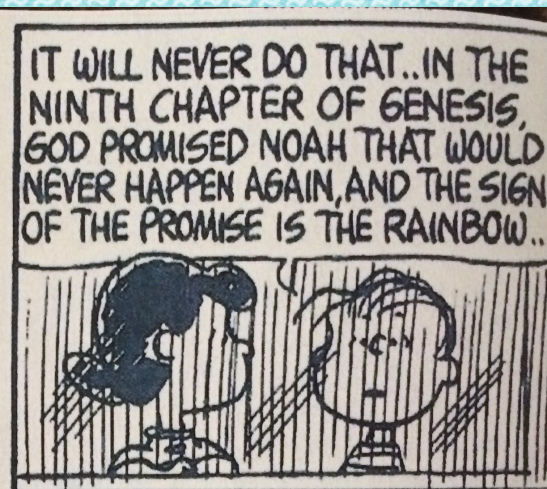


What Is Dispensationalism?

2025

Charlottetown Bible Chapel
Fall Conference, Friday evening



Introduction

- ▶ **State Churches?** Germany, Norway, Italy
- ▶ **Church Armies?** Such as there were during the European Reformation.
- ▶ **Religious Cities?** Such as Jerusalem, Rome
- ▶ **Polygamy?**
- ▶ Should it be practiced today? Why not?
- ▶ Dispensationalism speaks to these issues?

What is Dispensationalism?

▶ *Dispensationalism shows Christ to be the center of God's program for the ages and the object of worship for eternity. Dispensationalism shows the failure of man, the mercy of God, and the glory of Christ as both a Savior and King.*

Dispensationalism has proven itself to be a stimulus for evangelism, and world missions, sound principles for Bible interpretation, the importance of prophecy, the centrality of Christ.

Think it over...

- ▶ **“Discern the times and the seasons (of the Bible) and all Scripture will be in harmony with itself.”**
—Matthew Henry
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- ▶ **All Scripture is for us but not all Scripture is to us.”** — Charles Ryrie

Dispensationalism Basics

- ▶ Literal Interpretation of Scripture
- ▶ Distinction between Israel & Church
- ▶ Emphasis on Bible Prophecy
- ▶ Emphasis on the Person of Christ
- ▶ Emphasis on Missions
- ▶ Emphasis on Defense of Doctrine
- ▶ Emphasis Biblical Scholarship

7 Dispensations

Innocency	Conscience	Human Gov.	Promise	Law	Grace	Millennium
Gen. 1:1-3:6	Gen. 3:7-8:14	Gen. 8:15-11:9	Gen. 11:10-Ex. 18:24	Ex. 19:1-John 19:30	Act. 2:1-Rev. 19:21	Rev. 20:1-15

1. There is always spiritual and moral decline at the end of a dispensation
2. Salvation in every dispensation is on the basis of the blood and by faith.
3. Each dispensation contains responsibility, failure, judgement
4. Each dispensation shows Christ as the center of the ages.
5. Some principles overlap dispensations such as conscience, grace, promise

Word: “Dispensation”

- The word “**Dispensation**” is the translation of the Greek word *Oikonomia*, meaning “house order”, “Administration”, or “Stewardship.”
- The word ***Oikonomia*** in its various forms is used over 20 times in the New Testament.
- “**Age,**” “**Ages**” speaking of a specific working of God is mentioned over 30 times in the Bible. “present age”(Titus 2:12), “age to come”(Heb 2:5)

Some Observations

- **Sin** - In each dispensation SIN becomes **darker**. Innocency (disobedience); Conscience (Murder) Human Government (False worship) Law (idolatry, Sexual immorality)
 - **Christ** - In each dispensation Christ become **brighter**. Innocency (Types of Christ) Promise, Law (Prophecy of Christ); Law (Messianic Psalms) Grace (coming of Christ); Kingdom (Kingship of Christ) Eternal state (Christ the Center)
 - **One Man** - In each dispensation God always uses one man. Innocency (Adam) Human Government (Noah) Promise (Abraham) Grace (Paul)
- God begins with one**
God uses one to influence many
God uses one to to great things
Great Principle - God begins with you to do his work - Mueller, Hudson Taylor
Exodus 2:23,24,25, 3:1 But now Moses

Dispensations - Biblical Ages

- **This age, nor the age to come (Mt. 12:32)**
- **This present evil age (Gal. 1:4)**
- **The age to come (Eph. 2:7, He. 6:5)**
- **End of the ages (Heb. 9:26)**
- **Ends of the ages (1 Cor. 10:11)**
- **Age of the ages (Eph. 3:1)**

“Dispensation” or “Age”

—Harry A. Ironside

“A dispensation, then, is a period of time in which God is dealing with man in some way in which He has not dealt with Him before.”

