

DISCIPLESHIP UNIVERSITY AT
FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
PROP 4500: REVELATION

Maranatha!

AUTHOR

There is some debate over who exactly wrote the book of Revelation.

First candidate: _____ the _____

Evidence:

- Earliest and most reliable church tradition

- The author's self-identification (1:1, 4)

- Early church fathers

Other candidates: _____ the _____

Evidence:

- Other candidates were not proposed until the _____ century
- Eusebius' use of Papias

- Style, grammar, and literary contrasts

Conclusion:

DATE

There are two different views on the date of when Revelation was written.

First date: Mid- to late-60s AD (prior to 70 AD)

Evidence:

- One ancient text

- Persecution of Christians

- The Temple in Jerusalem

Second date: Mid-90s AD

Evidence:

- Testimony of Irenaeus

- Emperor worship

- Evidence of the seven churches

Conclusion:

PLACE

The island of Patmos



LITERARY TYPE

Revelation is written in two literary genres: apocalyptic and prophetic. Understanding each is key to properly interpreting this book.

Apocalyptic literature

- “Apocalyptic” means _____,
_____, or _____.
- This type of literature was very popular during the intertestamental period.
Why?
 - Three aspects that Biblical apocalyptic literature share:
 - Revelation of hidden truth through visions
 - God’s people are encouraged to remain faithful during times of persecution
 - God’s people are assured that, despite the hopelessness of their present circumstances, God will someday punish sin and make the world right

Prophetic literature

- The future events described in the book

FOUR INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORKS

Historicist

Historicist School

Revelation's Visions

Chs. 1–3: Letters to 7 churches	Chs. 4–19: seals, trumpets, witnesses, woman and dragon, beasts, bowls, harlot, Armageddon	20:1–6: millennium	20:7–22:5: dragon destroyed, all in graves rise, white throne judgment, all things new
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1st-century churches	Patristic, medieval, Reformation, modern church ages	second coming, general resurrection, last judgment, new heaven and earth
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Historical References and Events

Notes:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Preterist

Partial Preterist School(s)

Revelation's Visions

Chs. 1–3: Letters to 7 churches	Chs. 4–11: seals, trumpets, witnesses	Chs. 12–19: woman/dragon, beasts, bowls, harlot, Armageddon*	20:1–6: millennium	20:7–22:5: dragon destroyed, all in graves rise, white throne judgment, all things new
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1st-century churches	Jerusalem's fall: A.D. 70	Rome's fall: 4th century*	Rest of Patristic, medieval, Reformation, modern church ages	second coming, general resurrection, last judgment, new heaven and earth
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Historical References and Events

* Partial preterists differ on what would (from the original recipients' viewpoint) precipitate the millennium. This chart represents the view that sees ancient Rome as the church's main enemy. Others would understand Second Temple Judaism as the church's main enemy.

Notes:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Futurist

Futurist (Historical Premillennialism)

Revelation's Visions

Chs. 1–3: Letters to 7 churches	Chs. 4–19: seals, trumpets, witnesses, woman and dragon, beasts, bowls, harlot, Armageddon	20:1–6: millennium	20:7–22:5: dragon destroyed, all in graves rise, white throne judgment, all things new
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1st-century churches	Patristic, medieval, Reformation, modern church ages	tribulation	second coming, believers raised, Armageddon	Christ reigns 1,000 years on earth	general resurrection, last judgment, new heaven and earth
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Historical References and Events

Futurist (Dispensational Premillennialism)

Revelation's Visions

Chs. 1–3: Letters to 7 churches	Chs. 4–19: seals, trumpets, witnesses, woman and dragon, beasts, bowls, harlot, Armageddon	20:1–6: millennium	20:7–22:5: dragon destroyed, all in graves rise, white throne judgment, all things new
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1st-century churches*	Patristic, medieval, Reformation, modern church ages	rapture, believers raised	tribulation	second coming, Armageddon	Christ reigns 1,000 years on earth	general resurrection, last judgment, new heaven and earth
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Historical References and Events

* Some dispensational interpreters think the churches addressed in chs. 2–3 predict different periods in church history.

Notes:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Idealist

Idealist School

Revelation's Visions

Chs. 1–3: Letters to 7 churches	Chs. 4–19: seals, trumpets, witnesses, woman and dragon, beasts, bowls, harlot, Armageddon 20:1–6: millennium	20:7–22:5: dragon destroyed, all in graves rise, white throne judgment, all things new
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1st-century churches	Patristic, medieval, Reformation, modern church ages	second coming, general resurrection, last judgment, new heaven and earth
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Historical References and Events

