

Sunday, January 23, 2022 pm

## STUDIES IN PREMILLENNIALISM (11) Does This Doctrine Really Matter?

We have devoted several lessons to the doctrine of premillennialism. It is my hope that we have established that this is a false doctrine. In this final lesson, I want to address why belief in this doctrine matters. I also want to talk about fellowship with those teaching false doctrines like this.

There are some who say concerning this doctrine, that even though we believe differently, we can still be in fellowship with one another. Some apply this on an individual level, while others apply to collective teaching (i.e. What a church teaches on this subject).

### I. What are the doctrinal consequences of premillennialism?

a. Throughout our examination of this series, we have noted numerous doctrinal concerns. Let's begin by reminding us of some of the consequences of premillennialism.

b. Some of the consequences:

#### i. *It is bad Bible interpretation*

1. It is based first on apocalyptic (highly figurative and symbolic) passages. These are passages with fantasy TYPE visions (they are NOT fantasy) upon which they build their doctrine.
2. We have noted some KEY foundational doctrines that the rest is built around – mainly Jesus is to return to earth and reign 1000 years in Jerusalem on the literal throne of David. Everything else is built around this premise.
3. It takes many passages of scripture out of their context – both immediate and prophetic. It takes Daniel 9 (the 70 weeks) and Matthew 24 out of their context which culminate with the destruction of Jerusalem – not something yet future.
4. It takes the primary message of Revelation away from its original audience – the 7 churches of Asia (Revelation 1:4ff).
  - a. We devoted some time to discussing the nature of apocalyptic literature – a genre that used visions to lend encouragement during a time of persecution.
  - b. You CANNOT properly interpret the book of Revelation without making it useful to its intended audience – that is why addressing the persecutions of Rome and/or Jerusalem needs to be considered in the various visions.
  - c. And of course, do not forget the ultimate lesson – God wins!
5. It reads into them their speculative theories – this is *eisegesis* instead of exegesis. Eisegesis is the process of making the Bible say what you WANT it to say instead of desiring to learn from it what its intended meaning is.
6. And in some of these challenging passages there is inconsistency in interpretation – they make literal the elements they want to be literal, and accept the rest as figurative or representative.
7. When it comes to interpreting the Bible, we know that we need to respect its boundaries – 1 Corinthians 4:6, Revelation 22:18-19, etc.

#### ii. *It corrupts the message of scripture concerning God's plan of redemption through Christ and His kingdom.*

1. For some it makes Christ's first coming incomplete, or worse, a failure – i.e., Jesus failed to set up His kingdom as intended (not all premillennialists believe this, but those that do not still have a problem proving that such was God's plan).

