

ORDER FOR THE CORPORATE WORSHIP OF GOD
A Service of Celebration and Covenantal Renewal

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

—SCOTTY SMITH

MEDITATION AND PREPARATION—

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Great God, whose universal sway
The known and unknown worlds obey,
Now give the kingdom to Thy Son,
Extend His power, exalt His throne.

The saints shall flourish in His days,
Dressed in the robes of joy and praise;
Peace, like a river, from His throne
Shall flow to nations yet unknown.
("Jesus Shall Reign," Isaac Watts, 1719. vss. 1, 9, 14)

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

INVOCATION

—Elder Jack Watkins

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalms 90:1-4 (NIV)

- 1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place
throughout all generations.
- 2 Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
- 3 You turn men back to dust,
saying, "Return to dust, O sons of men."
- 4 For a thousand years in your sight
are like a day that has just gone by,
or like a watch in the night.

WORSHIP THROUGH SONG

Lyric sheets of today's music can be obtained from the ushers upon request

PASTORAL PRAYER

**Unveiled Hope:
The Meaning of the Millennium**

We now come to one of the most debated of all the chapters in the book of Revelation—chapter 20. The key issue for interpreters concerns the 1000 year period referred to in this passage. Is this a literal 1000 year period or something else? Please know that men and women equally committed to the Lordship of Christ and the highest view of Biblical inspiration and authority have differed significantly in interpreting the nature and meaning of the "millennium". This is the **only place** in the entire Bible which refers to Jesus reigning "1000 years." Yet whole theological systems have been built on this one phrase found in this one chapter of the Bible. Therefore, let's proceed with humility and teach-ability as we now turn our hearts to this great text.

Revelation 20:1-10

1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. 4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. 7 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth – Gog and Magog -- to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. 9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

I. THE THREE MAIN MILLENNIAL VIEWS

1. PREMILLENNIALISM

This position affirms that the 1000 years are to be taken literally. That is, Christ will return to earth to inaugurate a millennium of peace and righteousness, a period during which He reigns upon the earth with His people. At the beginning of this period, Satan is bound, and the first resurrection of Christians occurs. Towards the very end of this period Satan will be loosed, and the final showdown between his kingdom and God's Kingdom will occur. Satan and his allies will be utterly defeated and thrown into the lake of fire. The second resurrection and last judgment will take place, and this will mark the beginning of the final state, the ushering in of the new heavens and the new earth for believers and eternal separation from God for non-believers.

2. AMILLENNIALISM

This position affirms that the 1000 years are to be taken symbolically or metaphorically, consistent with the use of numbers throughout the Book of Revelation. The 1000 year period is understood to represent the entire period between the comings of Christ. It describes the present reign of Christ from heaven with His saints already with Him. It highlights the great defeat of Satan by the cross of Christ and understands the "binding" of Satan to refer to his no longer being able to keep the nations deceived relative to the great and gracious salvation of our God. Thus, during this period heaven is being filled up with men and women not just from among the Jewish nation, but also from every nation and people group upon the face of the earth. The first resurrection, in this system, refers to the resurrection of Jesus Christ in which all Christians share by virtue of their union with Him. At the end of this period Satan will be "loosed", that is, again he will be given power to deceive and blind the nations respect to the gospel, setting the stage for a final conflict which will precipitate his absolute defeat by the return of Jesus Christ. **Then** come the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment and the inauguration of the new heavens and the new earth, and eternal separation from God for those who have rejected the free grace of the gospel.

3. POSTMILLENNIALISM

This position teaches that the 1000 years refers to a period of peace and victory which the gospel will usher in **before** the return of Christ. Postmillennialists anticipate the advancement of the gospel throughout the world, not just with respect to the conversion of many from every nation, but also with respect to the healing of the nations. They anticipate a near "Christianizing" of the world prior to the return of Christ. Many who held to this position lived through great revivals and reformations in their lifetime leading them to believe that God would accomplish the same universally as a testimony to the power of the gospel and the glory of Jesus Christ. The final events in this schema are similar to that of Amillennialism.

GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

MINISTRY OF THE WORD, PART 2 –

II. THE MEANING OF THE MILLENNIUM *(Kudos to Darrell Johnson for writing Discipleship on the Edge: An Expository Journey through the Book of Revelation.)*

What Do All Three Millennial Views Affirm?

1. The best is yet to come.
2. The future belongs to Jesus, not to us.
3. The promised new world will come **to us, from God**, with the return of Jesus.

Where Do Proponents of Each View Tend to Err?

1. **Premill's** can be too **pessimistic** about life before the coming of Jesus.
2. **Postmill's** can be too **optimistic** about life before the coming of Jesus.
3. **Amill's** can be so dogmatic about the symbolism of the text they miss the **reality of the promises**.

Where the Three Ought to Agree

1. The one thousand years is not a rigid statistic. It's a dynamic symbol.
2. Jesus will not **become** King. He is **already** King of kings, and Lord of lords!
3. The church is not "a helpless victim on the stormy stage of history."
4. The gospel changes things, ALL THINGS... beginning with you and me.

