

Hoffmantown Church Eschatology Seminar

Charles Clough

“The Millennial Kingdom”

Topics to be covered:

- 1. Connection between eschatology & real history (Biblical & Secular)**
- 2. Prophets' descriptions of the millennium & why we interpret their words the way we do**
- 3. Purpose of the millennium**
- 4. Implications for Christian living today**

Eschatology & Real Life Today—Hope or Despair?

That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hope and fears. . .are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; . . .and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruin – all these things. . .are so nearly certain, that no philosophy that rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built.

Bertrand Russell, "A Free Man's Religion" (1903) essay in Mysticism and Logic (1917) pg. 45-46

Eschatology & Real Life Today—Hope or Despair?

“The fate of mankind, as well as of religion, depends upon the emergence of a new faith in the future. Armed with such a faith, we might find it possible *to resanctify the earth*”

Al Gore, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*, 1st edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992), 263

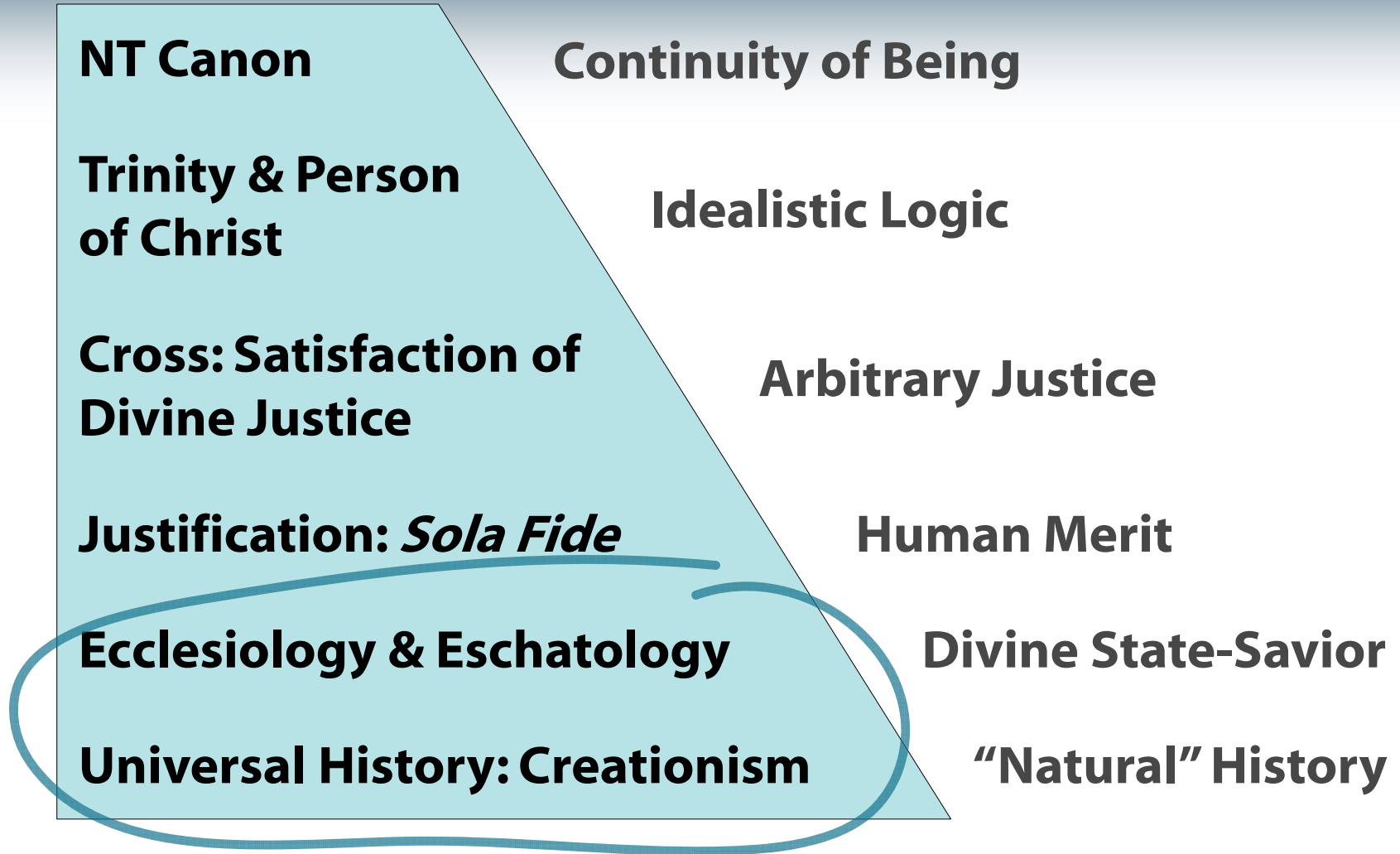
“I can’t wait to have Al Gore advising me when I am President of the United States”