2. The errors perpetrated by this doctrine are grand – on the level of theistic evolution, Calvinism, disregarding the importance of baptism and once saved, always saved.
- iii. **Misunderstands the scripture's teaching about the nature kingdom**
1. Premillennialism is materialistic – desiring a material kingdom
  2. That was the very thing the Jews of the first century wanted which cause them to reject Jesus
  3. Yet Jesus taught explicitly the kingdom is spiritual (John 18:36, Luke 17:21, etc.)
  4. Furthermore, we established that God NEVER intended His kingdom to be a material kingdom. We examined the spiritual nature of many OT prophecies.
- iv. **Misunderstands the relationship between the kingdom and church –**
1. Based on the previous point, for some the church is an afterthought.
  2. But the Bible teaches that the church was part of God's eternal plan – Ephesians 3:10-11
  3. The Bible shows the kingdom and church one and the same – e.g. Matthew 16:18-19, etc. Different descriptions of the same body of the saved.
  4. The Bible also shows the kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost AS prophesied (cf. Daniel 2:44, Joel 2:28-32, etc.).
- v. **It says the seed promise to Abraham has not been completely fulfilled**
1. In our last lesson showed that every aspect of the kingdom has been completely fulfilled - cf. Joshua 21:43-45.
  2. Yet premillennialism speculates about the future restoration of physical Israel so that Christ can reign for 1000 years. Because of this, Israel has to be converted to Christ at some point. Furthermore, Abraham's promise was "forever" or "everlasting" - We addressed this last week also. It was a reference to as long as the nation existed.
  3. Acts 3:24-26, Peter boldly declares Jesus was the fulfillment of the seed promise to Abraham. And it is for both Jew and Gentile (everyone – Galatians 3:27-28)
- vi. **It teaches multiple physical resurrections and judgments**
1. Premillennialism separates the resurrection of the righteous (maybe twice) and the wicked. It describes His first return as silent
  2. Yet scripture is clear that His return will be visible and loud – 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Revelation 1:7.
  3. Furthermore, the Bible teaches ONE simultaneous resurrection of both the righteous and wicked – Matthew 25:31-46, Jon 5:28-29, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9, Revelation 20:11-15, etc.
  4. And after that resurrection we face judgment – Hebrews 9:27
- vii. **It presents 2 plans of salvation** – one for Jews and another for everyone else. Yet the Bible says there is only ONE plan of salvation for all. Jesus died to break down the middle wall of separation – Ephesians 2:14ff, Colossians 2:13-14, etc.
- viii. **For some it gives a second chance not offered to the rest and contrary to plain Bible teachings** – consider those that survive "the rapture" – the Lord has returned, and those "left behind" have a second chance to repent and be converted.
- ix. It is the playground of speculations including date setters and "last day" prognosticators. And that is the nature of such a doctrine.
- x. Some other problems with premillennialism:
1. **NOWHERE does scripture teach Jesus returning and setting foot on earth again.** That He is coming back is not denied (2 Peter 3:10). That the righteous will be "caught up" in the air to be with Him is not denied (2 Thessalonians 4:15-18). That

there will be a judgment of both the righteous and wicked is not denied (2 Corinthians 5:10). BUT, Jesus returning to this earth to reign here is NOT found in scripture!

2. **Premillennialism denies the Biblical teaching about the last days** – Hebrews 1:1-2 speaks of being in the last days, meaning that since the time of Christ we are in the final dispensation. Premillennialism adds another dispensation after this one.
  3. **Premillennialism teaches that God was not able to keep His word** – considering the prophecies about the imminence of the kingdom (cf. Mark 9:1, and numerous OT prophecies), if Christ did not establish the intended kingdom then, God AND Christ failed. THOUGHT: Why should we put confidence in Him that He will succeed the next time? In fact, how can we say God is omniscient and omnipotent if that is the case?
  4. **Premillennialism minimizes the gospel** –
    - a. Concerning the church - if the church was not what was originally intended, that makes it inferior to the kingdom – being a SUBSTITUTE until the Lord returns.
    - b. Concerning the great commission – Matthew 28:18-20 – they were to go make disciples of all nations. Luke 24:47 teaches that repentance and remission of sins be preached to all nations. Is the great commission for everyone or just “Gentiles”, as some Jews are going to be saved another way (How? We do not yet know)? Incidentally, to whom did the apostles FIRST preach? Acts 2- Jews or Gentiles? Why? IF Jews are going to be saved independent of the gospel?
- xi. Considering all these errors and consequences do you think this doctrine matters?

## II. Can we have fellowship with this doctrine?

### a. Consider the following passages:

- i. **Galatians 1:6-9** – Paul warned of turning away to a different gospel and the consequences of such (see also Galatians 5:4). Considering what we have examined, is premillennialism “a different gospel”? Does it portray a different kingdom? Does it portray a different mission for Jesus? Does it portray return and judgment?
- ii. **Ephesians 5:11** – have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. If premillennialism is false, is it of the light or of darkness? Does it give false hope to some?
- iii. **2 John 9-11** – John addresses “the doctrine of Christ” – I believe this to be the teachings both about and of Christ, including His apostles (the admonition is in a letter from an apostle). As we have seen with premillennialism, this is a doctrine that involves BOTH who Christ is and what He taught. If who Christ is, is perverted CAN we have fellowship?
- iv. **Galatians 2:4-5** – Paul, in dealing with brethren who were teaching and binding circumcision said that we “*did not yield submission even for an hour.*”

