

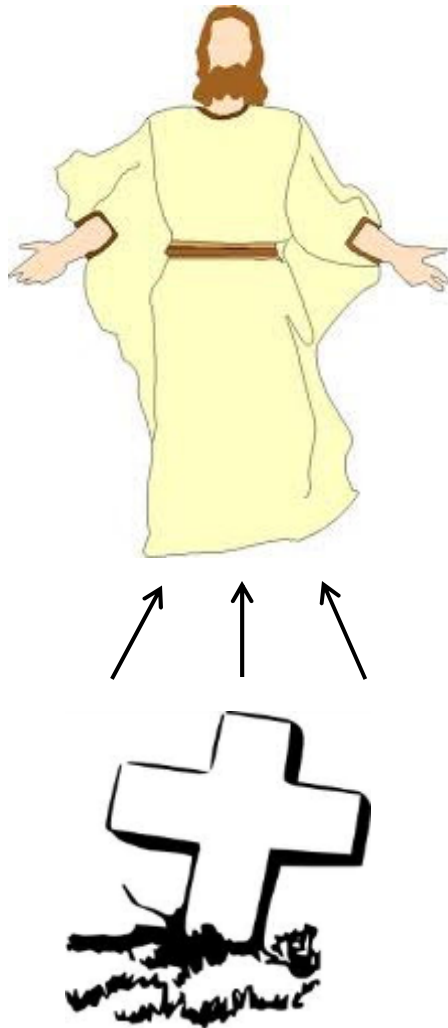


Know The Word: 1 Corinthians

Chapters 15 – 16

14 August 2011

Chapter 15: The Issue



- **Some of the Corinthians were denying the bodily resurrection of believers**
 - They did not deny that Christ rose from the dead
 - But they said there is no resurrection of his followers
- **They also did not understand the nature of the resurrection body**
 - Did not understand how material bodies, subject to sickness, death and eventual decay, could live eternally.

Paul's Response

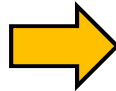


- Paul first established the historical reliability of Jesus' resurrection as a foundation
- He next argued that there is a seamless connection between the resurrection of Christ in the recent past and the resurrection of believers in the future
- Finally, he explained how God will, in the resurrection, change the bodies of believers to make them immortal

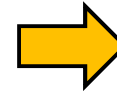
Historical Reliability of Jesus' Resurrection



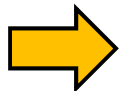
**Christ died
for our sins**



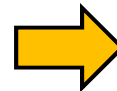
**Was buried and raised
on the third day**



