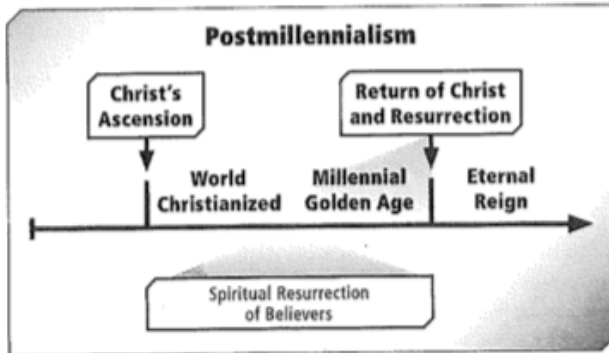




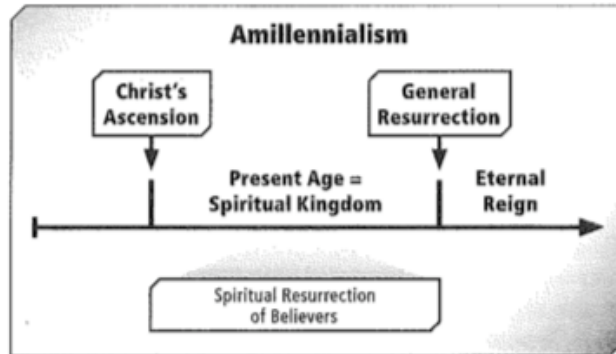
I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 1:9 ESV)

Viewpoints on the Millennium Kingdom and the Tribulation¹

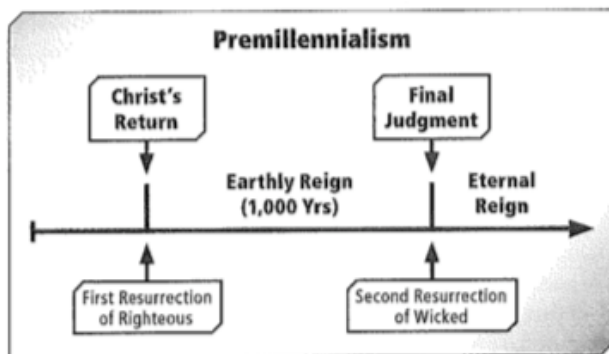
On the Millennium...



And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14 ESV)



Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. (Galatians 3:7 ESV)



⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." (Genesis 17:7-8 ESV)

Each of these views have support from Scripture and have dominated various periods of church history. Yours and my view might be wrong. Each has problems to reconcile with both Scripture and reason. Hold your view with humble conviction that is rooted in personal and communal study of the Scriptures.

