1Thess #99

Introduction to dispensations.

Let us open in 1Thessalionians chapter five – right from our introduction into this new chapter, we are called to embark on a very detailed and extended study on a doctrine that is extremely pertinent for the CA Bel.

This will be lesson one, of what may well be a five-to-ten part series, so buckle up!

I will teach this as I am led by God the HS. It may differ slightly then some teach dispensations.

But I think in the end you will see the big picture and how it aligns perfectly with what most scholars and informed pastors teach in relation to the doctrine of dispensations.

Let us read through the first 5 or 6 scriptures of chapter five so as to get a clear overview.

/1Thes 5:1 Now **as to the periods and times**, brothers *and sisters,* you have no need *of anything* to be written to you.\

These two words will be our main focus beginning with our lesson today.

[1Th 5:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/5/2/s_1116002) For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night.

Both the Rapture and the 7 years of Tribulation ignite with no warning, they come like a thief in the night.

[1Th 5:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/5/3/s_1116003) While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

[1Th 5:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/5/4/s_1116004) But you, brothers *and sisters,* are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief;

[1Th 5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/5/5/s_1116005) for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;

[1Th 5:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/5/6/s_1116006) so then, let’s not sleep as others do, but let’s be alert and sober.

The Apostle Paul uses the term - *sleep* here, in different context – it means laziness and carelessness.

Jump over to Acts chapter one RF.

Two words come into focus right here at the beginning – periods and times, the original language has it like this;

/1Thes 5:1 – *the times and the epochs* -

Times*, chronos –* a season or succession of events with definitive beginnings and endings.

Epochs*, Kairos -* a measure of time, limited or seasonal periods. \

CHRONE-US and KIEYE-RUS, both pointing us to specific time periods.

Keep in mind, the Apostle Paul is teaching about the coming Rapture, as a reminder to the Bels at Thessalonica who had gone astray concerning end time events. So, the lesson itself points to the end of a dispensation – the Church age.

Let us look at the core definition of the term dispensation;

/*A dispensation is a period of time, a category of human history expressed in terms of divine revelation. It is the divine interpretation of history. We might say that Dispensations are the divine timetable by which all human events are correlated. During each Dispensation God entrusts the Gospel dissemination to specific people. Failure to fulfil their responsibilities causes God to end one Dispensation and usher in a new one.*

*Col. R.B. Thieme Jr.* \

The book of Acts points to the beginning of the CA.

It is the historic 30-year span of the beginning stages of the church.

Next to the Apostle Paul one of the great authorities of the early history of the church age was Dr. Luke, who wrote the book of Acts.

Act 1:1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach,

[Act 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/act/1/2/s_1019002) until the day when He was taken up *to heaven,* after He had given orders by the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen.

/[Act 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/act/1/3/s_1019003) To these **He also presented Himself alive after His suffering**, by many convincing proofs, **appearing to them over *a period of* forty days and speaking of things** regarding the kingdom of God.

This 40-day period was a time of mystery doctrine becoming fully unveiled for the 11 Apostles. \

The Church Age would officially begin on the day of Pentecost. Yet the Cross of Christ was the pivot point between the Age of Israel and the new CA.

It was the interruption or intercalation point. Which is a doctrine of insertion related to the CA we now live in.

[Act 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/act/1/4/s_1019004) Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” *He said,* “you heard of from Me;

[Act 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/act/1/5/s_1019005) for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Something brand new on the horizon was now coming upon these disciples.

The water baptism was a ritual that only touched into the first part of the early church. Water baptism has nothing to do with salvation or spiritual growth.

Act 1: 6 So, when they had come together, they *began* asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time that You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”

/[Act 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/act/1/7/s_1019007) But He said to them, “**It is not for you to know periods of time** (*chronos)***or appointed times** (*kairos)*which the Father has set by **His own authority**;

Apostle Paul uses same term as Jesus in 1Thes 5:1 – *times or epochs*. God’s plan was stages of time, seasons – dispensations. \

[Act 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/act/1/8/s_1019008) but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and as far as the remotest part of the earth.”

The CA was to begin on the day of Pentecost and it will end on the day of the Rapture. Jesus was speaking in terms of introduction into something new.

Jump over to 2Peter chapter three so I can clarify something with you.

Dispensations are best viewed from the larger perspective of the four ages or four dispensations and then the categories or promises and transitions in between those four dispensations.

The best way to gather this information is to understand the four basic dispensations and each has sub- categories under the umbrella of that time period.

/The 4 core dispensations and their administrators are:

Age of the Gentiles: Gentile Believers

 Age of the Jews: Israel

 Age of the Church: Church

 Age of the Millennium: Christ \

You will see how this overview of 4 dispensations will help you understand even the teaching of what many claim is 7 dispensations.

If you stick with this series you will see exactly what I am teaching today.

The Apostle Peter became a better teacher over time as he opened up more toward the Apostle Paul’s ministry.

Because the initial 11 apostles were given great insight into CA doctrines by TLJC. Yet they did not get to the depth of the mystery doctrines until the Apostle Paul help enlighten them.

In 2Peter chapter 3 - we see a lesson on dispensations and a future reference as to what is to come.

/2Pet 3:13 But **according to His promise** we are looking for **new heavens and a new earth**, in which righteousness dwells.

Peter is highlighting a future reference to the end of the dispensation of the Millennium reign of Christ on earth. \

When that 1,000 years end - heaven and earth are completely changed as eternity begins, which ignites at the Great White Throne Judgement.

