

WORLD RELIGIONS AND OTHER BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

CLASS 6: HYPER-DISPENSATIONALISM AND KJV ONLY

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

- The goal of this series is not just to look at all the religions which are out there, but to look at what others believe and how it has infiltrated the church.
- There are many subtle beliefs which have come into the church and have been believed and practiced without regards to their origin or consequence.
- As we look through these various beliefs and systems which are put in place, it would benefit us to notice why they came about, when they came about and what is the overall goal.
- It is by having a better understanding of where people are coming from and where they think they are going that Christians can show them the ultimate truth of Jesus Christ.
- Just like Paul, we can go to the unsaved world, not agreeing with them but acknowledging their desire for religious or spiritual things.
- **Acts 17:22** “So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, ‘Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.’”
- From this observation, Paul was able to show them who the true and living God was.
- From the onset, it is vital to understand that one cannot be “reasoned” into heaven.
- It is not upon their agreement with you that they are wrong that their standing before God will change from enemy to friend.
- We know that the only truth which can rescue people from their sin is the truth of the gospel.
- **Here is the schedule for the upcoming lessons:**
 - March 2nd: Introduction and New Thought / Progressive Christianity
 - March 9th: PNG Mission Update
 - March 16th: Deism (God exists but is more of a clockmaker than an involved God)
 - March 23rd: New Age Movement / Eastern Mysticism / Animism
 - March 30th: Universalism / Annihilationism (all are saved and there is no hell)
 - April 6th: Moralism / Humanism (as distinct from religion) **Matt Tomlinson teaching*
 - **April 13th: Hyper-dispensationalism / ultra-dispensationalism / KJV only**
 - April 20th: Resurrection Sunday Celebration–No Class

INTRODUCTION

- There are two main “systems” of thought when looking at the Bible as a whole.
- **First, there is the covenantal view:**
 - Covenant theology (CT) is the Reformed position that sees biblical history through the lens of covenant, specifically the unfolding/expansion of God’s covenant of grace. CT holds that salvation is best understood through continuity, thus the New Covenant is essentially an expansion of the Abrahamic Covenant, and the church is an expansion/continuation of Israel.¹
- The goal or scope of this class is not to dive into what Covenant Theology is, we have many teachings and resources on that already.
- **Second, there is the dispensational view:**
 - Dispensationalism is an evangelical theological system that sees biblical history as the progress of revelation from creation to consummation [sic], with a particular focus on how God works through different eras/economies/ages. It stresses the distinction between those eras, particularly between the church and Israel.²
- Once again, this is not a class on dispensationalism, we have discussed that topic in great detail already.
- The purpose of this class is to zoom in on a variation of dispensationalism called hyper or ultra-dispensationalism.
 - To be fair, the list of “dispensationalists” includes progressive dispensationalists, classic dispensationalists, mid-Acts dispensationalists, hyper- dispensationalists, ultra- dispensationalists, and others that I don’t know of right now. (there are variations of covenantalism too)
- It is nearly impossible to find out how many people / churches follow the ultra-dispensationalism.
- Though we know that in the 1930’s H.A. Ironside, then pastor of Moody Church (1929-1948), wrote about the dangers of this movement.
- Ironside (an avowed dispensationalist) wrote a series of letters refuting E.W. Bullinger (who died in 1913 but was really the catalyst for this movement) and said that ultra-dispensationalism is “an absolutely Satanic perversion of the truth.”³
- While Bullinger was not alive when Ironside wrote these letters and eventually there was a book, Bullinger’s teachings are often considered the seedbed from which ultra-dispensationalism grew.

