

Theological Foundations for Leadership (TFL)

Creekstone Church • Spring 2011

Session #11 — “Eschatology: the Return of the King”

Introduction.

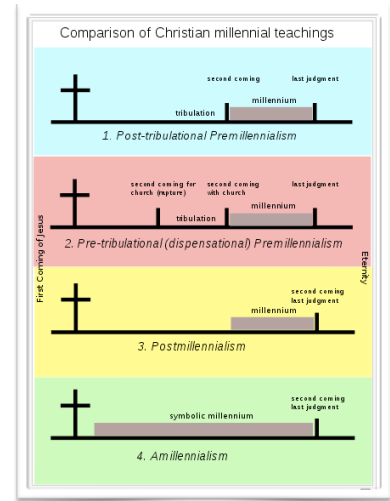
Eschatology is the study of the “end times,” which refer not only to the very last days of human history, but to the church age in general since the apostles.

There are a variety of views concerning the return of Jesus.

The passage we’re going to study does not cover every aspect of the return, but gives us plenty to work with.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. **14** For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. **15** For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. **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. The study of eschatology is very practical - v. 13
2. The return of Jesus assumes the death and resurrection of Jesus - v. 14a
3. The return of Jesus will mark the consummation of redemptive history, including the resurrection and glorification of deceased believers and the subsequent glorification of those who have remained alive at the coming of the King - v. 14b
4. The return of Jesus will be unmistakable and glorious - vv. 15-16
5. The big question and point of controversy concerns what is called “the rapture” - v. 17
6. The return of the King, including the resurrection and transformation of believers, should be an encouraging facet of faith - v. 18

Questions for Discussion and Application

- Is it okay to grieve the death of a loved one?
- What is the basis for hope in the context of that grief?
- What is the state of the believer after death?
- How does the reality of eternity affect a Christian worldview?
- Am I ready for the return of the King?