

Discipleship Course
Principles of Bible Study
The People and Dispensations of Scripture

- I. The People Groups in the Scriptures
 - A. The Word of God must be rightly divided in relation to three classes of people: the Jew, the Gentile, and the church (I Corinthians 10:32).
 1. The _____—Genesis 12 to Matthew 10
 2. The _____—Genesis 1 to Revelation 22
 3. The _____—Matthew 10 to Revelation 4
 - B. Every part of the Bible is written in relation to one of these three classes of people.
 1. The Jews are the central focus of the _____ Testament.
 2. The church is the “_____ _____” and is the spiritual body of Christ on earth during this dispensation of grace.
 3. The Gentiles are found in the New and the Old Testaments. They are sometimes called heathen or mentioned relating to the nations of the world.
 4. Three questions that are to be asked in relation to rightly dividing the truth regarding these three classes.

- a. Who said this?
- b. To whom was it said?
- c. Under what circumstances was it said?

II. The Dispensations of Scripture

A. a dispensation is an _____ during which God deals in a certain way with man in respect to sin and man's responsibility.

- The word "dispensation" means, "administration" and is found in I Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10; 3:2; Col. 1:25.

B. The Greek word *oikonomía* means, "to be a manager of a household. The position, work, responsibility or arrangement of an administration, as of a house or of property, either one's own or another's"

- It is also translated "stewardship" (Luke 16:2-4).

*"Dispensationalism views the world as a household 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."*¹

C. There are characteristics in each dispensation

1. Major characteristics

¹ Ryrie, Charles C. Dispensationalism (p. 29). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

4. Do not take statements applying to any other dispensations and try to make them fit the present.
 - Genesis 6:3 belongs to conscience
 - Luke 11:13 belongs to law
 - Romans 8:9 belongs to grace
5. Do not put the present into the future.
 - The church will not go into the tribulation dispensation. The dispensation to come is one geared toward Israel and is referred to as Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:3; Dan. 12:1).

- a. The _____ God has in his government of the world.
 - b. The _____ of man to respond.
 - c. The _____ of new truth that is necessary to affect change.
2. Secondary characteristics
 - a. Each dispensation has _____.
 - b. Man is _____ in his responsibility.
 - c. Man is _____ as a result of his failure.
 - d. Jesus Christ is revealed as the world's salvation (John 5:39).
- D. Eight dispensations
1. The dispensation of _____—from Creation to the Fall of man (Gen. 1:3–3:6)
 2. The dispensation of _____ (1,656 years)—starting from the Fall of man to the Flood (Gen. 3:7–8:14)
 3. The dispensation of civil _____ (427 years)—(Gen. 8:1–11:9)
 4. The dispensation of _____/patriarchs (430 years)—from the call of Abraham to the Exodus (Gen. 11:10–Ex. 18:27).
 5. The dispensation of _____ (1,491 years)—from Sinai to Calvary (Ex. 19:1–Acts 1:26)

6. The dispensation of _____ (no known time duration)—from the descent of the Holy Spirit to the descent of Christ (Acts 2:1–Rev. 19:1).
7. The dispensation of judgment or _____ (7 years)—to the millennium (Rev. 6–19; Dan. 12:1; Jer. 30:7)
8. The _____ dispensation (1,000 years)—from the return of Christ to the great white throne judgment (Psalm 2; 11).

| The Dispensations | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--|---|------------------------------|
| Name | Scripture | Responsibilities | Judgment | Enemy |
| Innocence | Gen. 1:3 –3:6 | Keep Garden Do not eat one fruit Fill, subdue earth Fellowship with God | Curses, and physical and spiritual death | Serpent |
| Conscience | Gen. 3:7 –8:14 | Do good | Flood | Cain |
| Government | Gen.8:15–11:9 | Fill Earth Capital Punishment | Forced scattering by confusion of languages | Nimrod |
| Patriarchal/ Promise | Gen. 11:10–Ex. 18:27 | Stay in the Promised Land Believe and obey God | Egyptian bondage and wilderness wanderings | Pharoah |
| Mosaic Law | Ex. 19:1–Acts 1:26 | Keep the law Walk with God | Captivities | Heathen Nations |
| Grace | Acts 2:1–Rev. 19:21 | Believe in Christ Walk with Christ | Death Loss of Rewards | Pharisees/ false teachers |
| Tribulation | Rev. 6:1–19:1 | Endure | God’s wrath Christ’s return | Antichrist /Beast |
| Millennial Kingdom | Rev. 20:1–15 | Believe and obey Christ and His government | Death Great White Throne Judgment | Dragon |

E. Rules to Follow

1. Truth must be divided into dispensations, and it must be divided into the same dispensation.
 - a. Compare Matt. 10:5, 6 and Mark 16:15.
 - b. Compare Luke 9:3 and Matthew 10:9, 10 with Luke 22:36.
 - c. Compare Psalm 58:10 with Rom. 12:17, 21.
 - d. Compare Rev. 20:12 with II Cor. 5:10.
2. One must never take truth that belongs to a past dispensation and bring it up to the present.
 - a. Roman Catholicism and Mormonism bring the priesthood into the present dispensation of grace.
 - b. Seventh Day Adventists bring the law into this present dispensation of grace (Romans 7:4–6).
3. Never take truth from a future dispensation and try to apply it to the present.
 - a. Russelism (Jehovah’s Witnesses) teach that the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation chapter seven, have already come and gone.
 - b. The church belongs to this dispensation. Old Testaments saints like Adam, Abel, and Noah etc. are not a part of the church.