

THE KING IS COMING

When prisoners request the prophecy writings I have, I warn them of the danger, spiritually, of focusing on prophecy at the expense of the weightier matters of brokenness, witnessing, prayer, etc.

Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them (Heb 13:9).

New Christians really should be focusing first of all on things like the Gospel of John, the writings of the Puritans, the covenant, etc. Solomon Stoddard's, *THE NATURE OF SAVING CONVERSION* is a good place. Also, Whitfield's sermons and Spurgeon will help. The Westminster Shorter Catechism and Stoddard's book are the first classes I want to have for new members, once we have the extra room. I also warn them to submit to a local church even if they can't find one they agree with on everything. This is a good test on humility. Learning to get along with those you may not agree is good practice for grace in the heart.

There are many different views on the various details of prophecy within the orthodox Bible-believing churches. All orthodox Christians, however, believe Christ is coming to destroy death on earth and complete His plan of redemption. The Lord's Prayer shall be answered. His kingdom shall come; His perfect will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. This is our fervent prayer. The Paradise of Plan A shall be restored. That is what Christ came to accomplish.

Slide 2 The Millennium – three views

Pre-millennialists believe Christ will come before a literal thousand-year reign. A-millennialists believe it is symbolical and we are in it now. Post-millennialists believe Christ will come after a symbolical thousand years.

There are Spirit filled men in all three camps. No one view has ever been agreed on by all of God's churches. John MacCarther is pre. The Puritans and R.C. Sproul are post. St. Augustine and Luther were A-mil. Sproul had speakers from all three camps at his conferences. It is sectarian and divisive to divide over this issue. That does not mean that each should not debate and try to convince others of his own view.

The most popular view for the last 1900 years has been the amilennial position. The catholic churches (Eastern, Rome, Coptic, Armenian, and Egyptian) and most of the Reformers are amilennialists. Most of the Puritans and men like Jonathon Edwards were post. Premilennialism made a resurgence starting 200 years ago. Most evangelicals are now pre-mil. A couple of the early church fathers in the 2nd century were pre-mil, but not

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dispensationalists. The vast majority of the early fathers were a-mil by 300 A.D.

Slide 3 Dispensationalism – a subset of premillennialism

Dispensationalism is fairly new, but is widespread in America and Latin America. It was started in the 1830's by Charles Darby, of the Plymouth Brethren, and popularized later by the Scofield Study Bible. It did not become very popular until the early 1900's. It teaches that the Lord is coming soon to rapture His church, followed by seven years in which there will be no Holy Spirit on earth, 144,000 Jews will be converted, and the Antichrist will sit in a rebuilt Temple persecuting believers and ruling the world. At the end of the seven years, Christ will come with those He had raptured and reign on earth for a 1000 years. One can see that they believe both raptured believers with new bodies and believers that had not been raptured will live side by side on earth for 1000 years. At the end of the 1000 years, Gog and Magog will rebel and come against Christ and His church. He will rain down fire on them and the earth will be destroyed. All of this is based on a literal interpretation of the visions given to John in the Revelation. Many dispensationalists are very intolerant of any other view. If you do not agree with them they think you are not right with God. This appears to be very factious.

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FACTIONS

One of the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:20, is what is called “factions” or “divisions” or a “party spirit.” (NKJV: contentions, dissensions, heresies. NIV: - dissensions, factions. New Living Translation: - the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group). Just because we do not agree on prophecy is no reason to divide, call each other names, or engage in a factious spirit. The heart should be occupied with grace and not with “foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them” (Heb 13:9). A factious sectarian spirit is an ugly spirit. James says, “This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic” (Jas 3:15). He says, “the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits.” (Jas 3:17).

All true Christians believe the basics of the faith found in the Apostles' & Nicene Creeds. The Nicene Creed says, “We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.” That means we believe in one universal church; not a sectarian one. We do not condemn other denominations because they do not agree with our little group as long as they believe those two creeds. One of the absolutely necessary spiritual

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attributes of a true Christian is that he has a catholic spirit. Those of a sectarian nature are walking in the flesh. They are re-inventing a private interpretation, they are anti-historical, they are provincial, they are un-orthodox bigots, not to mention self-righteous. We can disagree and still be brothers as long as we agree on the fundamentals of the faith as outlined in the Apostles' Creed.

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
2. I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord.
3. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
4. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.
5. On the third day he rose again.
6. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
7. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. The holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
10. The forgiveness of sins,
11. The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Romans 14:4 Who are you to judge another's servant?

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Post-millennialism

The elders of Church of the King are post-mil. That does not mean one has to agree with them to be a member. The Bible says, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom 14:5). To be a member of Church of the King:

1. Be baptized by water
2. Attend services regularly
3. Have a heart for the ministry and support it financially
4. Believe in the Bible as God's ultimate authority
5. Agree with the doctrinal statement on page 5 of our church constitution. (Which is basically the same as the two Creeds. The Nicene Creed is basically the same as the Apostles' Creed but emphasizes the Deity of Christ more.)