[2Pe 3:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2pe/3/14/s_1159014) Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found spotless and blameless by Him, at peace,

/[2Pe 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2pe/3/15/s_1159015) and regard the patience of our Lord *as* salvation; just as also our **beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you**,

There is a reason Paul wrote 13 books of the NT – not including his influence with Dr. Luke who wrote at least two books. Peter gives a nod to the master teacher of mystery doctrine - Paul. \

This was written toward the end of the Apostle Peter’s life and he is well aware now, more so than when he was younger – that the Apostle Paul had deeper knowledge directly from TLJC.

Many scholars believe that Paul and Luke wrote the book of Hebrews as well.

At this historic point the Apostle Paul was now considered the authority on CA doctrines. Because he knew the depth of mystery doctrine above all other apostles.

/[2Pe 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2pe/3/16/s_1159016) as also **in all *his* letters**, **speaking in them of these things**, in which there are **some things that are hard to understand**, which **the untaught and unstable distort**, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

ALL of Paul’s teachings (letters) carried great weight. And … *in them these things*, the subject of Peter’s teaching, end times – dispensations, are deeper knowledge. \

Many other teachers and Gnostics were twisting the accuracy of mystery doctrine.

HARD TO UNDERSTAND is one word, the Greek adjective – *dysnoētos,*

(DIS-NAY-US-TOSS) meaning very difficult to perceive.

It is interesting that Peter uses this term because it is not used anywhere else in the NT.

This is one of the reasons God has a calling for pastor-teachers in the CA.

[2Pe 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2pe/3/17/s_1159017) You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unscrupulous people and lose your own firm commitment,

/[2Pe 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2pe/3/18/s_1159018) but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Be aware of false teachers, false doctrine and keep pressing forward into the deeper doctrines – emphasis on the Apostle Paul’s teachings. \

That is not the words of Pastor Rick this is directly from the words of the Apostle Peter.

Jump over to Ephesians chapter three.

This series will cover dispensations in a very bright light so that, almost any level of Christianity you are currently at - this doctrine will become obvious for you.

You simply need to follow the whole set of teachings, take notes and follow through with personal study and it will become very obvious.

Eph 3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

/[Eph 3:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/3/2/s_1100002) if indeed you have heard **of the administration**(*oikonomia*) **of God’s grace which was given to me for you;**

The stewardship, the dispensation assigned to me in God’s grace plan. \

OH-COIN-OH-ME-AH, a manager, a property caretaker, one in charge of specific set of boundaries or real estate.

[Eph 3:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/3/3/s_1100003) that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before briefly.

The Apostle Paul learned face to face from TLJC in the 3rd heaven.

[Eph 3:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/3/4/s_1100004) By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,

/[Eph 3:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/3/5/s_1100005) which **in other generations was not made known** to mankind, as it has **now been revealed** to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

In other dispensations, reference to the Age of Israel – it was not known! \

[Eph 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/3/6/s_1100006) *to be specific,* that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

Part of mystery doctrine is the CA Bels being graphed into the family of God.

[Eph 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/3/7/s_1100007) of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

I’m going to close with the first dispensation listed in theology. As you begin to look at this, you would gather how often times, dispensations are taught as a mind-numbing multiple number of ages.

When you understand the core doctrine of dispensations has 4 ages listed and under each one is a set of sub categories it is much easier to digest.

/ The dispensation of the Gentiles: Genesis 1-11.

*The age of innocence* - Creation of mankind, one language, one race. Four divine institutions introduced. Divine perfection is shown as a shadow of heaven on earth.

*The age of conscience* – Beginning at the fall in the garden (Gen 3:7). Mankind now is given over to God’s grace plan of faith alone in Christ alone, the Cross is now in view. From Seth until Noah (Gen 6), mankind is now fully responsible for accepting God’s justice system and grace plan.\

We will close in Gen chapter 11 RF.

The age of conscience is the age mankind began to move away from God and fully embrace Satan’s cosmic system.

Starting with the first murder under the hand of Cain.

Had God not stepped in, eventually Noah and his family would have been killed or even succumb to the worship of the Nephilim.

/ The dispensation of the Gentiles: Genesis 1-11.

*The age of human government* -

(Gen 6 -11) The failure of mankind once again is seen in obstinance toward God’s justice and plan. Cain’s children build up evil across the land, they worship fallen angels. God introduces judgement and a promise to Noah. Noah’s descendants build upon human power/government in attempts to be like God – Tower of Babel. God again comes in to strike down mankind’s evil. \

Gen 11:7 “Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.”

The age of human government under the Dispensation of the Gentiles first brought in Cain’s attempt at control and human power over God’s power. This was a transition from the age of conscience into the age of human government.

After the flood, God commanded Noah’s children to spread out and multiply while developing a closer relationship under HIS authority. They instead took human power and the worship of false god’s like Nimrod and built Babel.

[Gen 11:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/gen/11/8/s_11008) So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth; and they stopped building the city.

/[Gen 11:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/gen/11/9/s_11009) **Therefore it was named Babel, because there the LORD confused the language**of all the earth; and from there **the LORD scattered them** abroad over the face of all the earth.

Each time mankind kicks against the authority and plan of God for extended time. Eventually God brings in some form of cleansing and judgment. \

/The Dispensation of Gentiles stretches from the creation of Adam to the Tower of Babel. The characteristics were; Faith alone in Christ alone. No canon of scripture, yet divine revelation and the focus on the family unit to teach the next generation. Mankind chose self and religious works to elevate themselves which led them to worshipping fallen angels. Human government, human power and human solutions lead to idolatry. \