

Dispensationalism- Lecture 1

Introduction

We agree with the following statement by Charles Ryrie: “If plain or normal interpretation is the only _____ hermeneutical principle and if it is consistently applied, it will cause one to be a dispensationalist. As basic as one believes normal interpretation to be, and as consistently as he uses it in interpreting Scripture, to that extent he will of necessity become a dispensationalist”

The normal _____ method of interpretation is the only proper method. On the opposite end of the spectrum there are those who are committed to Reformed theology and its allegorical method of interpretation, which despises dispensationalism.

I. What Is Dispensationalism?

Dispensationalism refers to the fact that Bible history can be divided into distinct periods of time during which God works out His purposes. Dispensationalism is:

- 1- based on a _____ interpretation of the Bible
- 2- based on a clear distinction between _____ and the Church.

I. Several words have reference to Dispensationalism

A. The Bible uses the word _____ in Ephesians 1:10.
It refers to a period of _____ during which God is doing some particular work.

B. Another Bible word for this is _____.
In Acts 1:7 we find the phrase “the times,” referring to God’s plan. These are also called “the seasons.” It refers to the time on God’s great calendar. The Bible speaks of the “times of the Gentiles” (Lk. 21:24), the “times of the restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21), and “this present time” (Rom. 11:5).

C. Another Bible word for this is _____. The Bible refers to “ages past” (Eph. 3:5), “ages to come” (Eph. 2:7), and “all ages” (Eph. 3:21).

D. Another Bible word for this is _____.
“the day of the Lord” (Isa. 2:12)
“the last day” (Jn. 6:54)
“the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Co. 1:8; Ph. 1:10; 2:16; 2 Th. 2:2).

The Bible teaches that there are great periods of time during which God works out His eternal plan. These periods are called “dispensations,” “ages,” “times,” and “days.”

II. Definitions of Dispensationalism

Following are some definitions of dispensationalism based on the previous terms. These are taken from our textbook written by Charles Ryrie.

Charles Ryrie: "Dispensationalism views the world as a _____ run by God. In His household-world God is dispensing or administering its affairs according to His own will and in various stages of revelation in the passage of time. These various stages mark off the distinguishably different economies in the outworking of His total purpose, and these different economies constitute the dispensations".

These are found in the textbook.

B. W. Graham Scroggie:

C. Harry Ironside:

D. Clarence Mason, Jr.:

E. Paul Nevin

III. What Are the Various Dispensations?

Scofield said, "Each of the dispensations may be regarded as a new _____ of the natural man, and each ends in _____, marking his utter _____ in every dispensation." He mentions seven. That is one way that the ages of God can be explained and divided; but there are other ways to look at them, and the number seven is not necessary.

The important point is that there have been various periods during which God has worked out His _____, and during these periods God has related to men in different ways and has required different things of him. Personally, I believe it is profitable to divide the ages into nine categories as follows:

1. Man Innocent: Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 1-3). This age extended from the creation of Adam to the expulsion from Eden. Adam and Eve were created sinless and innocent and they were given only one commandment, not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

When they sinned, that age of innocence ended. We do not know how long Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden before they sinned, but we do know that they had no children until after the Fall.

2. Man Under Conscience: From Adam's Fall to the Flood (Genesis 4-8). During this period, God left man to his own devices. There was no law, but there were prophets sent by God, such as Abel, Enoch, and Noah. The result was that man corrupted the earth and had to be destroyed in the flood, with only Noah and his family being saved to continue the human race. This period lasted roughly 1,600 years.

3. Man Under Human Government: From after the Flood to the Tower of