ALREADY / not yet

already / **NOT YET**

Already / Not Yet

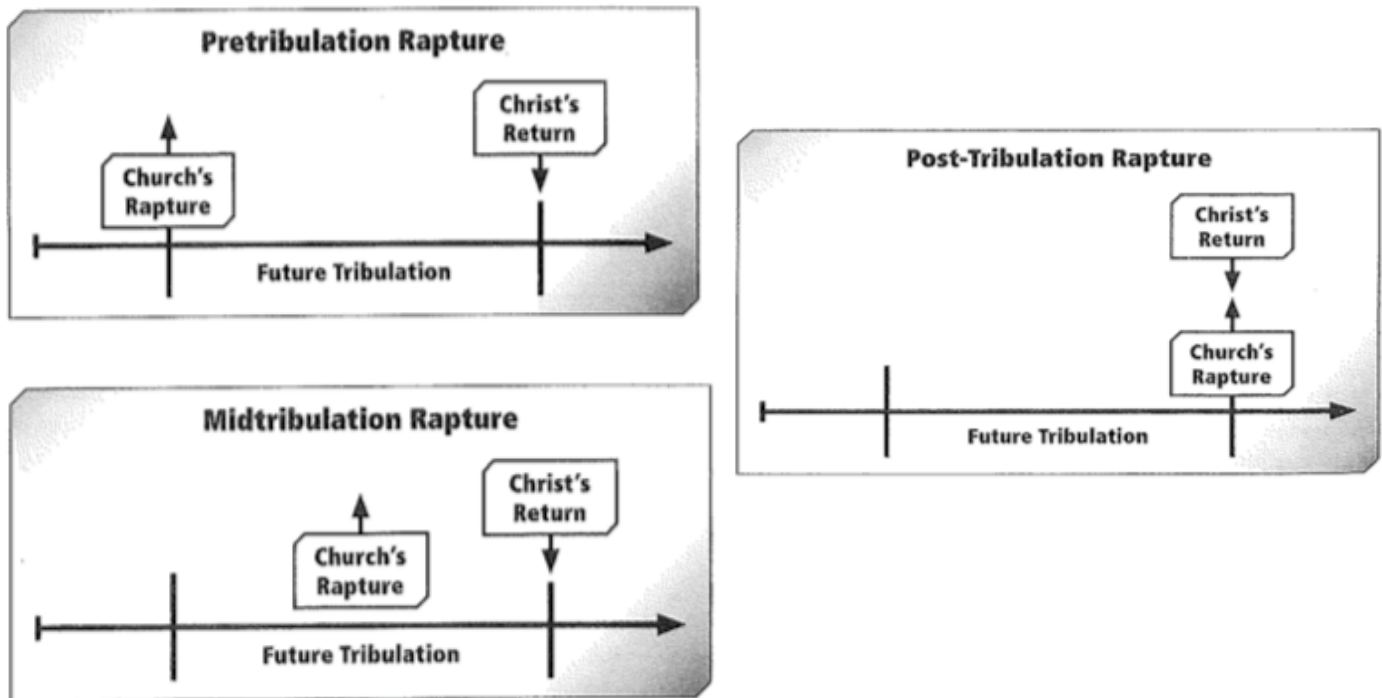
As kingdom citizens, we are to evangelize the lost with urgency, live out God's kingdom ideals in the church the best we can, and further causes of biblical justice for the good of mankind.

¹ Diagrams from Nathan D. Holsteen and Michael J. Svigel, *Exploring Christian Theology Vol. 3, The Church, Spiritual Growth, and the End Times*, (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2014).

On the Great Tribulation... (Premillennialism)

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 ESV)

Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, was there no hail.
(Exodus 9:26 ESV)



²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. (Act 14:22 ESV)

Therefore, let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.
(1 Peter 4:19 ESV)

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33 ESV)

¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.
(1 Thessalonians 4:17-18)

[Whether Christ takes us before, during, or after, we are to encourage one another with the promise of the rapture and patiently endure any suffering that comes our way, trusting in his faithfulness, and looking forward to his return.](#)

¹⁰ *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet ¹¹ saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."* (Rev 1:10-11 ESV)

Note on Audience: The seven churches existed in the 1st century, yet speak to all churches throughout history. The visions of 4-22 reveals the future, at times reflecting on the past and shedding light on this current age, in such a way that spoke to their day-to-day existence.

"They represent the types of churches that perennially exist throughout the church age. What Christ says to these churches is relevant in all times."
John MacArthur

¹² *Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.* (Revelation 1:12-16 ESV)

Rather than describing in detail exactly how Jesus looks (though he might look as described here), these symbols are meant to teach us about the character and nature of Jesus Christ.

