

Eschatology – Points of Agreement and the Two Ages
Fairfield Christian Reformed Church
April 19, 2020



John Piper
Debate Moderator¹

Jim Hamilton
Premillennial

Doug Wilson
Postmillennial

Sam Storms
Amillennial

The Three Historically held Positions

- Premillennial → Christ returns prior to his thousand-year reign on earth
 - o Hippolytus, Lewis Chafer, John Walvoord, D. Moody, John MacArthur, Thomas Schreiner
- Postmillennial → Christ returns after the symbolic thousand-year reign, which occurs through Christ's kingdom expansion on earth
 - o Charles Finney, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, Charles Hodge, B Warfield, NT Wright
- Amillennial → Christ returns after the symbolic thousand-year reign, which occurs in heaven, not on earth
 - o Augustine, John Calvin, Anthony Hoekema, Louis Berkhof, GC Berkhouwer

What is the definition of eschatology?

- Study of last things, including where we are right now
- Jesus' resurrection was an "eruption of the last things" in the middle of history

What is the Gospel?

- "Proclamation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the sins of his people and his exaltation to the right hand of God the Father... In Christ, God is remaking humanity, restoring the image of God, and Christ is that image of God that we are being restored into." –Doug Wilson
- "Christ died as a substitutionary sacrifice... in our place, enduring the wrath of God that we deserve, absorbed it into himself; exhausted it; satisfied the holiness and the wrath of the Father. At the same time... as our guilt was imputed to him and the wrath of God fell on him, for that reason his righteousness is imputed to us that we receive by faith so we stand declared righteous in the sight of the Father. That's the good news of what he accomplished that we receive through faith alone." –Sam Storms

¹ "An Evening in Eschatology." Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minnesota, MN, Sept. 27, 2009.

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Why is it Important to Talk about Eschatology?

- Ephesians 4-5 – we must grow up into unity, which requires talking about it
- “The millennium is a thousand years of peace that Christians like to fight about.”
- Those on the road to Emmaus lacked wisdom

This Age and the Age to Come

- Doug Wilson
 - o Illustration of a baton toss between the Judaic and Christian ages
 - o We are currently in the “age to come”
 - o The age to come is not the same as the eternal state
 - o When Christ comes again and the dead are raised, that is the eternal state
- Jim Hamilton
 - o Age to come is after Christ’s return, the messianic reign
 - o This age is the entirety of the Church between the two advents of Jesus
- Sam Storms
 - o This age is the present Church age in which we live
 - o Age to come is the new heavens and earth

Discussion Questions

- What other topics that we have discussed did you hear come through in their explanation of the Gospel?
- In the Gospel discussion, Doug Wilson said “Christ did not die so that we might live; Christ died so that we might die. He lives so that we might live... If they die in Christ, they are raised in Christ. If they die outside of Christ, they die outside of Christ and perish forever.” What is your reaction to this statement?
- Read Matt. 12:32, Mark 10:30, Luke 18:30, Luke 20:34-36, 1 Cor. 10:11, Gal. 1:4, Eph. 1:20-21, and Titus 2:11-13. What do these verses say about the “age to come”? What is your reaction to the three views on the “age to come”?