

Difficulties with Postmillennialism

1. Review of the problems so far:
 - a. Historic Premil – If everyone is resurrected, raptured, or destroyed in Rev 19 who enters the Millennium?
 - b. Dispensationalism – How to get living mortals into the Millennium to produce children, the presence of resurrected and unresurrected people coexisting on earth at the same time, Christ will sit on the throne in the Jerusalem temple while non-glorified humans offer sacrifices – when are they resurrected and how did they get there?
2. The Postmillennialism View
 - a. Looks forward to a glorious victory of Christ's Kingdom in this age due to the church missionary program
 - b. This will result in a world-wide Christianizing that results in gains throughout all areas of life (health, monetarily, political, cultural, etc.)
 - c. Christ will return to a converted world
 - d. Key terms:
 - i. Victory; Dominion, Conqueror

Question: Who knows the time of Christ's coming? If no one does is it plausible that Christ could return any moment? If so, what does this say of Postmillennialism and the state of the world currently?

Would God's plan for redemption be considered a failure if He returned today to a non-Christianized world?

3. First major difficulty
 - a. Postmillennial teachers must explain one critical question:
 - i. Why, after 2000 years, has the world not yet been Christianized?

4. The second major difficulty:
 - a. What is the nature of the NT expectation for the future course of this age?
 - i. The NT speaks of only two ages
 1. The Present Age (current temporal age)
 2. The Age to Come (eternal state)
 - ii. Cf. Matthew 12:32
 5. The dilemma:
 - a. Does the NT anticipate a future age in which the world IS Christianized at Christ's coming or does the NT portray Christ exerting His divine will and intervention into a wicked and unbelieving world like that in they days of Noah?
 - b. Does Christ come back to a Christianized world or to a decaying world?
 6. Notable Scripture References:
 - a. Matthew 13:24-49 – The parables – in particular the parable of the wheat and weeds
- This presents problems for the Premillennialist as well – there seems to be only one “harvest” at which the sons of the kingdom and the wicked will be separated.
- b. Matthew 24:37-39
 - c. Galatians 1:4
 - d. 2 Corinthians 4:4 – the god of this world (aiwn - or age)
 - e. Ephesians 1:21
 - f. Titus 2:12
 - g. Hebrews 6:5
7. Note also the term “Last Days”
 - a. Describes the period of time between the first and second advent of Christ – it does NOT refer or describe the time just before the return of Christ as many premil and postmil writers state
 - b. Acts 2:17

- c. 2 Tim 3:1-5 – this presents a serious problem for the golden age
 - i. Contrast this with Paul’s command to Timothy despite the last days
 - d. Heb 1:2
 - e. James 5:3
 - f. 2 Pet 3:3 – this again presents a problem for the Christianized golden age
8. The difficulty of the identity of the church
- a. Perseverance would become obsolete if there is to be a golden age
 - b. Why would the church be called to persevere?
 - c. Why would Timothy be told to preach despite the difficulty
 - d. Paul never indicates to the church that the times are going to get easier
 - e. The church is called to persevere despite the state of the world and the NT seems to indicate that the world be opposed to the church until Christ returns
 - f. Is the church not supposed to incur persecution from being separate from this world? (Mt. 5:10-12) – Identity with Christ brings persecution
 - g. Philippians 3:10-11
 - i. Does Paul not say that sufferings identified him with Christ?
 - ii. Romans 8:16-17
9. Consider the suffering church
- a. Phil 2:5-8

The church is called to suffer but the world says that this is foolishness. It is unfortunate that the modern day church sees this as foolishness as well.

Make the church look good – make the church look successful – make it look pretty – make it lose its suffering

and then people will come! This is what the world says and reduces and diminishes the need of Christ’s church to suffer.

“The church has had its most influence when its people are being persecuted and being put death rather than when the church had the power to put others to death.” ~ Jim Gables

The church will triumph in this age by suffering with Christ not by becoming a ruling authority.