Definitions as we begin this conversation

Eschatology

Heaven

Hell

End Times

Judgment

Purgatory

Sheol

Revelation

Apocalypse

Second Coming

Predestination

Universalism

Tribulation

Pretribulation Rapture

Mid-Tribulation

Post-Tribulation

Millennialism

Premillennialism,

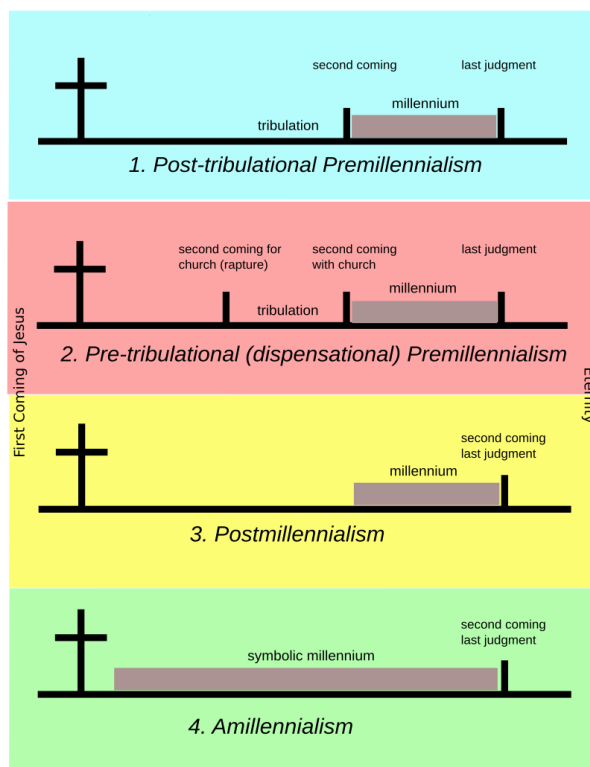
postmillennialism,

amillennialism

preterism

Dispensationalism

Comparison of Christian millennial teachings

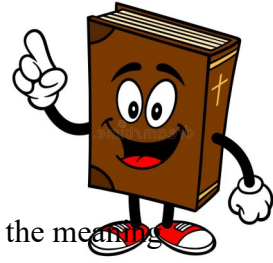


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Development of End Times theologies

One reason we have belief systems in God, or gods, or spiritual things, is it helps explain the meaning of life, and the meaning of life is understood through a lens of what will happen after we die.

Ancient Jewish people believed in a concept called Sheol; ancient Greco-Roman philosophies had a concept of Hades

Notions of resurrection pre-date Jesus, but no one personally experienced resurrection, until earliest disciples claimed Jesus was resurrected and began changing their lives because of that news.

Earliest Christians connected Jesus' resurrection to a notion of God bringing about an end of this life and this world and bringing about a new life or a new world — this hope created endurance and meaning through the suffering of this world. In other words, all this suffering has to mean something and that something had to mean bad people who cause suffering of others will be eternally punished and good people who serve the will of God will be rewarded with eternal paradise.

Never any agreement from the beginning how this will actually happen.

Paul's earliest writings seem to imply Jesus is returning quickly

Later New Testament writings seem more concerned with setting up ecclesiastical systems and long-term belief systems because quickly is becoming unknown.

As church moved from underground to religion of empire, different perspectives developed as well that became dependent on Empire rules, Empire behaviors,

Medieval philosophical writings and artwork, such as Dante's Inferno, become more influential for defining post-life punishment/paradise constructs than scripture.

Enlightenment era philosophies lead to religious movements reinterpreting verses and crafting spiritual movements based on Natural Theology; systems of logic become more influential in creating new systems of understanding the End Times, like Dispensationalism (constructing of Divine Eras)

Various 'prophets', 'gurus', 'spiritualists', declare different dates for when the "Second Coming" will definitely happen — to date every one of these has been completely wrong.

How does Eschatology/End Times Theology influence ...

How we interact with nature

How we interact with our neighbor (close proximity or global)

How we interact with our God

Closing Prayer