**He appeared to
the disciples**



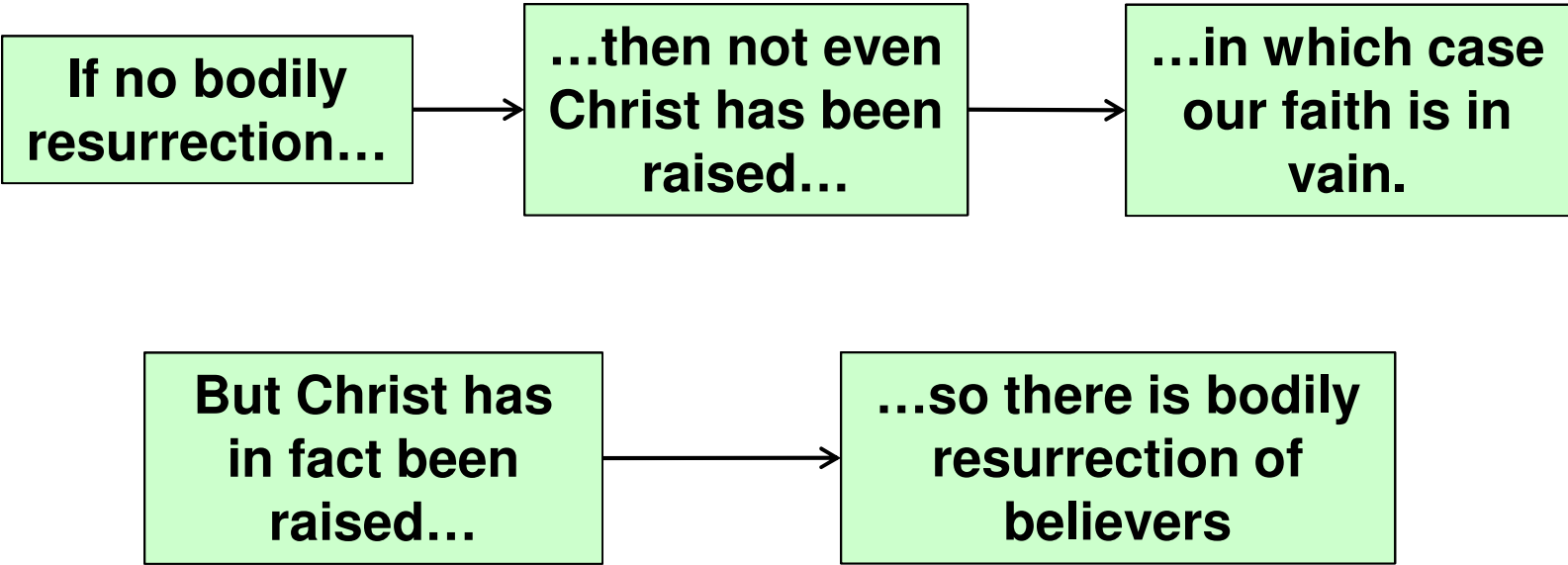
**Then he appeared
to many more**



**Finally, he
appeared to Saul
on the road to
Damascus**

Resurrection of Christ and Resurrection of Believers

Paul's Reasoning in 15:12-34



Resurrection of Christ and Believers (cont'd)

Paul's Reasoning in 15:12-34

If no bodily resurrection...

...then not even Christ has been raised...

...in which case our faith is in vain.

- Because Christ was fully human with a human body

- The resurrection confirms that God has accepted Christ's once-for-all sacrifice for our sins (Rom 4:25)
- If Christ has not been raised, we are still in our sins and those who have died in Christ have perished
- We will also be misrepresenting that God has raised Christ

Resurrection of Christ and Believers (cont'd)

Paul's Reasoning in 15:12-34

**But Christ has
in fact been
raised...**

- Based on the witness of so many people he had appeared to (as described in vv. 3-8)

**...so there is bodily
resurrection of
believers**

- If God can raise Christ from the dead, He can raise us also
- And He will raise us because Christ was meant to be the firstfruits

The Nature of the Resurrection Body

Earthly vs Resurrection Bodies (1 Corinthians 15)

Verse	Earth Bodies	Resurrection Bodies
v. 42	Perishable	Imperishable
v. 43a	Exist in dishonor	Raised in glory
v. 43b	Exist in weakness	Raised in power
v. 44	Natural	Spiritual (but not spirit-form)
vv. 45, 47	First Adam a living being, from the earth	Last Adam (Christ) a life-giving spirit, from heaven
vv. 48-49	Those who are of earth bear the image of the man of dust	Those who are of heaven shall bear the image of the man of heaven
vv. 53-54	Mortal	Immortal

Source: ESV Study Bible, page 2216

The Resurrection Event: Two Key Passages

1 Cor. 15:51-54

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-- ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. **For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.** ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

1 Thess. 4:13-17

¹³ Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ **For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.** ¹⁷ **After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.**

The Resurrection Event: The Rapture??