—Charles C. Ryrie

“A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God’s purpose. If one were describing a dispensation, he would include other things such as the ideas of distinctive revelation, testing, failure, and judgement.”

Dispensations & Scripture

Ephesians 1: mentions 1 Dispensation.

Ephesians 1:10- “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ...”

John 1 (gospel): mentions 2 Dispensations.

John 1:17 - “For the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 3: mentions 3 Dispensations. (1) DISPENSATION OF PROMISE “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made...(v. 16) (2) DISPENSATION OF LAW “...The law, which came four hundred and thirty years after...(v. 17) (3) DISPENSATION OF GRACE “Before faith came, we were kept under the law...(v. 23) ...but after faith is come we are no longer under...(v. 25).

Three Primary Characteristics of a Biblical Dispensation

Three Primary Characteristics of a Biblical Dispensation

- a. Each dispensation unfolds a unique ***Rule (administration)*** in which God conducts His affairs over men. For instance Law, Human Government, or Grace.
- b. Each dispensation unfolds a unique (new) ***Revelation from God to man.*** (Revelation not known in the previous dispensation.)
Capital punishment, The Law and priesthood, tabernacle, the Church, body of Christ of which Christ is head.
- c. Each dispensation unfolds a unique ***Responsibility for man in his responsibility to God.***

Three Secondary Characteristics of a Biblical Dispensation

Three Secondary Characteristics

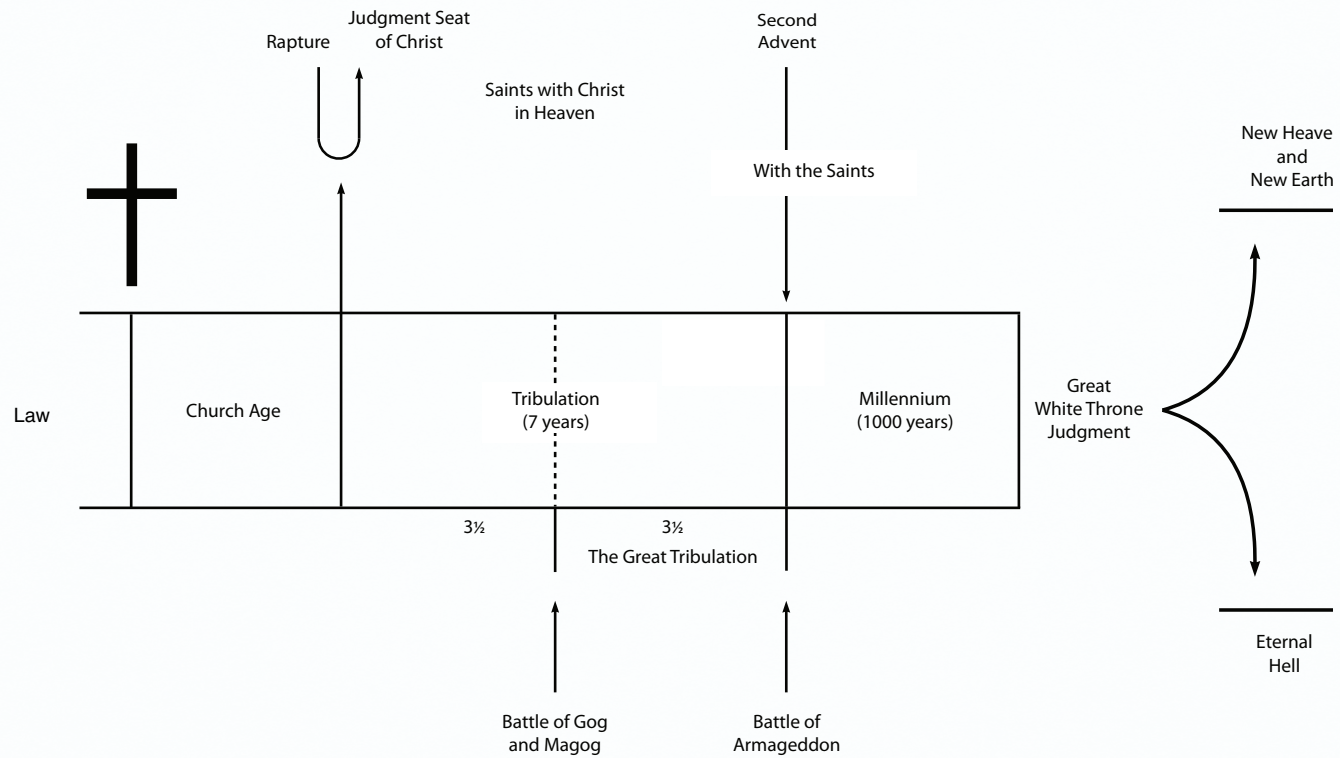
Three Secondary Characteristics of a Biblical Dispensation