SYMBOLS IN JOHN'S VISION OF CHRIST

ROBE AND SASH	Jesus as the Great High Priest	cf. Lev. 16:4
WHITE HAIR	Eternal wisdom.	cf. Dan. 7.9
FIERY EYES	Divine insight and judgment.	cf. Dan. 10:6
REFINED BRONZE FEET	Unrivaled strength and authority, yet pure.	cf. Dan. 10:6
MIGHTY VOICE / SWORD	Authoritative word that will judge the earth.	cf. Dan. 10:6; Isa. 11:4, 49:2
GLORIOUS FACE	Fully glorious, "Ideal end-time Messianic warrior"	cf. Jdg. 5:31

"Christ's face being like the sun shining in its strength is an allusion to Judges 5:31, where the same is said of the victorious Israelite warrior. Here the portrayal in Judges is viewed as pointing to Christ as the ideal end-time messianic warrior." G.K Beale

Jesus is the Christ (Messiah) who loves God perfectly and will return with unveiled glory.

"The word Christ in Greek, and Messiah in Hebrew, signify anointed, and imply the prophetic, priestly, and royal characters, which were to meet in the Messiah.... And if we look into ourselves, we shall find a want of Christ in all these respects. We are by nature at a distance from God, alienated from him, and incapable of a free access to him. Hence, we want a mediator, an intercessor, in a word, a Christ, in his priestly office. This regards our state with respect to God. And with respect to ourselves, we find a total darkness, blindness, ignorance of God, and the things of God. Now here we want Christ in his prophetic office, to enlighten our minds, and teach us the whole will of God. We find also within us a strange misrule of appetites and passions. For these we want Christ in his royal character, to reign in our hearts, and subdue all things to himself." – John Wesley

- **Jesus is the Great High Priest who is present with his Church. (v. 12-13; See Hebrews Ch. 4-10)**
- **Jesus is the wise and mighty King who rules with absolute purity. (v. 14-15)**
- **Jesus is the true prophet who holds his messengers in his hand and will judge the earth by his authoritative word. (v. 16)**

"The threefold office that was promised in the Old Testament and fulfilled in Jesus Christ is exercised now through the people of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the world. Every member of the body of Christ has a prophetic calling to share God's Word, a priestly calling to intercede for others, and a kingly calling to exercise God's authority in the world." – Philip Ryken

¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last,¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. (Revelation 1:17-18 ESV)

The fear of the Lord sets you free from the fears of this world.

Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. (Revelation 1:19 ESV)

An interpretive key? Two Views:

1. Outline of the Book (MacArthur)
 - a. Revelation 1 – Things that you have seen
 - b. Revelation 2-3 – Things that are
 - c. Revelation 4-22 – Things that will be
2. Phrasing is an allusion to the phrasing in Daniel 2 (Beale [Idealist] and Osborne [General Futurist])
 - a. All three clauses relate to the past, present, and future orientation of the entire book.

The 2nd view seems to fit better with the content of the book, while still maintaining a generally futurist outlook.

As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

(Revelation 1:20 ESV)

The Angels of the Churches, Four Views:

1. Guardian angels for churches.
2. General spirit of the churches
3. Pastor(s) of the churches
4. Messengers who ministered to John and delivered the letters

Angels = the pastors of the church who stand as representatives of the spirit of their congregation.

The Churches as Golden Lampstands

- **The Church is purified by Christ.**

What unites a church is simple: her members have been cleansed from their sin through their surrendered faith in the gospel. By the wounds of Christ, the church is healed. Apart from this reality, one may call themselves whatever they want to—member, deacon, pastor—but they are not a part of the church.

- **The Church is indwelt, empowered, and equipped by the Spirit. (cf. Zechariah 4:2-6)**
- **The Church is light in this world.**

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16 ESV)

Apply

1. Believe in Jesus, the Christ.
2. Reflect the image of Christ as prophets, priests, and kings.
3. Patiently endure in the trials of this life as kingdom citizens, proclaiming its gospel and furthering its character and causes in this world.
4. Fear the Lord, and be set free from the fears of this world.
5. Live out your faith in the community of the local church as lights in this world.

Tips on Reading the Bible Well:

- Seek to understand the author's original intent.
- Let Scripture interpret Scripture wherever possible.
- Let the genre and intention of the author inform whether or not you read something literally or figuratively.
- Look at the surrounding context to help understand what the author is saying.