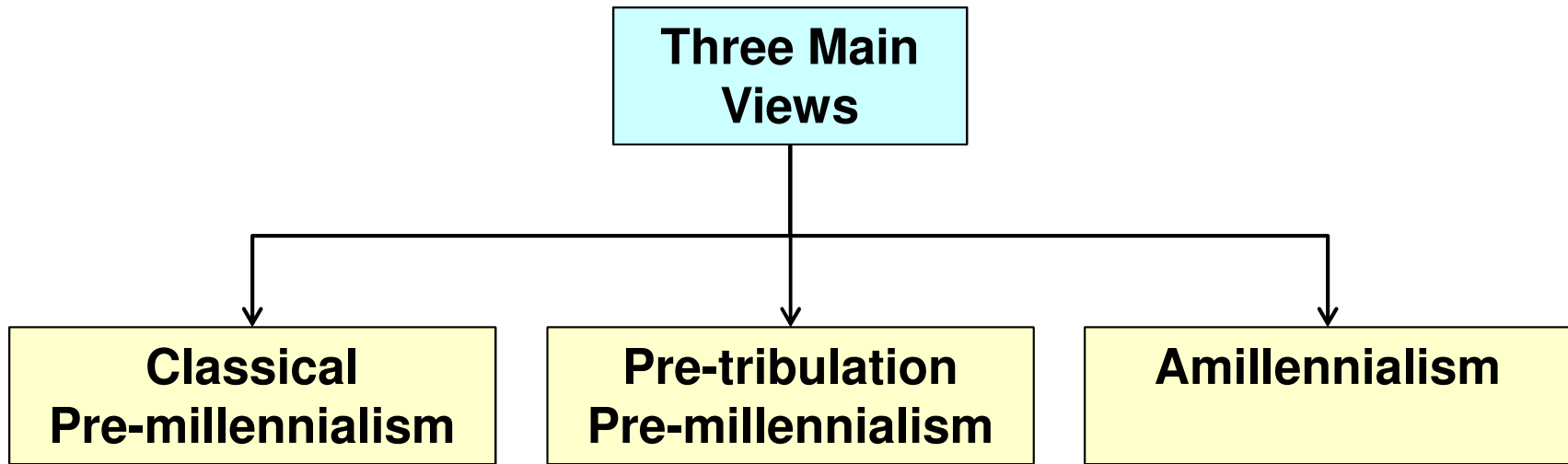
- The term “Rapture” is derived from a Latin word which refers to being “caught up”
- It is usually used to refer to the living Christians being “caught up” with the Lord when He comes again (because the dead in Christ will rise first) (1 Thess 4:16-17)



A recent episode of a false prophet who made the worldwide news – predicted Rapture on May 21, 2011