¹ <https://thecripplegate.com/covenantalism-vs-dispensationalism-part-1-covenantalism/>

² <https://thecripplegate.com/covenantalism-vs-dispensationalism-part-2-dispensationalism/>

³ <https://old.randywhiteministries.org/article/850>

A VERY BRIEF OVERVIEW OF DISPENSATIONALISM

- Once again, *this is not a class on dispensationalism itself*, but it is helpful to know the basics so that we can understand what the “ultra” means.
- Dispensationalism has many beliefs, but it is best to understand it as a hermeneutical system, not a specific set of beliefs to fit into an already made system.
- Some of the core beliefs⁴:
 - A future salvation and restoration of national Israel.
 - A literal interpretation of Scripture, to include prophecy
 - The church began in **Acts 2** on the Day of Pentecost.
 - The OT is taken on its own terms not reinterpreted through the lens of the NT
 - There is a distinction between the church and Israel (the sharpness of those distinctions is debated even amongst dispensationalists)
 - There is a future earthly Davidic reign for Jesus, He is not reigning now
 - There is a literal and visible 1000-year reign of Christ
 - A focus on not just soteriological eschatology, but also physical promises being fulfilled.
- Regarding the term *dispensation*:
 - God has had different laws and expectations for people during the six dispensations until now (innocence, conscience, human government, promise, Law of Moses, and grace [church age]) and the one dispensation to come, the kingdom [Millennial and New Earth]. The Tribulation could be seen as a separate dispensation, or as the transition between grace and kingdom.⁵
 - A dispensation then is a period of time in which God is dealing with men in some way in which He has not dealt with them before. Only when a new revelation from God is given, does a dispensation change.⁶
- In other words, God has managed His house differently throughout the ages...it is of the utmost importance that we understand *this has nothing to do with salvation*.
- Salvation has always been by grace through faith without exception.

⁴ List taken from various parts of Michael Vlach’s excellent book *Dispensationalism: Essential Beliefs and Common Myths*, revised and updated.

⁵ <https://faithalone.org/blog/what-is-ultra-dispensationalism/>

⁶ <https://biblelineministries.org/wrongly-dividing-the-word-of-truth-chapter-1/>

WHAT IS HYPER OR ULTRA DISPENSATIONALISM

- **Hyperdispensationalists** also known as **Ultradispensationalists** frequently call themselves **Mid-Acts** or **Pauline**, believing the church didn't begin until Acts 9 or 13. Possibly they're attempting to avoid mixing grace with law, but we firmly believe they over divide in not understanding certain Scriptures. What some may call Classic Dispensationalism sees the Church Age starting at Pentecost (upon the promise of the Spirit we are baptized into the body of Christ (the Church) by belief in Him – 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 4:4-6) and seems to be the simplest and clearest approach.⁷
- Ultra-dispensationalism, also known as hyper-dispensationalism/hyperdispensationalism (although some theologians draw fine distinctions between these terms), is the teaching that Paul's message was unique from the other apostles' and that the church did not begin until [Acts 28](#) or later. For this reason, ultra-dispensationalism is sometimes called "post-Acts dispensationalism."⁸
- **Hyperdispensationalists** distinguish between **Paul** and **Jesus**, stating that Jesus came not except for the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matt 15:21-28).⁹
- Hyperdispensationalists do not believe that the church began until Paul's imprisonment in Rome.
 - **Acts 28:28** "Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen."
- Since Paul was not one of the original 12 Apostles, he was *set aside* for the church and Gentiles.
 - This is shown best when he says **Romans 2:16** "...on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus." (see Rom 16:25 and 2 Tim 2:8).
- Since Paul is *the* Apostle to the church, it makes sense that only his letters would be for the church.
 - Many teach that Romans through Philemon are the only books that carry instructions for the church.
 - Hebrews and Revelation are futuristic and for Israel.
 - Matthew thru John do not include the gospel (specifically that Paul preached).
 - Because ultra-dispensationalists believe in a late start to the church, they view the church in Acts as a "Hebrew" or "Jewish" church, separate from the "mystery" church to which Paul wrote his Prison Epistles. They believe that the books of Peter, James, Jude, Hebrews, and the epistles of John are all addressed to the Hebrew church, which is different from the "body of Christ." This Jewish church, which was built on Kingdom promises, will be reestablished during the millennium and will worship at the rebuilt temple with atoning sacrifices.¹⁰