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SOON COMING

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Both Premillennialists and Amillennialists many times say they believe the Lord is coming soon. Postmillennialists believe certain prophecies such as the conversion of the nations must be fulfilled before that can happen. We, however, must leave room for our faulty human interpretations. We all could be wrong. Only the Father knows when. God's Word is infallible; our interpretations are not. No man knows the hour.

We must also examine our motives for serving God. If the only reason we serve Him is because we are afraid He will come soon, that seems a little self-serving and mercenary. Are we just out to save our skins, or are we out to glorify God and enjoy him forever?

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Acts 1:6-8 “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in **His own authority**. 8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Notice in the verses just quoted that to delve into date setting is not for us to know. To meddle in all predictions of a “soon coming” in our day is to trespass into God's domain. The secret things belong to God. It is none of our business. There is too much that is already revealed by God for us to waste time speculating on the secret things.

The *secret things belong* to the LORD our God, but those *things which are revealed belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we may do all the words of this law (De 29:29)*.

Thousands have set dates over the last 2000 years. One hundred percent of them have been wrong...every single one. And every time they are proven wrong, they do not bother to apologize for their false prophecies. They just set another date. This borders on blasphemy. It is a waste of time and energy. It puts the focus on “foods which have not profited by those who have been occupied with them” (Heb 13:9). Read **LAST DAYS MADNESS** by Gary DeMar.

But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die (**De 18:20**).

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Unfulfilled Prophecies

Many Spirit filled men like Dr. Livingston, Finney, Edwards, the Puritans, and Whitfield were post-mil who believed Scriptures like the following.

Psalm 22:27 All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.

Hab 2:14 For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.

Dan 7:27 Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

Dan 2:44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

Psalm 86:9 All nations whom You have made Shall come and worship before You

Psalm 102:15 So the nations shall fear the name of the LORD, And all the kings of the earth Your glory

Psalm 102:22 When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

PSA 72:11 Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.

PSA 72:17 All nations shall call Him blessed.

Post, Pre, And A All Have One Thing In Common.

We all believe these things will be fulfilled.

We just differ on the details of how.

FULFILLED PROPHECIES

The atheist, Bertand Russel, declared that Jesus and the apostles were false prophets because they said His coming would be in that generation and later the apostles said it would happen soon. C.S. Lewis says these statements by Jesus and the Apostles are one of the "great embarrassments" to the Church. In his essay on *The World's Last Night* he discusses the

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problem with the statement by Jesus that His coming would take place in that generation (Mat 24:34).

But there is worse to come. “Say what you like,” we shall be told, “the apocalyptic beliefs of the first Christians have been proved to be false. It is clear from the New Testament that they all expected the Second Coming in their own lifetime. And, worse still, they had a reason, and one which you will find very embarrassing. Their Master had told them so. He shared, and indeed created, their delusion. He said in so many words, “this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.” And He was wrong. He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else. It is certainly the most embarrassing verse in the Bible.

Lewis still believed Christ is coming. He explained the dilemma by saying that Christ in His human nature was limited. However, this would have made Him a false prophet. We believe His prophecies *were* fulfilled in that very generation. Matthew Henry, John Gill, and R.C. Sproul believed they were fulfilled in A.D. 70 as a type and shadow of a future fulfillment. In other words, Christ came spiritually and destroyed Jerusalem as a type of His future coming.

Mat 16:28 Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

John 21:22 Jesus said to him, “If I will that he [John] remain till I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me.”

Rev 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants--things which must shortly take place.

History tells us that John was the only apostle still alive in A.D. 70, but there were no doubt other disciples “standing there” with Jesus who had also survived.

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The Sign Of His Coming And The End Of The Age

We believe when Jesus said that He would come in that generation and the Apostles later said He was coming soon, that they did not lie. We believe He came spiritually in A.D. 70 and destroyed Jerusalem just like He said He would. He will come again some day physically.

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Act 6:14 [W]e have heard him [Stephen] say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us.

His fulfillment of that prophecy is a token of His future coming. The destruction of Jerusalem was the sign of His coming. It signaled the end of the O.T. age. Not everyone saw Jesus after He arose. But in a sense, EVERY EYE saw the destruction of Jerusalem. Through that sign, they saw Him coming in the clouds to the Ancient of Days (Dan 7:13). This was legal proof that Jesus was not only a true prophet, but was the Messiah.

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His Final Coming

The following Scriptures explain what some call the rapture. The Bible calls it the resurrection. This is the blessed hope of all believers.

The Lord shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. The dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds. So shall we ever be with the Lord
(**1 Thes 4:16**).

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed (**1 Cor 15:51,52**)