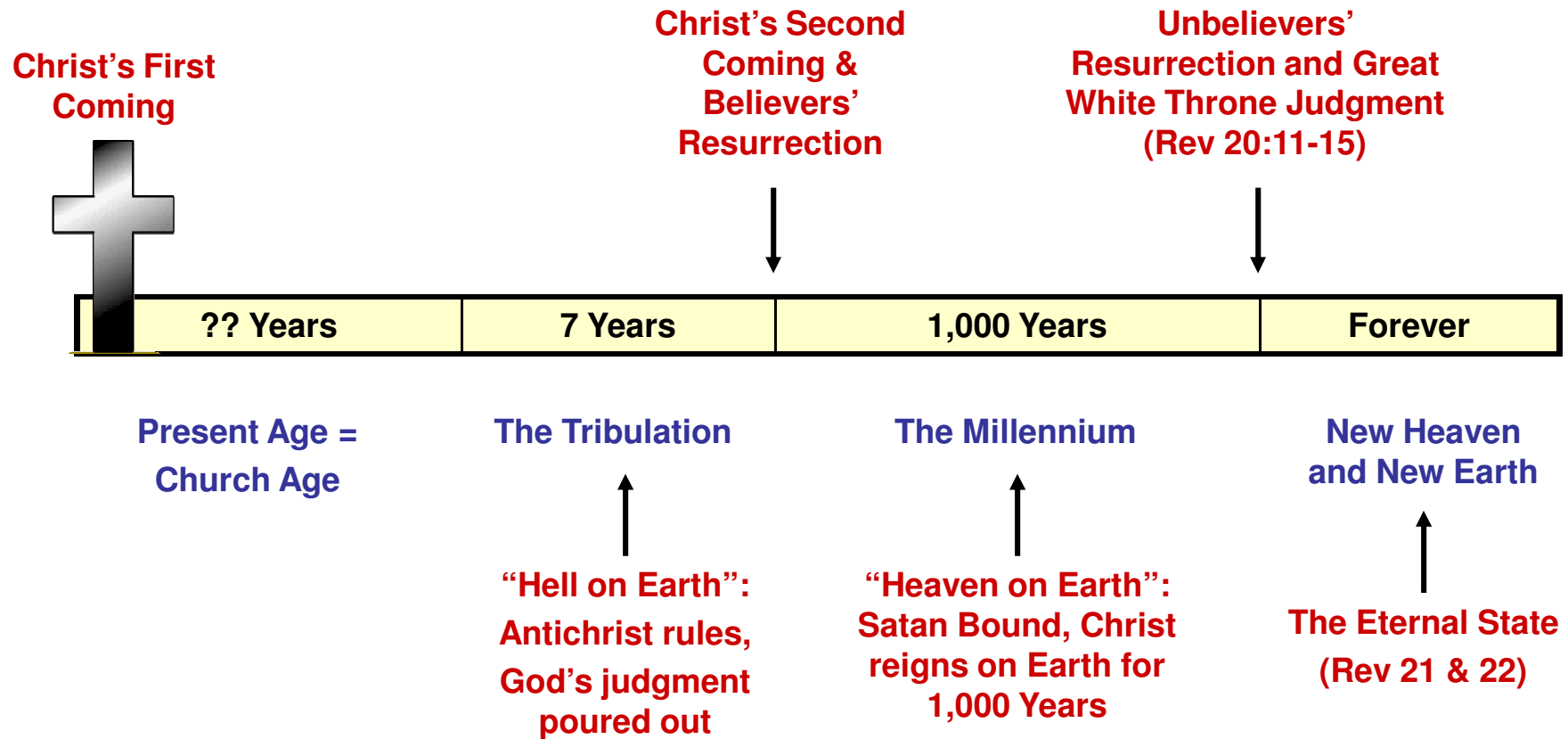
Harold Camping

When will the resurrection happen?



[Source: ESV Study Bible, pages 2458 – 2460]