OF THIS WE CAN BE SURE

1. Your participation and enjoyment in the "millennium" is not tied to your interpretation and position, rather it is simply tied to your being in Christ. Be sure about being in Christ even if you are confused, clueless or indifferent about the millennium.
2. Our greatest preoccupation should be with the "Millennium Man" himself, Jesus. Let's never forget that the central focus of the Book of Revelation is the revelation of **Jesus Christ**—who he is, what he has accomplished for us, and what he will bring to pass when he returns. Do you know him? Do you love him? Presently, how are you living as both an object of his affection and a subject in his kingdom?
3. Today, as we finish our study of Revelation and prepare to share in the Lord's Supper, let's obey the last command recorded in the Bible. **Revelation 22:17** - The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

COMMUNION

Welcome to our celebration of the Lord's Supper. All who confess Jesus Christ as their Savior are invited to be served. If you do not profess saving faith in Jesus, we ask that you refrain from taking communion and encourage you to prayerfully consider speaking with a Pastor or Elder. To receive the bread and cup—the body and blood of Christ broken and shed for you— please come forward to the nearest table and an Elder will serve you. Elders and Deacons are available to help guide you. If you cannot come to the table, please let a Deacon or Elder know and you will be served at your seat.

RESPONSE TO THE LORD THROUGH GIVING

—DEACONS OFFERING

We who drink of Jesus' grace are to be those who offer a cup of cold water of mercy in his name.

BENEDICTION

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION:

1. What had the most impact on you today from our time in God's Word and worship? What was encouraging, convicting, and/or calling for more clarification?
2. What is your background when it comes to discussions about the millennium of Revelation 20? How did today's study enlighten, broaden or help you think through what John had in mind in these 10 verses of the Bible? What is the significance of this being the only place in the Bible the 1000 year reign of Jesus is specified with this phrase? What are the strengths of each of the millennial views, from what you heard today?
3. Talk about life in the "already and not-yet", or as we refer to it in light of David Arms' painting, God's Story... "third panel living". What is already true, in light of the finished work of Jesus? What is not-yet experienced, but most certainly will be? How does this both encourage you and compel us to missional living and loving?
4. As we bring to conclusion our study of the Book of Revelation, what has been most helpful to you from the time we spent in the last book of the Bible? What questions linger? Send those in for the upcoming series called "A True and Reasonable Faith"!
5. Close with a good season of prayer for one another

GRADUATING SENIORS, 2008

<i>Student</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>School</i>
Adam (Toy) Andrews	Kathy Andrews	Prescott Arizona University
Addie Lee	Robb & Jamie Lee	University of Georgia
Arthur Perthel	Mark & Beth Perthel	M.TN. State University
Bethany Long	Kevin & Darlene Long	Undecided
Caleb Chapman	Steven Curtis & Mary Beth Chapman	Undecided
Caroline Morris	Taylor & Marie Morris	Auburn University
Charles Martin Jamison Ware	Brent & Judy Ware	Belmont University
Christopher James Lane	Mark & Renee Lane	Boston University
Daniel Campbell	Barry & Pat Campbell	University of Tennessee
Forrest J. Reynolds	Forrest & Judith Reynolds	University of Tennessee
Gabby Thompson	Mary Thompson	M.TN. State University
Hannah Witt	Brian & Susan Witt	M.TN. State University
James McIntyre	Jim & Betty McIntyre	University of Tennessee
Jessi Gamble	Sue Gamble	U. TN. at Chattanooga
Jessica Henderson	Mindy Henderson	University of Tennessee
John Bibb	Julian & Jayne Bibb	Wake Forrest University
Kelsey Tichenor	David & Lisa Tichenor	Samford University
Kevin McCurdy	Bruce & Debbie McCurdy	Undecided
Kirkland Thomas Vaughn	Mike & Joan Vaughn	American University
Laura Lively	Ron & Penny Lively	Columbia State University
Lindsay White	Drew & Julie White	Auburn University
Luke McCroskey	Lee & Debra McCroskey	University of Alabama
Mackenzie Van Dam	Jerry & Betsy Van Dam	University of Tennessee
Marc Votteler	Robert & Pam Votteler	University of Tennessee
Martin Grude	Amy Morse	Lipscomb University
Mary Jane Pope	Wayne & Sunny	University of Kentucky
Matthew De La Torre	Bob & Annette De La Torre	Northwestern
Matthew Kuhn	Steve & Dede Kuhn	University of Central Florida
Meaghan Bizzell	Leroy & Kristine Bizzell	U. T. at Chattanooga
Meghan Mace	Jim & Debbie Mace	University of Arkansas
Michael Krey Schlitt	John & Dorla Schlitt	Columbia State University
Michael Seites	Mark & Marilyn Seites	M.TN. State University
Mitchell Reed Brandon	Gary & Joy Brandon	Auburn University
Paul Warren	Larry & Warren	Baylor University
Rachael Daughtrey	Wade & Sue Daughtrey	University of Tennessee
Rachel Creamer	Matt & Roberta Creamer	M.TN. State University
Rebecca Stoll	Dawn Stoll	Columbia State University
Rose Van Ryckeghem	Pat & Dawn Van Ryckeghem	Western Kentucky University
Roxanne McIntyre	Mike & Kristi McIntyre	Jacksonville University
Samuel Roley	Scott & Linda Roley	Cumberland University
Sandy Moss	Don & Peggye Moss	University of Alabama
Timothy Tant	Scott & Kim Tant	United States Army