- a. Each dispensation will **“apply a test”** to man’s obedience to God.
- b. Each dispensation will **“demonstrate a failure”** of man to obey God.
- c. Each dispensation will **“execute divine judgment”** upon man’s disobedience.

Characteristics of the Seven Dispensations

Seven Dispensations	Innocency	Conscience	Human Govt.	Promise	Mosaic Law	Grace	Millennium
Scripture	Genesis 1:1-3:24	Genesis 4:1-8:14	Genesis 8:15-11:32	Genesis 12:1-Ex. 18:27	Ex. 19:1-Jn. 19:30	Acts 2- Rev. 19:21	Revelation 20:1-15
Beginning	Creation of Man	Fall of Man	Flood	Call of Abraham	Giving of Mosaic Law	Calvary	Second Coming
Ending	Fall of Man	Flood	Call of Abraham	Giving of Mosaic Law	Calvary	Rapture of Church	Release of Satan from Abyss
Ruling Factor	Unconfirmed Holiness	Conscience	Human (Civil) Government	Promises	Mosaic Law	Grace	The Theocratic (kingdom) Rule of Christ
Man's Responsibility	Marry, Multiply, and Subdue	Blood Sacrifice	Populate the earth, capital punishment	Faith, Obedience to the Promises of God	Obedience to the Law	Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ	Obedience to the King
Man's Failure	Disobedience and Ate of the Tree in the Garden of Eden	Murder	Tower of Babel	Unbelief	Law Broken	Rejection and Crucifixion of Christ	Resistance and Final Revolt
Man's Judgment	Earth's Curse, Physical & Spiritual death	World-wide Flood	Languages Confused	Slavery in Egypt	Times of the Gentiles	7-Year Tribulation Period	Great White Throne Judgment
Moral Decline at the End of Each Dispensation	Disobedience to the Commands of God	Failure of Cain to bring the proper blood sacrifice ("way of Cain")	"Every imagination ... thoughts...only evil continually" Gen. 6:5	40 years of rebellion in the wilderness, hardness of heart	Matt. 23 – Religious corruption, Moral decline, spiritual <i>deceit</i>	2 Timothy – "Lovers of self, form of godliness... lovers of pleasures."	Rev. 20:8 Deception, Loyalty and Service to Satan
Miraculous Signs at Beginning of each Dispensation	Divine Creation	None Mentioned	None Mentioned	Rainbow in heavens	Lightning and Thunder on Mount Sinai	Tongues, Signs, Wonders at Pentecost	Cosmic Disturbances Prior to Second Coming

The Premillennial Scheme of World Events



Mixing Dispensations?

Danger of Confusing Dispensations

- ▶ Applying principles from the dispensation of law in the dispensation of Grace?
- ▶ Principles from the Millennium and applying them today in the age of Grace?

Confusing Definitions?

Danger of Confusing Definitions

- ▶ **Day of the Lord?**
- ▶ **Confusing the kingdom with the church?**
- ▶ **Confusing Israel with the Church?**

Matthew 10:5-6, 28:19, Acts 1:8

- ▶ **Matthew 10:5-6** “Go not into the way of the Gentiles...But rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel...”
- ▶ **Matthew 28:19** - “Go you therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name...”
- ▶ **Acts 1:8** - “You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth.”