Hilary Clinton’s address at Miami-Dade College, Oct 12, 2016

Worshipping Nature in NYC



Eschatology & Church History



Eschatology & the Unbelieving World

“Hitler believed that primitive Christianity was the ‘first Jewish-Communistic cell.’ The Nazis therefore propounded their own Millennium. . . .The 1000 year Reich was propagated as a counter culture millenarianism directly opposed to the very originators of the millennial/apocalyptic worldview—Jews and Christians.”

Mark Musser, *Nazi Oaks*, 150.

Eschatology & the Unbelieving World

“We need a restoration of the millennial hope which the Catholic Church dropped out of eschatology. It was crude in its form but wholly right in its substance. . . We hope for such an order for humanity as we hope for heaven for ourselves.”

Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, 88

Eschatology & the Unbelieving World

“We are in the midst of the worldwide rise of a non-religious chiliastic [apocalyptic] movement, announcing global human renewal and predicting planetary catastrophe as its woeful alternative. . . . [This belief is that] it is possible now, amid present corruption and degradation, to build a glorious new Rome.”

Ernest Sternberg, “Purifying the World: What the New Radical Ideology Stands For,” *Orbis* 54:1 (Winter 2010)

Eschatology & Real History--Summary

“[The dispensational] view of history is anti-humanist and anti-developmental. . . Change takes place almost solely through dramatic divine intervention. . . .Modern historiography assumes that human and natural forces shape the course of history. . . .These totally opposing views of history lay at the heart of the conflict and misunderstanding between theological liberals and their fundamentalist opponents.”

George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford University Press, 1980) 62-63

Prophetic Millennium Literally Interpreted

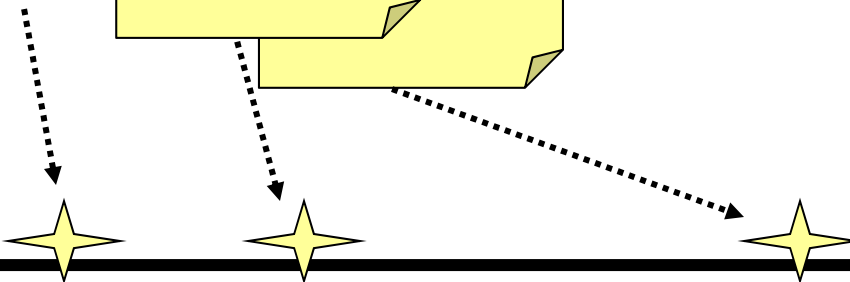
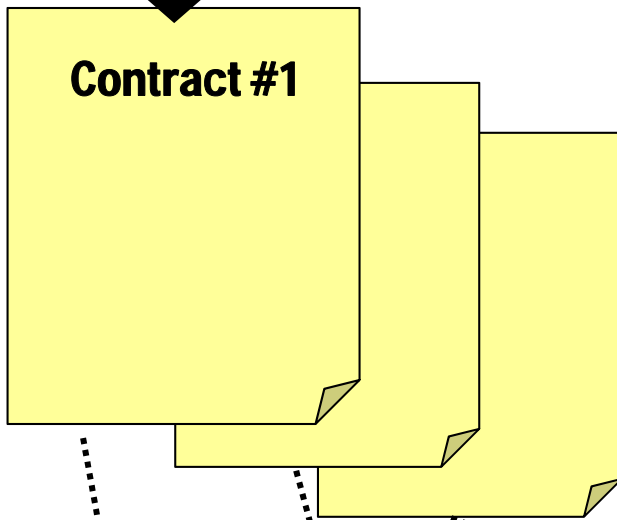
- 1. *Physical Environment* Supernaturally Changed (Isa 11:6-9; 33:24; 41:18)**
- 2. *Human Society* Supernaturally Changed (Isa 2:2-4; 65:19-20)**
- 3. *Invisible Spirit World* Supernaturally Changed (Rev 20:1-2)**

Prophetic Millennium Literally Interpreted

CREATOR &
REDEEMER



Contract #1



Consistent contract stipulations throughout time

“Only the Hebrews, so far as we know, made covenants with their gods or God.” W.F. Albright, Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan.