⁷ <https://redeemingmoments.com/2022/07/26/i-am-of-paul-hyperdispensationalism/>

⁸ <https://www.gotquestions.org/ultra-dispensationalism.html>

⁹ <https://redeemingmoments.com/2022/07/26/i-am-of-paul-hyperdispensationalism/>

¹⁰ <https://www.gotquestions.org/ultra-dispensationalism.html>

- This means that they teach **two gospels**.
- Mid-Acts dispensationalism makes a distinction between a “gospel of circumcision,” taught by Peter, and a “gospel of uncircumcision,” taught by Paul, based on Galatians 2:7.¹¹
 - “I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised.”
- Most importantly, mid-Acts dispensationalism or the Grace Movement implies there are different gospels, a gospel of the kingdom taught by Peter and a gospel of grace taught by Paul. Under the law, works were required, but with the coming of Paul’s doctrine, it is all by grace.¹²

How (not WHY) Do They Do That?

- Hermeneutics...hermeneutics...hermeneutics...
- **2 Timothy 2:15** “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing the word of truth.*” (KJV)
 - Since the Apostle Paul wrote this verse, he then tells us how we are to “rightly divide” God’s Word for the church today. The Bible is divided into how God worked in the past, how He is working currently and how He will work in the future:
 - **In Times Past: Ephesians 2:11-12** “Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”
 - **In the Present: Ephesians 2:13** “But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”
 - **In the Future: Ephesians 2:7** “...so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

Genesis 1-11

- Romans 1 succinctly demonstrates that Gentile alienation was their own doing. Paul presents the sad history of rebellion, evil thinking and self-will that resulted in the three-fold declaration:
 - Wherefore God gave them up (Rom. 1:24)
 - For this cause God gave them up (Rom. 1:26)
 - God gave them over (Rom. 1:28)
- Historically this took place in Genesis 11 at the Tower of Babel.
 - Acts 14:16 (1168)
 - Acts 17:30 (1174)

<https://gracelifebiblechurch.com/wp->

[content/uploads/2017/12/Right-Division-101-Slides-Final-1.pdf](https://gracelifebiblechurch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Right-Division-101-Slides-Final-1.pdf)

¹¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/mid-Acts-dispensationalism.html>

¹² <https://www.gotquestions.org/mid-Acts-dispensationalism.html>

- **Matthew 28:18-20** “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (KJV)
 - The current age, called the age of grace or the church age, is held by most dispensationalists to have begun in Acts 2 on the Day of Pentecost. At that time, the Holy Spirit came upon the believers and empowered them to fulfill the Great Commission, and the church age began. However, mid-Acts dispensationalism sees that event as still part of the dispensation of Law; the “church” in the first part of Acts was a Jewish congregation under Jewish rules, not the church of the church age. According to mid-Acts dispensationalism, or Pauline dispensationalism, the church began with the ministry of the apostle Paul in either Acts 9 (Paul’s conversion) or Acts 13 (Paul’s first missionary journey).¹³

Some Popular Figures in the Movement¹⁴

- E. W. Bullinger died in 1913 (super hyper)— only prison epistles (Eph-Phil-Col) were for the church.
 - In the 19th century, Anglican clergyman E. W. Bullinger was the father of a system of theology that claimed that the gospel of grace was unknown until it was revealed to Paul. He claimed that the church age as we know it did not begin until Acts 28, when an offer to immediately institute the kingdom of God on earth was withdrawn from Israel. Bullinger claimed that only the *prison epistles* were binding on the church. Thus Bullinger relegated most of Scripture to a category similar to the book of Leviticus: inspired, but not directly binding on Christians in all of its details. One implication of this teaching is that Jesus' own teachings, including the Great Commission, are not binding or applicable to the church.¹⁵
- J.C. O’Hair died in 1958 and is commonly held as the American founder of the Free Grace movement
- Cornelius R. Stam was a friend and contemporary of O’Hair.
- TV Programs¹⁶:
 - “Forgotten Truths” by Richard Jordan
 - “Through the Bible” by Les Feldick
 - “Transformed by Grace” by Kevin Sadler

¹³ <https://www.gotquestions.org/mid-Acts-dispensationalism.html>

¹⁴ <https://redeemingmoments.com/2022/07/26/i-am-of-paul-hyperdispensationalism/>

