

**Revelation**  
**The Lamb of God: On His Throne and Among His People**  
*The Millennium*  
**Revelation 20:1-3**  
**Study Notes**

**Home Group Questions**

- Read Revelation 20 – the whole chapter. What sticks out to you, what is clear to you, and what is confusing to you?
- Are you able to define the four millennial positions? If you are, would you preach next Sunday? These are surely complex, but even a basic understanding is helpful.
  - Remember, these positions concern the millennium – the 1,000-year period in which Christ will reign.
  - The question about the millennium is not a question about the tribulation or the rapture – it is about whether the 1,000-reign of Christ is literal or symbolic; it is about when the 1,000 years occur – before or after the Second Coming of Christ, or if the millennium is symbolic and Christ is reigning over his kingdom and his church now, between his two advents.
- Discuss the application points from the sermon
  - Make sure that Jesus is given his rightful place on the throne of your heart
  - Do more to strengthen the city of God than to subdue the city of man
  - Propagate the benefits of receiving God’s kingdom among those who do not know Jesus
- See the bottom of this handout for an extensive section of the sermon that describes postmillennialism and theonomy.

**Quotes and Thoughts from the Sermon**

All millennial views – premillennialism (both historic premillennialism and dispensational premillennialism), amillennialism, and postmillennialism – are sophisticated, complex, and compelling.

A natural reading of Revelation 20 would seem to support a premillennial view of the end times, but, as with all views, there are challenges, many of which have been discussed in this study.

You will never be able to reason your way to God, but after you believe in Jesus, there will be more than enough evidence to sustain your faith.

“Jesus must be Lord of all, or he is not Lord at all.” You might have a theological bone to pick with that, but surely there is truth that should awaken and challenge us.

Link to the four views of the millennium:

<https://cpmfiles1.com/graceccnc.org/four-millennial-positions.pdf>

Link to the power point slides from the message about the four millennial views:

<https://cpmfiles1.com/graceccnc.org/eschatological-excursus-revelation-20-1-thru-10.pdf>

### **A Description of Life in the Millennium in both Historic and Dispensational Premillennialism**

See **Isaiah 11, Isaiah 65:17-25, and Zechariah 14:16-25**. Because of the length of these passages, they are not written out here.

### **1,000 Years Used Symbolically in Scripture**

**Psalm 90:3** You return man to dust  
and say, “Return, O children of man!”

**4** For a thousand years in your sight  
are but as yesterday when it is past,  
or as a watch in the night.

**Ecclesiastes 6:6** Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good—do not all go to the one place?

**2 Peter 3:8** But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that **with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.**

### **Satan Bound at Jesus’ Victory at the Cross, Burial, Resurrection, and Ascension to God’s Right Hand**

**John 12:31 Jesus speaking:** Now is the judgment of this world; **now will the ruler of this world (Satan) be cast out.**

**Colossians 2:13** And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. **15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.**

**On the other hand . . .**

**Ephesians 6:10** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, **that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.** 12 **For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.**

### Scripture Associated with Postmillennialism

See Isaiah 2:2-4, Psalm 22:27, Daniel 7:13-14, Matthew 28:18-20, and 1 Corinthians 15:20-28.

**For the theological and philosophical nerds among us,** here are three articles about Theonomy. All three articles recognize the good intent of the theological philosophy, but all recognize the dangers, albeit they are concerned about different things. Disclaimer – I have skimmed the articles, not carefully studied them.

<https://learn.ligonier.org/guides/theonomy>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/theonomy/>

<https://www.9marks.org/article/theonomy-serious-theology-serious-politics-seriously-wrong/>

**This didn't make the cut for the sermon but might be helpful:** When we come to verse 4, Satan has been loosed at the end of the millennium. How you interpret verses 4-10 depends on your millennial view. In fact, your millennial view will guide the way you interpret Scripture as a whole, so it is no insignificant matter we have been wading through this morning. Remember, we learn in layers. Even if you have never

heard of these positions and even if you feel like you understand very little of what has been said today, it is meaningful. The next time you will get it a little more and so on until it makes enough sense for you to have an opinion about the different positions.

### **Other Scripture Associated with the Text and Message**

**Jeremiah 29:7** But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

**Hebrews 12:28** Therefore let us be grateful for *receiving a kingdom* that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

**Daniel 7:21** As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, 22 until **the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High**, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.

**Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship (or reasonable service). 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Ephesians 4:11** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 **to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ**, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

**1 Corinthians 3:5** What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. 6 **I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.** 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God

who gives the growth. 8 He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

**Matthew 28:18** And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

**Mark 10:17** And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 18 And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’” 20 And he said to him, “Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.” 21 **And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”** 22 **Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.**

### **Sermon Excerpt about Postmillennialism and Theonomy**

The last of the four millennial positions is postmillennialism. Postmillennialists think that the world will get better before Jesus returns. In this system, the mission of the church is to work to advance the kingdom of God. Believers, therefore, are assigned to usher in the kingdom of God. Postmillennialists understand the 1,000-year period to occur before Jesus’ return. We have thought a lot more about the other positions in this series, but it would be good for us to spend some time here this morning.

Postmillennialism was quite popular in the early 20th century when it had been a while since there were major wars and it seemed that the world was making significant progress with treating and curing diseases, infant mortality, the combustible engine, flight, and so much more. WWI put a significant dent in the postmillennial view and then WWII put it to rest. For a while. Postmillennialism is back in the 21st century with a new focus. In the early 20th century, postmillennialists were thinking, “It looks like things are improving – maybe Jesus will come soon.” In the 21st century, it is more like, “Things are getting worse – we need to bring society under biblical rule, whether people believe the gospel or not.” I think we would all

agree that the closer society comes to living according to biblical principles, if not biblical laws, the better life will be. How we get there is the question.

Late in the 5th Century, St Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, wrote one of the most important books in Christian history – The City of God. The Roman Empire was about to be defeated by Germanic tribes when Augustine, who loved Rome like many of us love America, foresaw the Dark Ages that were to come. He wrote a book that would help believers prepare to live in that world. Augustine averred that the world is divided into two cities – the city of God and the city of man. We have seen this truth repeatedly in Revelation. Believers and unbelievers. Followers of Jesus and followers of Satan. Jerusalem and Babylon.

The city of God is, essentially, the kingdom of God in this already/not yet existence in which believers exist as pilgrims. The city of man is the world system that is opposed to God's rule, whether its inhabitants are refined or barbaric. Citizens of the city of God love God above all; citizens of the city of man love self, above all.

Postmillennialists think that the kingdom of God will grow stronger while the city of man will diminish. Augustine argued that the responsibility of believers in the city of God is not to overcome the city of man, but to live with the world and to pray for the peace of those in the city of man, much like Jeremiah encouraged Judeans who had been taken to Babylon to pray for the prosperity of the city, because if the city prospered, they would prosper. Augustine encouraged his readers to share the gospel with unbelievers so that those in the city of man would be brought into the city of God and enjoy the hope of eternal life, thus avoiding eternal judgment. Just as the gospel is to be believed and received, so the kingdom must be received, not built. Hebrews 12:28 says:

Hebrews 12:28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

We live in a day of extremes. We talked about this at our Grace Connection Class on Friday night. In a few short years, our culture has gone from celebrating Leah Thomas to celebrating Sydney Sweeny. We should pray for both, because both represent the city of man. Do not confuse politics with the kingdom of God. While not all postmillennialists want to forcibly bring about the kingdom of God, many do. It is especially appealing to young men, whom our culture has shunned and even despised. Young men who are believers – you are so very important in the city of God! Do not, though, ride the pendulum all the way to the opposite extreme.

Some postmillennialists are theonomists. Proponents of theonomy, which simply means God's law, believe the way to God's rule on earth is to implement God's laws in society. To believe this way makes it easy to become comfortable with Christian nationalists, who easily grow comfortable with nationalists who often find themselves in league with racists. Brothers and sisters – and especially young men – I beg you not to allow yourself to go down the road of thinking that we must overcome the world through politics, and especially through violence of any sort! Racism is thoroughly condemned in Scripture, which means a hatred of any race. If you allow yourself to go down this road, you will deeply regret your decision, one day, and I do not mean only the Day of the Lord when Jesus returns. I mean in this life. All of us should give glory to God that he saved sinners like us, and we should seek to glorify him with our good works in this life – not because we want to be saved, but because Jesus saved us with his blood. Our good works include loving and forgiving our enemies and following Jesus.

It is not necessary for postmillennialism to end in such a dire place, but like the other millennial positions, there are strengths and weaknesses. You can see those more clearly in the handouts available as a supplement to the message and notes.