

# DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY

## Lesson 1

- I. Defined: a system of interpreting the Bible which explains how God is dealing with mankind differently in different periods of time.

There are a total of seven (7) dispensations:

1. Innocence
2. Conscience
3. Human Government
4. Promise
5. Law
6. Grace
7. Kingdom

Five have already passed, we live in the sixth and the seventh is yet to come.

- II. Examples of how God has dealt differently over various periods of time

a. Dietary differences

- i. Before the flood Genesis 1:29 & 30 PLANTS ONLY
- ii. After the flood Genesis 9:2 & 3 ANIMALS & PLANTS
- iii. After the Mosaic law Leviticus 11:2-7 NO RABBIT, NO PIG, MUST HAVE CLOVEN HOOF & CHEW THE CUD
- iv. After Christ's ascension Acts 10:9-15 EAT WHAT YOU WANT

b. Observing the sabbath

- i. Under the law Exodus 20:8-10 KEEP IT (Saturday)
- ii. Church age Colossians 2:16 & 17, Romans 14:5 & 6 DO WHAT YOU WANT

c. Covenant of circumcision

- i. Abraham Genesis 17:9 & 10 DO IT
- ii. Paul to Galatia Galatians 5:1 & 3 DON'T DO IT

- III. Why we believe in dispensations

a. Makes the Bible make sense; verses out of context of the dispensation lead to wrong thinking and actions

b. Dispensations tell us three vital things

- i. Where we came from
- ii. Why we are here
- iii. Where we are going

c. Each of the seven dispensations has three common characteristics

- i. The ruling factor; What God wants man to do—a test
- ii. Man has a responsibility to obey the ruling factor; mankind fails
- iii. Judgement follows; then a new divine revelation that shows God's new plan of ruling and man's responsibility

- d. This all leads to progressive revelation; more and more is known about God's full plan as each dispensation passes; i.e.
  - i. Genesis 3:15—after the fall a Savior was prophesied, all those that followed watched for Him; we now know it was Jesus
  - ii. Ephesians 3:2-6—The church wasn't expected; it was a new idea only revealed after Christ's return to heaven
- e. Dispensations give a literal view of the Bible; not allegorical or spiritual
  - i. Revelation 20:2 & 3 a literal 1000 year reign
  - ii. Exodus 20:11 a literal 7 days
  - iii. Isaiah 11:6-8 a peaceful earth
  - iv. Genesis 5:27 Methuselah was OLD
- f. Hyperbole, figure of speech , etc.; always clear by context of the passage
  - i. Matthew 5:29 If thy right eye offend thee...*Don't let your lust rule you*
  - ii. Mark 11:23 Say to the mountain be removed and cast into the sea...*Accomplish the impossible, the control of Judaism is apparent now but won't be for long*
- g. Dispensations show there are two distinct peoples of God—Israel and the Church; they are not the same
  - i. The church does not replace Israel (spiritually or otherwise)
  - ii. The Old Testament promises to Israel have not been transferred to the Church