¹⁵ <https://cicministry.org/commentary/issue108.htm>

¹⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyperdispensationalism>

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE KJV ONLY

- **Most are KJVOnlyists [sic] who believe the KJV is the Gift to the Gentile church.** Now, this is going too far. The Word (not a translation) is for all of the church, the one new man that God put together.¹⁷
- The KJV is translated from Textus Receptus (or Received Text) which is a Greek translation.
- Then in the late fifteenth century, the Greek language—unknown for hundreds of years—was recovered in the West, the geographical area of the Latin Church. With the rediscovery of Greek and its inception as the language of the people, the Latin Vulgate translation was subjected to a critical examination in comparison with the Greek original. Scholars discovered numerous mistranslations or outright errors in the Vulgate. This provided a reason for printing the New Testament in its original language, Greek.¹⁸
- “It cannot be determined exactly when Erasmus first decided to prepare an edition of the Greek Testament, but on a visit to Basle (Switzerland) in August of 1514 he discussed (probably not for the first time) the possibility of such a volume with the well-known publisher Johann Forben...[later] Froben importuned him...to undertake immediately an edition of the Greek Testament...”¹⁹
- Metzger goes on to say that this was to beat the translation of the Spanish Polyglot Bible as the market was “ready for an edition of the Greek New Testament.”
- Because of Erasmus’s haste, his translation “is in that respect the most faulty book I know.” F.H.A. Scrivener...19th century NT textual critic and Bible translation committee member.
- Most KJV-Only Christians are just trusting their pastors, who have told them that 1) the KJV is the only truly trustworthy translation, and 2) the KJV is the only Bible translation based on the pure Hebrew and Greek texts.²⁰
- A glaring issue with those who hold to KJV-only is that they believe that Erasmus was used by God to *perfectly* preserve the Bible by guiding him to the perfect Greek NT manuscripts.
- The older manuscripts do not contain many of the verses that were later inserted by Erasmus. For example, **1 John 5:7-8** “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” (KJV)
- **1 John 5:7-8** “For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.” (NASB)

¹⁷ <https://redeemingmoments.com/2022/07/26/i-am-of-paul-hyperdispensationalism/>

¹⁸ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Textus-Receptus.html>

¹⁹ Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 98-99.

²⁰ <https://credomag.com/2020/10/how-to-rescue-people-from-the-trap-of-kjv-onlyism/>

- When confronted with this in the GNT (not the KJV), Erasmus said “he had not found any Greek manuscript containing these words, though he had in the meanwhile examined several other besides those on which he relied when first preparing his text.” (Metzger, 101)
- Erasmus then “promised that he would insert the *Comma Johanneum*, in future editions if a single Greek manuscript could be found that contained the passage.” (Metzger, 101)

SOME MOVEMENTS IN OUR AREA

From Grace Life Bible Church in Grand Rapids²¹

- We believe that the entire Bible is verbally inspired of God and is of plenary authority (II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:20-21) and that God has providentially preserved His completed Word for us today (Psalms 12:6-7, Colossians 1:25, Isaiah 40:8). *We believe that the Word of God exists in its preserved form in what is commonly called the Textus Receptus (Received Text) and that the King James Version (KJV) is the best English translation of the Received Text available today. We believe the KJV to be without error and disapprove of all attempts to “correct” the text of the KJV with manuscript evidence or supposed understanding of original languages.*

Anchor Point Bible Church in Muskegon²²

- Various Christian groups practice other ritual and/or symbolic baptisms but this baptism with the Holy Spirit is the only essential one. We believe that this baptism which God Himself performs is the only one that He requires today. *For that reason we do not practice any form of water baptism*, first to avoid adding to the confusion and then secondly, to place emphasis where God does. If you are a Christian, no matter what you believe about the water ritual, we recognize you as having been baptized by the hand of God and on that basis you are welcome as member here.

Grace Gospel Fellowship in Grand Rapids²³

- The current dispensation, God’s plan for the Church, the Body of Christ, “*the mystery*” revealed to the Apostle Paul, is distinct from God’s plan for the nation of Israel. We find in Paul’s writings alone the revelation, position and destiny of the Church.

²¹ <https://gracelifebiblechurch.com/>

²² <https://anchorpointbiblechurch.com/about-us/what-we-believe/>

²³ <https://ggfusa.org/>