

are serious difficulties in considering the millennium as still future, though prior to Christ's return, as we have noticed.

Amillennialism is difficult to define. Many views seem to be held by those individuals who take this name, and it is hard to find real agreement among them. The word means "no millennium," and the view seems to be a negative one, consisting mainly of a denial of premillennialism. Most who hold this view seem to deny the millennial kingdom altogether, spiritualizing the prophecies so as to make them refer to the Gospel age. Some seem to deny this, claiming to accept the predictions of an earthly, universal, external kingdom, but alleging that it is everlasting. Such a view can be held only if Revelation 20 is spiritualized into thin air. We have already noticed additional difficulties which it involves.

Certainly it is utterly unfair to draw obscure and tenuous inferences by pressing some statements of Paul to the utmost possible extent and then to use these inferences as a basis for rejecting the plain meaning of the statements of John.

DESTRUCTIVE METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

The truth of the matter is that both postmillennialism and amillennialism reject precious teachings which are plainly taught in Scripture. In doing so they introduce a method of interpretation which is utterly destructive. Some apply this method only in a few chapters of the New Testament. Others apply it widely in both Old and New Testaments. It is not a matter of merely taking figurative language as figurative. Most language contains figurative expressions. It is a matter of taking an entire framework of a passage figuratively, and passing beyond the bounds of any sane use of figures whatever. A pinch of salt in a dish of soup is good. If one pours a bucket of salt into a quart of soup, the result is disagreeable and dangerous to health. This is the so-called spiritualization. If a man rejects premillennialism, let me plead with him to be utterly inconsistent, and to restrict his spiritualization to a few passages. For if he applies it widely, he must give up many other precious truths of God's Word.

My purpose in presenting this subject has not been controversial. I have no desire to promote divisions regarding these matters. But I cannot keep silent where God has spoken clearly in his Word. God has given us this great hope for a purpose. How sad if we neglect the gift that he has given. The teaching of the Scripture regarding the premillennial return of Christ to establish his kingdom of universal