

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

Grand Tour of Eschatology

Passages: Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-6; Isaiah 2:1-4; Zechariah 14:1-5, 16-19; Revelation 20:1-6.

Introduction: John presented an overview of different interpretations of the end times as an introduction to Romans 11, where Paul answers the question, "have God's promises to Israel failed?" End times is a tertiary doctrinal issue, meaning that on the elder/pastor level there are different views represented at Redeemer, and each of the four views John covered is a possible faithful interpretation of Scripture.

Additional passages: Matthew 24:36, 44-47; 25:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-14, 5:2-5, 8.

Questions:

1. John noted that some of us are very excited about eschatology, while others have very little interest. Which category are you in? If the former, what raises your excitement level? If the latter, why is that?
2. John said God calls us to eagerly anticipate Christ's return, not be indifferent to it or push it out of our minds (2 Tim 4:8-10, Heb 9:28). How does this impact your engagement with end times' discussions?
3. How do you form and hold convictions about issues that Scripture addresses while maintaining a charitable attitude towards those who disagree?
4. John noted two key differences between dispensational pre-millennialism and historical pre-millennialism: 1) The dispensational view says Israel and the church are two distinct groups while the historical view says there is one people of God. 2) Dispensational view says the church will be raptured before the great tribulation while historical view says the church will go through the tribulation. (On these two points, the amillennial and post-millennial views agree with historical pre-millennialism.)
Do you understand why the Redeemer elders/pastors say these are debatable matters that do not need to impact shared mission together as members of the same local church?
5. Read Matthew 24:36, 44-47; 25:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-14, 5:2-5, 8. What do these passages have to say about those trying to predict exactly when Christ will return? What do these passages teach believers should be characterized by and found doing when Christ returns?
6. John finished by noting what every orthodox eschatological view agrees on:
 - a. Christ is returning as the true king.
 - b. He will apply justice to right every wrong.
 - c. God will resurrect the living and the dead.
 - d. Death will be defeated forever and in the new heavens and new earth there will be no more suffering, pain, sickness, or death.

What hope and joy do these truths offer to believers?