Classical Pre-millennialism



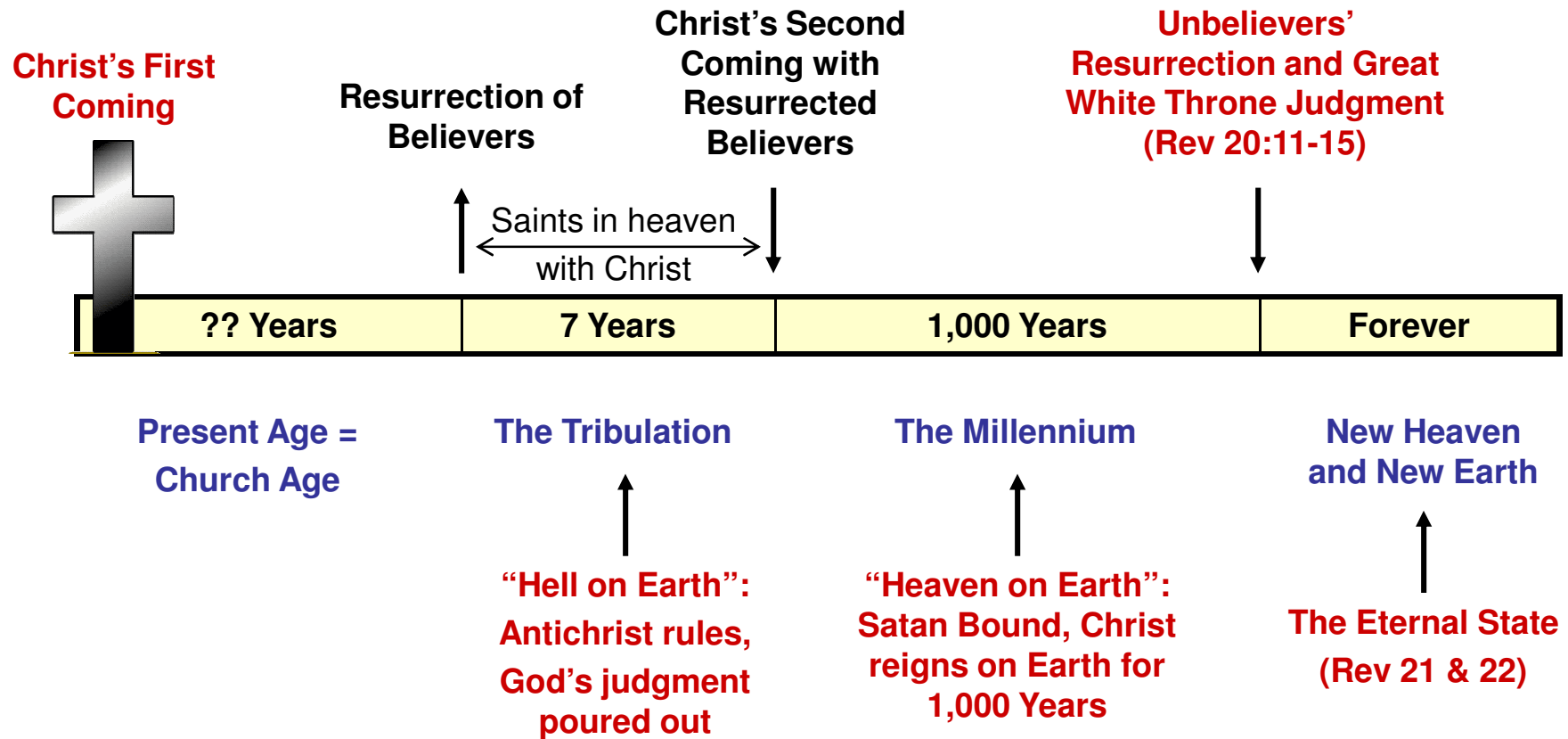
Scripture References

Tribulation: Mt 24:4-29; Rev 6:2-11; 11:2-3; 12:6, 12-17; 13:5,11-18; Dan 7:25; 9:27; 12:7

Resurrection: 1 Thess: 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:51-55

Millennium: Rev 20:1-6

Pre-tribulation Pre-millennialism



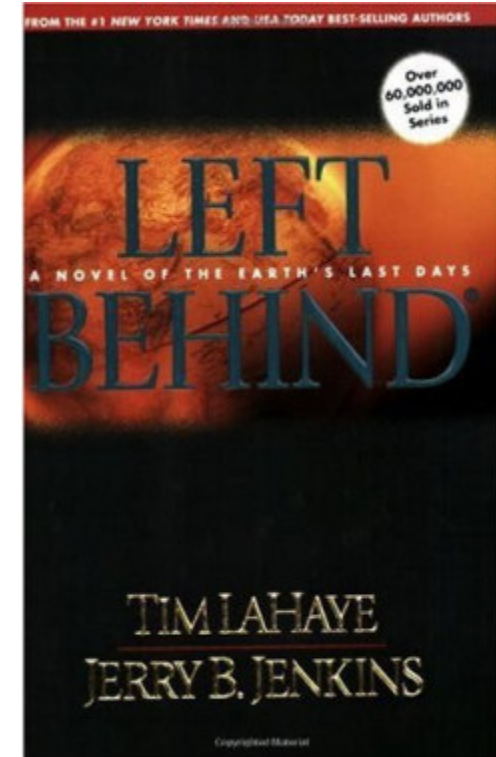
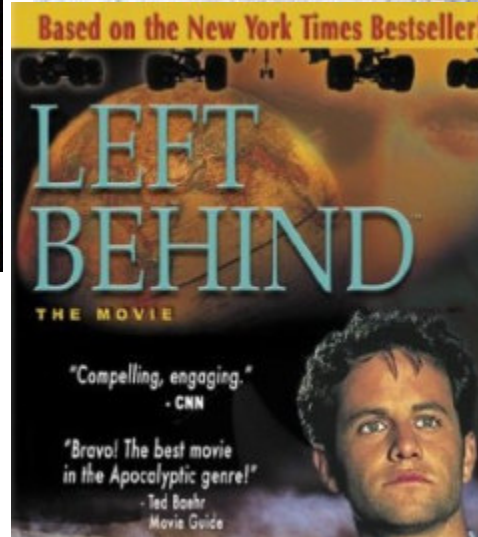
Scripture References

Tribulation: Mt 24:4-29; Rev 6:2-11; 11:2-3; 12:6, 12-17; 13:5,11-18; Dan 7:25; 9:27; 12:7