Notes:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

MILLENNIAL VIEWS

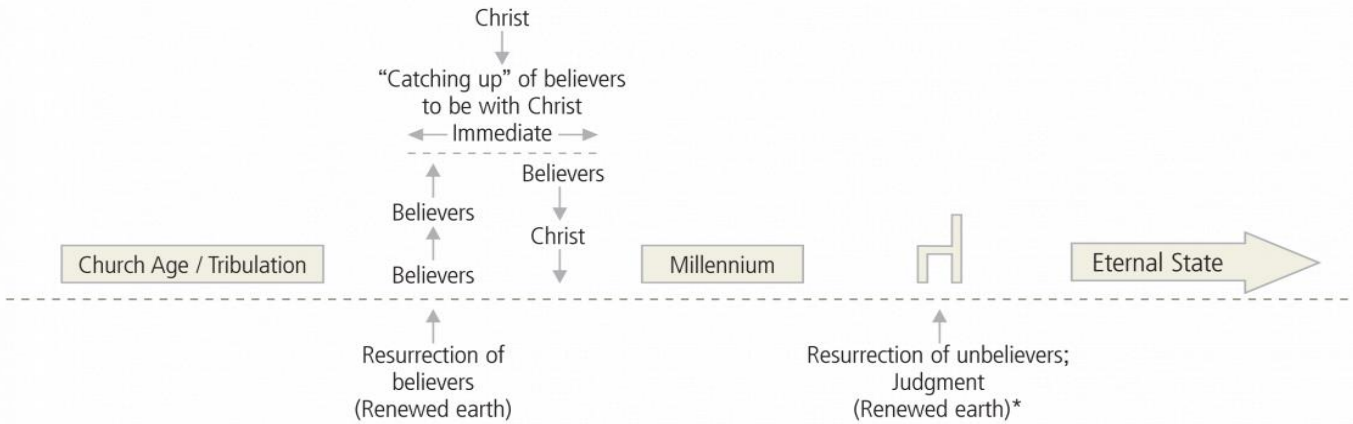
There are essentially three approaches to the Millennium that John writes of in Revelation 20:1-6.

- Premillennial:

- Difference between classical premillennialists and dispensationalists:

Classical Premillennialism

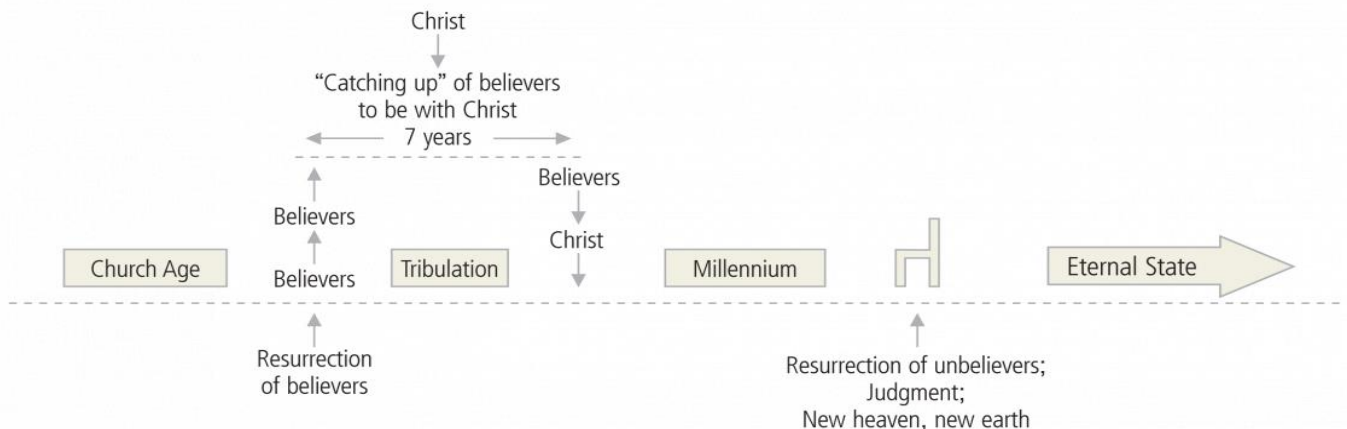
(Christ comes before the millennium but *after* the tribulation; the chair, in this and following illustrations, represents the judgment seat of Christ)



*Classical Premillennialists differ over whether the renewed earth will begin in the millennium or the eternal state.

Pretribulational Premillennialism

(Christ comes before the millennium and *before* the tribulation)