Prophetic Millennium Literally Interpreted

Abrahamic Contract → geographically-defined land forever, revelation to mankind exclusively through his genetic descendants, for blessing all mankind

Davidic Contract → dynasty of his genetic descendants to Messiah reigning over mankind from Mt. Zion

New Contract → with Israel to meet the behavioral standards required by the Mosaic Law for blessing

Prophetic Millennium Literally Interpreted

“The theology that motivated the movement to evangelize the Jews conceived of that people not as a rival religious community but as a remnant of an ancient people who carry a special mission and are predestined to help bring the drama of Christian salvation to its conclusion. . . In no other case has one religious community assigned a predominant role to another religious community in its vision of redemption. . . .”

Yaakov Ariel, *Evangelizing the Chosen People* (Univ of North Carolina Press, 2000) 287

The Purpose of the Millennium

“Why should there not be an age when all wars will be stopped, all diseases cured, all the injustices of government rooted out, and a full measure of years added to human life? Why should there not be an age in which all such unrealized and worth-while dreams of humanity will at last come true on earth? . . . All the true values of human life will be preserved and carried over into the coming kingdom; nothing worthwhile will be lost.”

Alva McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom* (1968) 530f

The Purpose of the Millennium

“The rebellion reveals that even after a thousand years of a socially just environment without what is claimed today to be the causes of social injustice—wars, lack of natural resources, poverty, lack of education, plagues, corrupt leadership—ethical progress in mortal society is fragile and reversible.”

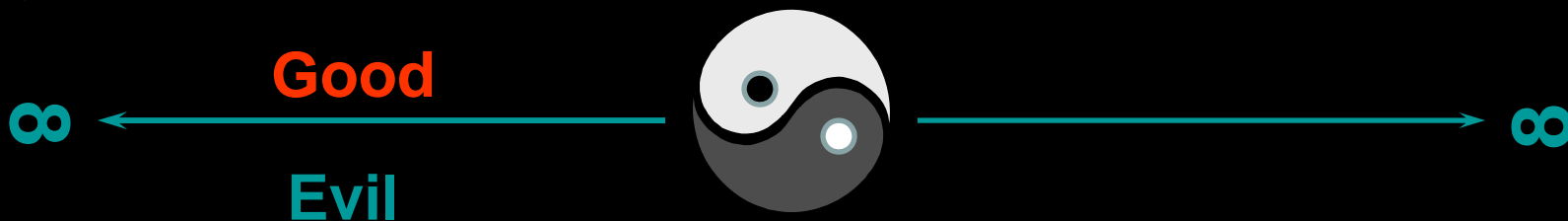
Charles Clough, “Historical Progress While the New Covenant Awaits Implementation,” *An Introduction to the New Covenant* ed. Christopher Cone (2013), 350f

Who Has the REAL “Evil Problem”?

Christian:



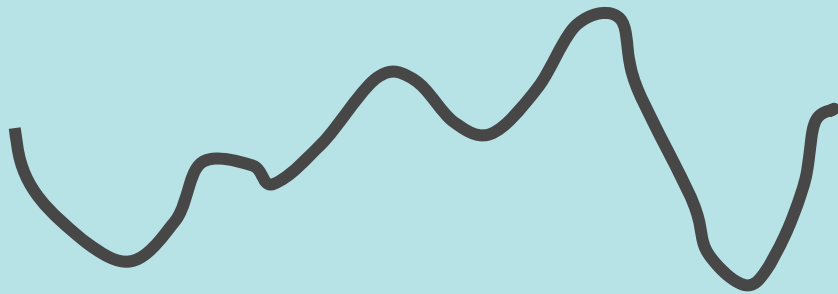
Pagan:



Church Age Contrast with Tribulation & Millennium Conditions

ENVIRONMENT

NOT Millennial conditions



NOT Tribulational conditions

*“Dominion-friendliness”
of natural environment*

POLITICS

NOT Millennial conditions



NOT Tribulational conditions

Cultural righteousness