

Fundamentals of Our Faith from the Beginning

Frameworks and the Future

Dispensational Premillennialism

1. An overview of the system:

- a. Five dispensations leading up to and including Christ's 1st Advent: Age of Innocence, Age of Conscience, Age of Government, Age of Promise, Age of Law (through the closing days of Jesus' ministry).
- b. The Jews reject Christ's offer of His messianic rule and crucify Him, but He is resurrected.
- c. He ascends and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
- d. Age of Grace = the church age (a parenthetical period of time during which God's kingdom plan for Israel is paused, i.e. the times of the Gentiles in Luke 21:24).
- e. When the fullness of the Gentiles come in, Christ will resurrect believers¹, secretly rapture the Church (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52), and judge the saints at His judgment seat ("bema", 2 Corinthians 5:10).
- f. This begins the seventieth week of Daniel (9:24-27). The Jews will have rebuilt the temple and will reinstitute the Levitical sacrifices and rituals.
- g. Times of tribulation will begin, and Antichrist will be revealed (cf. Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; 1 John 2:18) and will make a pact with the Jews that he will break ushering in the Great Tribulation (the wrath to come), and this will last an additional 3 ½ years.
- h. Christ will return with His saints (the Church) and will destroy the Antichrist and all the wicked nations in the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16 and 19:11-20).
- i. Satan is bound and thrown into a pit (Rev. 20:1-3), believers who died in the Tribulation are resurrected, and Jesus separates the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:31-46).
- j. Age of Kingdom = Christ inaugurates the millennium, the resumption of God's kingdom plan for Israel during which the land promises are fulfilled (cf. Genesis 12:2-3; Isaiah 32, etc.).
 - i. Most believe the Church will reign with Christ but in a subordinate role to Israel.
 - ii. The millennial kingdom will be populated by the glorified saints who return with Christ, the survivors of the Tribulation, and the progeny of those survivors.
- k. At the end of the millennium, Satan will be loosed, will gather rebellious nations that will be in numbers "like the sand of the seashore," but fire will come down from heaven and destroy them, and Satan and his cohorts will be thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:7-10).
- l. God will resurrect all the unbelieving dead and will execute final judgment at His Great White Throne and will cast them into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15).
- m. The New Heavens and New Earth will be created (renewed) and will usher in the eternal state.
 - i. Classic dispensationalists believe that the Church will be in the New Heavens and the Jews will be on the New Earth.
 - ii. Progressive dispensationalists believe they will be together in the New Heavens/Earth.

¹ Some believe that only the New Testament believers will be resurrected and that Old Testament believers will be resurrected at the commencement of the millennial kingdom.

2. What are common questions and difficulties for dispensational premillennialism?

- a. In this program there are five “comings” of Christ: the 1st Advent, the Secret Rapture, the 2nd Advent, the millennial reign, and the final judgment ; but Scripture only speaks of two Advents.
 - i. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 most likely refers to the 2nd coming, not the Rapture.
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 15:50-51 most likely refers to the same event of 1 Thessalonians.
- b. In this program there are 4+ resurrections: at the Rapture, at the beginning of the millennium, at the end of the millennium; but there must be an accounting for the believers who die during the millennium.²
- c. In this program there are at least three judgments: The “Bema”, the Sheep and Goats, the Great White Throne, but what becomes of the believers who die during the millennium?
- d. In this program glorified, sinless saints will live next to and among fleshly (presumably sinful) peoples, some of whom will not believe in Christ.
- e. These fleshly peoples must still be born under Adam’s curse: born into sin, in need of regeneration since they still die (Rom. 5:12-14, etc.).
 - i. Will they need to be “born again?” In what sense?
 - ii. Into what covenant will they be born? The New Covenant?
 - iii. Will they need to be baptized?
- f. Death still exists even though the sting and power of death are removed (1 Cor. 15:54-57).
- g. Paul says that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom (1 Cor. 15:50), what of these flesh and blood millennial kingdom residents?
- h. Why does Christ allow the continuation of temple sacrifices?
 - i. Christ is the fulfillment of these sacrifices as the final Lamb of God.
 - ii. Even if these are simply a memorial, why revert to the type when Christ, the fulfillment, is visibly in their midst?
- i. Though Christ will bodily reign in His glorified state and will be King over all, somehow many will not believe and will join in a massive global rebellion at the end. How does this happen?
 - i. The nations will have been utterly destroyed (Rev. 19:11-21).
 - ii. Where do the rebellious nations come from? Does an innumerable horde of rebellious people accumulate under Christ’s glorious reign?
- j. Why do none of the epistles give any indication of an earthly millennial reign of Christ either before or after Christ’s 2nd coming?
- k. Using a literal method of interpretation, how do DPMs justify adding a nearly 2,000 year gap between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel?
- l. How is the absence of this interpretation in the first 1800 years of the Church explained?

² Dr. John Walvoord writes, “It is probable that the righteous who die in the Millennium will be resurrected, much as the church will be at the Rapture, and that living saints will be given bodies suited for eternity like those living church saints will receive.”