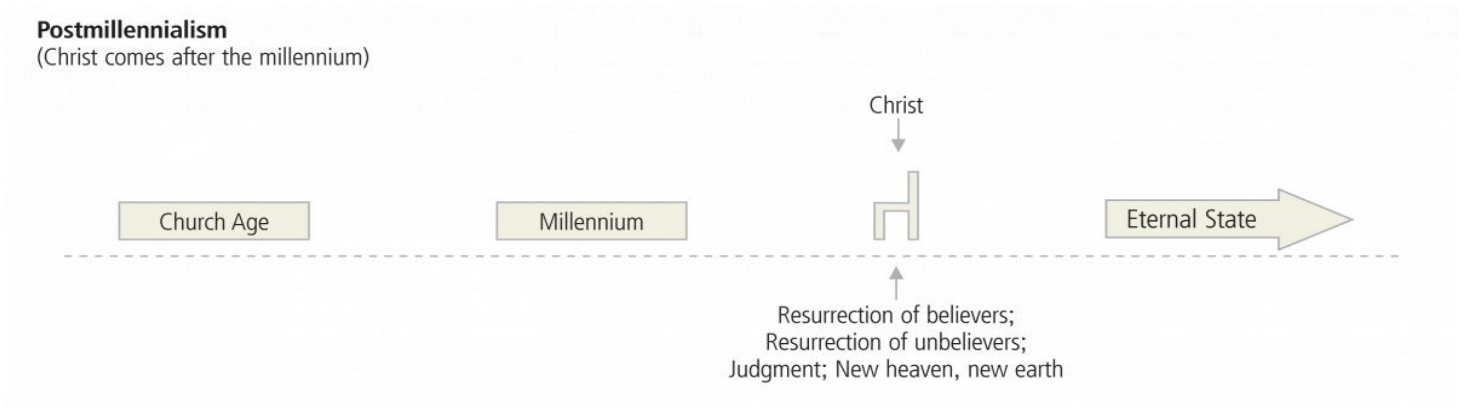
- Pre-tribulation

- Mid-tribulation

- Post-tribulation

- Premillennialism is most closely associated with:

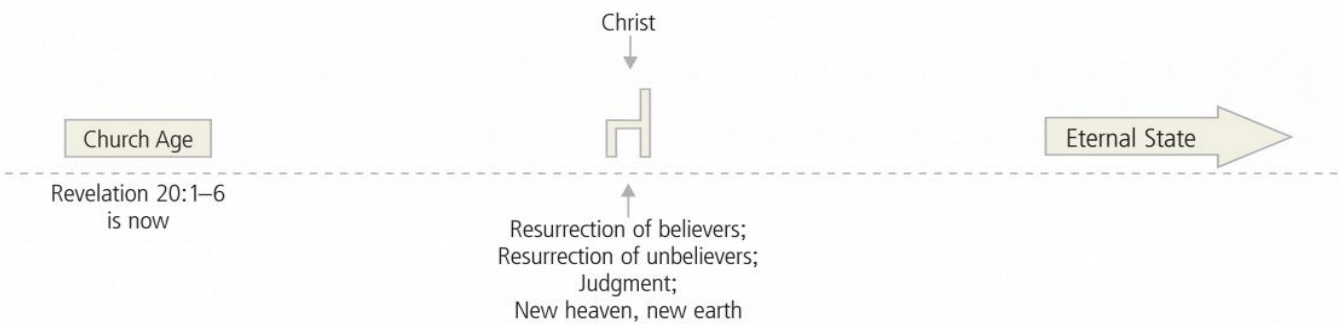
- Postmillennial:



- Postmillennialism is most closely associated with:

- Amillennial:

Amillennialism
(No future millennium)



- Amillennialism is most closely associated with:

- Other millennial views: promillennialism and panmillennialism

“This vision is about Jesus Christ...We may then understand what goes on in our world according to the principles we find in the book of Revelation, as it discloses who Jesus Christ is and what He is doing in this world, and what He will do to bring all things to an end.” ~Joel Beeke

“Revelation needs to be preached!...The visions of Revelation were not intended as complex puzzles for a scholarly cadre of specialists. Instead, every Christian should know and often think about the vision of the dragon, the woman, and her child in chapter 12. Every preacher should have the vision of the angel presenting John with the scroll of God’s Word emblazoned on his conscience. Believers entering into weekly worship should lift their spirits up to the vision of God’s throne room in chapter 4—

truly one of the great chapters in the Bible—conscious of entering into that very scene. And Christians suffering temptation or distress should turn anew to the vision of the glorified and exalted Jesus—Prophet, Priest, and King—who comes in chapter 1 as the Sovereign Lord with an urgent message for his church today, no less than in John’s time.” ~Richard D. Phillips

“The late British prime minister Winston Churchill once described the former Soviet Union as ‘a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.’ Many Christians view the book of Revelation in much the same way...Those who ignore Revelation deprive themselves of a rich treasure of divine truth. Revelation takes a high view of God’s inspired Word. It claims divine inspiration for itself (1:2), and it has been estimated that 278 of its 404 verses allude to the inspired Old Testament Scriptures. Revelation reveals God the Father in all His glory and majesty, describing Him as holy (4:8), true (6:10), omnipotent (4:11), wise (7:12), sovereign (4:11), and eternal (4:10). Revelation details the depths of man’s depravity. Despite experiencing the final outpouring of God’s devastating wrath and judgment on sinful mankind, people will nevertheless harden their hearts (like Pharaoh before them; 1 Sam. 6:6) and refuse to repent (9:20-21; 16:9, 11). Scripture contains no clearer summation of the doctrine of redemption than that of Revelation 1:5, which declares that ‘Jesus Christ...loves us and released us from our sins by His blood.’ The ministry of angels also figures prominently in Revelation, which contains one out of every four references to angels in Scripture. Revelation warns the church of the dangers of sin and compromise with the world (chaps. 2-3), and teaches how to properly worship God (chaps. 4-5)...But the book of Revelation is preeminently the ‘Revelation of Jesus Christ’ (1:1)...Far from being the mysterious, incomprehensible book many imagine it to be, Revelation’s purpose is to reveal truth, not obscure it.” ~John MacArthur