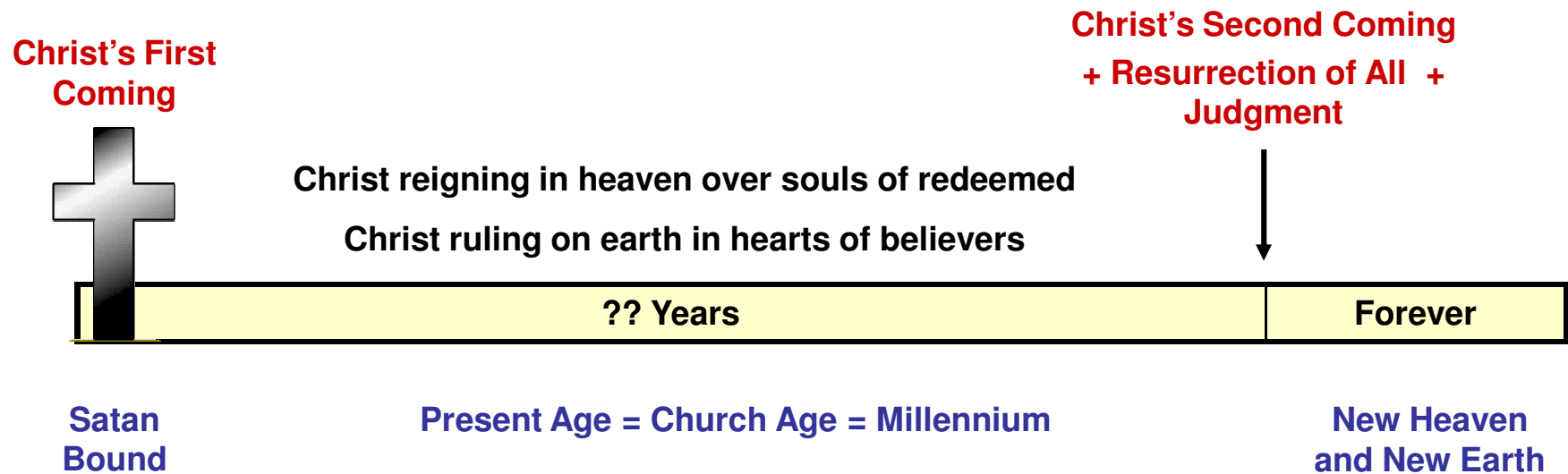
Resurrection: 1 Thess: 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:51-55

Millennium: Rev 20:1-6

Pre-tribulation Pre-millennial Rapture: Credible?



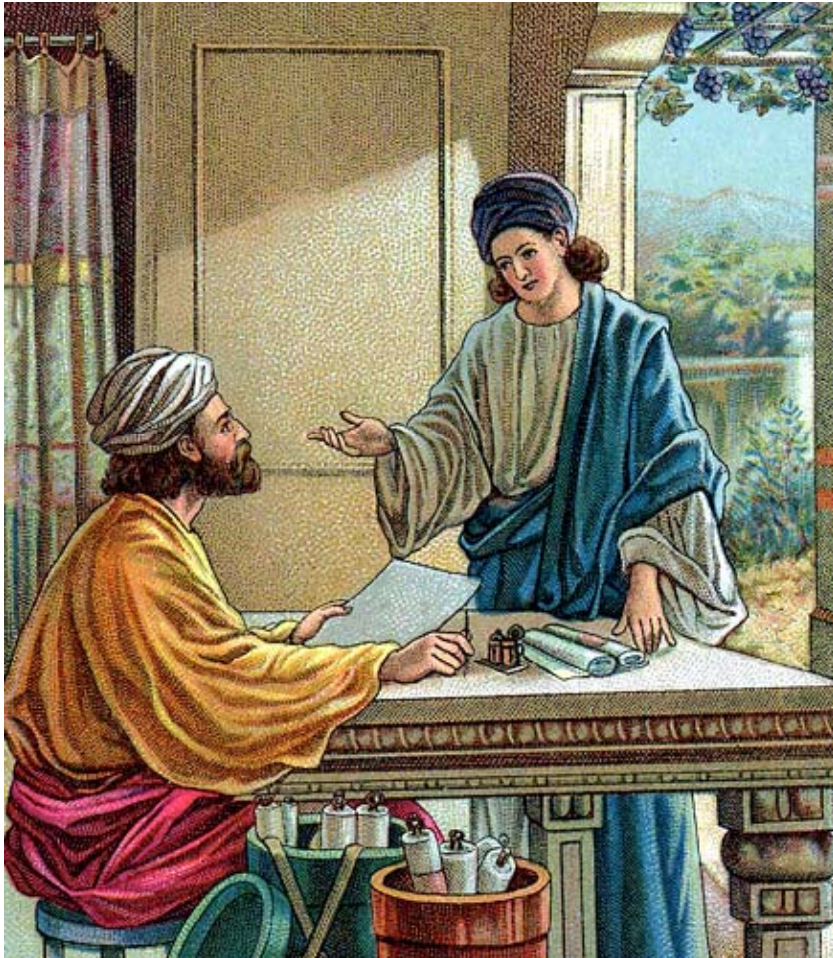
Amillennialism



Key Distinctives of the Amillennial Viewpoint:

- Does not believe in a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth
- Rather, the millennium is symbolic of present life on earth (believers) and present life in heaven (dead saints), not a literal 1,000 years but a “long period of time”
- The Church has replaced Israel as the people of God, so all the prophecies relating to Israel will now be fulfilled by the Church (as the spiritual Israel)

Chapter 16: Closing Remarks



- The collection for the saints in Jerusalem
- Paul's travel plans including his proposed visit to the church in Corinth
- Closing admonitions to the Corinthians to persevere, love and submit to good leaders
- Greetings from the Christians in Asia

Discussion Questions

1. In the last session, we saw that there were four views on whether the spiritual gifts have ceased (Cessationist, Pentecostal/Charismatic, Third Wave, Open but Cautious). Where do you think SJSM is on this spectrum of views? Where do you think we should be?
2. Share with your group members any personal experience you may have with spiritual gifts. What do you think are the benefits and risks of exercising spiritual gifts?
3. If Christians are to have a bodily resurrection in the future, is it a problem for Christians to be cremated at death?

- **KTW Discussion Questions on 1 Corinthians 11-16**

- **Question 1:**

- **In the last session, we saw that there were four views on whether the spiritual gifts have ceased (Cessasionist, Pentecostal/Charismatic, Third Wave, Open but Cautious). Where do you think SJSM is on this spectrum of views? Where do you think we should be?**

- **Answer:**

- **I think SJSM takes the Open but Cautious viewpoint and my personal opinion is that this is probably where it should stay. But you can form your own opinion. Notes on the four viewpoints are repeated in Appendix 1 (in a little bit more detail than in the class notes).**

- **Question 2:**

- **Share with your group members any personal experience you may have with spiritual gifts. What do you think are the benefits and risks of exercising spiritual gifts?**

- **Answer:**

- **This is an open sharing question so no answer is provided.**

- **Question 3:**
 - **If Christians are to have a bodily resurrection in the future, is it a problem for Christians to be cremated at death?**
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- **Answer:**
- **Just because a body has been destroyed by fire, doesn't mean God cannot one day resurrect it in newness of life, to reunite it with the soul of the believer. If God could not do this, then all believers who have died in a fire are without hope of receiving their heavenly bodies.**
- **All flesh and blood bodies eventually decay and become like dust in the earth. Cremation simply speeds the process along. God is certainly able to provide a resurrected body for those who have been cremated. The heavenly body is a new, spiritual body, and not the old body of flesh and blood.**
- **Appendix 2 provides an article on cremation from www.gotquestions.org which discusses the topic in a bit more detail.**

- **Appendix 1:**
 - **A Summary from “Are Miraculous Gifts For Today?: Four Views”, Wayne A. Grudem, ed. Zondervan Publishing House, MI, 1996, pp 10-13**
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- **View 1: Cessationist**
- **"The cessationist position argues that there are no miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit today. Gifts such as prophecy, tongues, and healing were confined to the first century, and were used at the time the apostles were establishing the churches and the New Testament was not yet complete."**
- **The basic thesis for cessationists is that the revelatory and miraculous gifts were given as foundational gifts, in order to establish the church of Christ. With the church established, and the inerrant word of God fully revealed, as contained in the (canonical) New Testament, the need for these gifts passed, and with it, the gifts themselves. It should be noted that this the view does not preclude God performing miracles in present times (in answer to prayer, etc.) - it merely states that God no longer gifts individuals with the ability to perform such miracles.**
- **The book of Acts intends to document a completed history, a unique epoch in the history of redemption - the once-for-all, apostolic spread of the gospel "to the ends of the earth." The miraculous events are an integral part of a completed event-complex, complete with the finished apostolic program. In this context the apostles exercised spiritual gifts, and others exercised such gifts under an "apostolic umbrella," so to speak. With the establishment of the church, the new revelation is established, and so the apostles, and also prophets and other associated revelatory word gifts, pass from the life of the church. To maintain the continuation of revelatory gifts maintains the introduction of fresh, inerrant, revelation of God. This stands in contradiction to the concept of the closed canon (of the New Testament). Thus, one would have to hold that the canon is not closed, and that God continues to reveal inerrant and authoritative teaching today.**

