

B. Basic Views of the Millennial kingdom of Christ

Three basic views of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ have arisen in the history of this area of doctrine: Amillennialism, Postmillennialism, and Premillennialism. They differ as to the nature and the time of Christ's Millennial kingdom, and to some extent on the interpretation of Old Testament predictive prophecy.

1. Amillennialism

Millard J. Erickson, in his book *Contemporary Options in Eschatology*, mentions seven general features of Amillennialism:

- a. There will be no earthly, thousand-year reign of Christ. thus the name A-millennialism.
- b. The second coming of Christ will inaugurate the final age and the final state for both believers and unbelievers. This means that the second coming will be followed immediately by a general resurrection and general judgment of the righteous and the unrighteous, and their assignment to one of two ultimate and permanent states -- heaven or hell.
- c. The one thousand year period mentioned six times in Revelation 20 is symbolical rather than literal. It is symbolic of the present age between Christ's first and second comings.
- d. The two resurrections mentioned in Revelation do not require an intervening millennium. In addition, the two resurrections are not both physical. Some amillennialists hold that the first is spiritual and the second physical, others hold that both resurrections are spiritual.
- e. Old Testament prophecies which predict things concerning Israel and world conditions are to be understood figuratively and symbolically, as being fulfilled within the history of the New Testament church (or, as Anthony Hoekema has proposed, in the new earth).
- f. The amillennial view allows for either a deterioration or an improvement of world conditions, teaching neither that the entire world will be converted prior to Christ's return nor that world conditions will inevitably grow worse. Amillennialism thus claim to have a philosophy of history that is neither overly optimistic (as it claim Postmillennialism is) or overly pessimistic (as it claims Premillennialism is).
- g. Christ's second coming is imminent. With no major events of long duration yet to be fulfilled, the Lord could come at any time.

2. Postmillennialism

Erickson lists seven themes characteristics of Postmillennialism.