

Dispensationalism

Introduction

19 November 2014 Wed – 2 Timothy 2:15 – Disp 14 – Scott Childs

Introduction: I want to begin this evening with a question. ([Genesis 2:25](#)) "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." ([1 Timothy 2:9](#)) "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; ..." Both statements are in our Bible. Which are we to follow? __ Why? __

As we study the Bible, it is important we understand that it describes various periods in which God dealt with man differently. God is not changing, but He is testing man in various situations to make it clear that man cannot live holy to save himself from judgment. "In every dispensation man fails and only God's grace is sufficient." Chafer / Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes*, p. 136

Lewis Chafer states "It is probable that the recognition of the dispensations sheds more light on the whole message of the Bible than any other aspect of biblical study." *Ibid.*, p. 126

Transition: This evening I want to introduce you to dispensationalism.

1. What is Dispensationalism?

a. A definition of dispensationalism

- 1) The word "dispensation" is used four times in the Bible (1Co 9:17, Eph 1:10, 3:2, Col 1:25). It refers to the management of a household or of household affairs.
- 2) "A biblical dispensation involves: a divine revelation of some new approach in God's relationship with man and a resultant responsibility which man has." Ernest Pickering, *Dispensationalism Mining the Riches of God's Word*, p. 4
- 3) "A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God." Scofield Reference Bible
- 4) These tests are not to enlighten God, but to bring out what is in people, whether faith or failure. Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, p. 29

⌚ Think about this. Why did Israel stone the man who picked up sticks on the Sabbath? Why did David pray

“take not thy holy spirit from me”? Why don’t we offer animal sacrifices for our sins? Why can’t the lion and lamb lay together as they will during the Millennium? None of these questions have biblical answers if we reject dispensations in the Bible.

b. Characteristics of dispensationalism

- 1) “Dispensationalism essentially is a system of biblical interpretation.” Pickering, p. 1 (See Ryrie, p.36)
 - a) It uses a literal interpretation of Scripture without spiritualizing. Literal interpretation leads to a pretribulation rapture and a premillennial return of Christ.
 - b) It makes a distinction between Israel and the church. Israel is the literal descendants of Abraham — Christians are not spiritual Israel. “God is not finished with Israel. The church didn’t take Israel’s place. They have been set aside temporarily, but in the Endtimes will be brought back to the promised land, cleansed, and given a new heart.” Endtimes.org
 - c) It shows God’s purpose is to glorify Himself rather than just to provide salvation for man.
 - d) It holds that salvation is by grace through faith in every dispensation. Pickering, p.2 Salvation is by faith in accordance to the revelation given in a particular dispensation.
 - e) It teaches that God has revealed His will progressively in the Bible. “There is a distinguishable pattern of progressive revelation in Scripture. During each period man is especially accountable to God in some particular way.” Pickering, p.3
- 2) Most dispensationalists find seven dispensations in the Bible (titles vary): Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, Patriarchal Rule, Mosaic Law, Grace, Kingdom
- 3) Each contains a command, a failure, a punishment, a hope
- 4) Read *Major Bible Themes*, p. 127 ¶ 1,2