■ View 2: Pentecostal & Charismatic

- **"Pentecostal refers to any denomination or group that traces its historical origin back to the Pentecostal revival that began in the United States in 1901, and that holds the following doctrines: (1) All the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the New Testament are intended for today; (2) baptism in the Holy Spirit is a n empowering experience subsequent to conversion and should be sought by Christians today; and (3) when baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs, people will speak in tongues as a "sign" that they have received this experience. Pentecostal groups usually have their own distinct denomination structures, among which are the Assemblies of God, the Church of God in Christ, and many others."**
- **"Charismatic, on the other hand, refers to any groups (or people) that trace their historical origin to the charismatic renewal effort of the 1960s and 1970s and that seek to practice all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament (including prophecy, healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation, and distinguishing between spirits). Among charismatics there are differing viewpoints on whether baptism in the Holy Spirit is subsequent to conversion and whether speaking in tongues is a sign of baptism in the Spirit. Charismatics by and large have refrained from forming their own denominations, but view themselves as a force for renewal within existing Protestant and Roman Catholic churches."**

View 3: Third Wave

- **"In the 1980s a third renewal movement arose, a movement called The Third Wave by missions professor C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Theological Seminary (he referred to the Pentecostal renewal as the first wave of the Holy Spirit's renewing work in the modern church, and the charismatic movement as the second wave). Third Wave people encourage the equipping of all believers to use New Testament spiritual gifts today and say that the proclamation of the gospel should ordinarily be accompanied by "signs, wonder, and miracles," according to the new Testament pattern. They teach, however, that baptism in the Holy Spirit happens to all Christians at conversion and that subsequent experiences are better called "fillings" or "empowerings" with the Holy Spirit. Though they believe the gift of tongues exists today, they do not emphasize it to the extent that Pentecostals and charismatics do."**

View 4: Open but Cautious

- **"There is yet another position, held by a vast number of evangelicals who think of themselves as belonging to none of these groups. These people have not been convinced by the cessationist arguments that relegate certain gifts to the first century, but they are not really convinced by the doctrine or practice of those who emphasize such gifts today either. They are open to the possibility of miraculous gifts today, but they are concerned about the possibility of abuses that they have seen in groups that practice these gifts. They do not think speaking in tongues is ruled out by Scripture, but they see many modern examples as not conforming to scriptural guidelines; some also are concerned that it often leads to divisiveness and negative results in churches today. They think churches should emphasize evangelism, Bible study, and faithful obedience as keys to personal and church growth, rather than miraculous gifts. Yet they appreciate some of the benefits that Pentecostal, charismatic, and Third Wave churches have brought to the evangelical world, especially a refreshing contemporary tone in worship and a challenge to renewal in faith and prayer."**

- **Appendix 2: An Article on Cremation from www.gotquestions.org**
 - **Question: "What does the Bible say about cremation? Is it wrong to cremate a person's body?"**
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- **Answer: The Bible does not give any specific teaching about cremation. There are occurrences in the Old Testament of people being burned to death (1 Kings 16:18; 2 Kings 21:6) and of human bones being burned (2 Kings 23:16-20), but these are not examples of cremation. It is interesting to note that in 2 Kings 23:16-20, burning human bones on an altar desecrated the altar. At the same time, the Old Testament law nowhere commands that a deceased human body not be burned, nor does it attach any curse or judgment on someone who is cremated.**
- **Cremation was practiced in biblical times, but it was not commonly practiced by the Israelites or by New Testament believers. In the cultures of Bible times, burial in a tomb, cave, or in the ground was the common way to dispose of a human body (Genesis 23:19; 35:4; 2 Chronicles 16:14; Matthew 27:60-66). While burial was the common practice, the Bible nowhere commands burial as the only allowed method of disposing of a body.**

Is cremation something a Christian can consider?

- **Again, there is no explicit scriptural command against cremation. Some believers object to the practice of cremation on the basis it does not recognize that one day God will resurrect our bodies and re-unite them with our soul/spirit (1 Corinthians 15:35-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:16). However, the fact that a body has been cremated does not make it any more difficult for God to resurrect that body. The bodies of Christians who died a thousand years ago have, by now, completely turned into dust. This will in no way prevent God from being able to resurrect their bodies. He created them in the first place; He will have no difficulty re-creating them. Cremation does nothing but “expedite” the process of turning a body into dust. God is equally able to raise a person’s remains that have been cremated as He is the remains of a person who was not cremated. The question of burial or cremation is within the realm of Christian freedom. A person or a family considering this issue should pray for wisdom (James 1:5) and follow the conviction that results.**