### b. Heed the warnings against false teachers –

- i. **2 Peter 2:1-3**, warns of false teachers and prophets who “secretly bring in destructive heresies” (is premillennialism a destructive heresy?), denying the Lord who brought them (do they deny the work of Jesus on earth?), they blaspheme the truth (is this possible with premillennialism – if one says Jesus failed the first time, etc.), by covetousness they exploit (is this a doctrine of covetousness – a MATERIAL kingdom?). They are facing the description of God.
- ii. **Colossians 2:8**, *Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.*

- iii. If this is a false doctrine, those who espouse it are false teachers. And we are to not let such deceive us in any way.
- iv. While much more could be said about false teachers, I conclude with this thought – Ephesians 5:17 tells us, to “understand what the will of the Lord is.” That is EXPECTED of us.
- c. Should we recognize AS faithful a church that believes, teaches or fellowships this doctrine and its advocates?
  - i. Because of all the Biblical concerns expressed I would say no! Absolutely not! This is a congregation teaching error on a multi-faceted subject. Such a congregation is NOT doctrinally pure. Nor do they handle accurately the word of God (2 Timothy 2:15). And unless they are open to studying the matter and willing to repent, I see no place for recognition of such. While there were congregations in Revelation 2 & 3 that had errors both in doctrine and tolerance, they were warned to repent or face dire consequences.
  - ii. Consider: There is the matter of a congregation advocating serious doctrinal error and they want you to acknowledge that even though we believe differently, you should accept their doctrine as plausible and non-consequential if they are in error. You are free to disagree with them doctrinally, but DON'T make it a test of fellowship. The is ecumenicalism which is contrary to God's word!
  - iii. I ask, Is there a line that needs to be drawn concerning doctrinal errors? AND WHERE do we draw that line? NOTE: This is true not only of this doctrine, but other doctrines as well (such as MDR, issues of morality, WHO do we fellowship, institutionalism, etc.).
  - iv. Typically, a church that advances a doctrine filled with as many fundamental errors as premillennialism will approach other erroneous doctrines in scripture similarly. And that is a MAJOR problem. Such is NOT the true church.

### III. Why Bring Christ back to earth?

- a. We conclude this study with this probing question. Consider everything that Jesus completed while on earth the first time.
- b. **His redemption is complete** – Ephesians 1:7-10 – all are redeemed by His blood. Who else is left to be redeemed
- c. **He completed His mission** – Colossians 1:13-14, John 17:1-5
- d. **He NOW has complete authority** – Matthew 28:18, 1 Peter 3:22, *who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.*
- e. **His revelation is complete** – Jude 3 – the faith has been “once, for all delivered to the saints”, Hebrews 1:1-3 – in these last days He has spoken by His Son. What else remains?
- f. **His name is complete** – Philippians 2:9-11, God has given Him a name that is above every other name. Acts 4:12, there is no other name given among men by which we must be saved.
- g. **He is glorified as before** – John 17:5, Philippians 2:9-11, 1 Peter 1:20-21
- h. **He is now reigning in heaven on His throne** –
  - i. He is “*seated at the right hand of God*” – Acts 2:33, 7:56, Romans 8:34, Hebrews 12:2, 1 Peter 3:22, etc.
  - ii. NOTE: There is also another line of reasoning that says Jesus CANNOT physically reign on earth on the throne of David – it has to do with Coniah (Jeconiah), the final king of Jerusalem in [Jeremiah 22:30](#). No descendant of his would proper sitting on the throne of David in Judah. [Matthew 1:11](#) – Jesus, as a descendant of Coniah, cannot sit on David's throne on earth!
- i. **Finally, in Him WE are complete** – Colossians 2:10. If we are complete in Him, why do we need Him to come back and reign on earth with us BEFORE going to heaven?

And thus we conclude our study of premillennialism. In this lesson it is my hope we can see this doctrine is false and dangerous. We should have no part in it or with those espousing it. And as I have continually said in this study – We KNOW Jesus is coming back. When? I do not know. But we need to be ready NOW! Are you? Think about it!.