

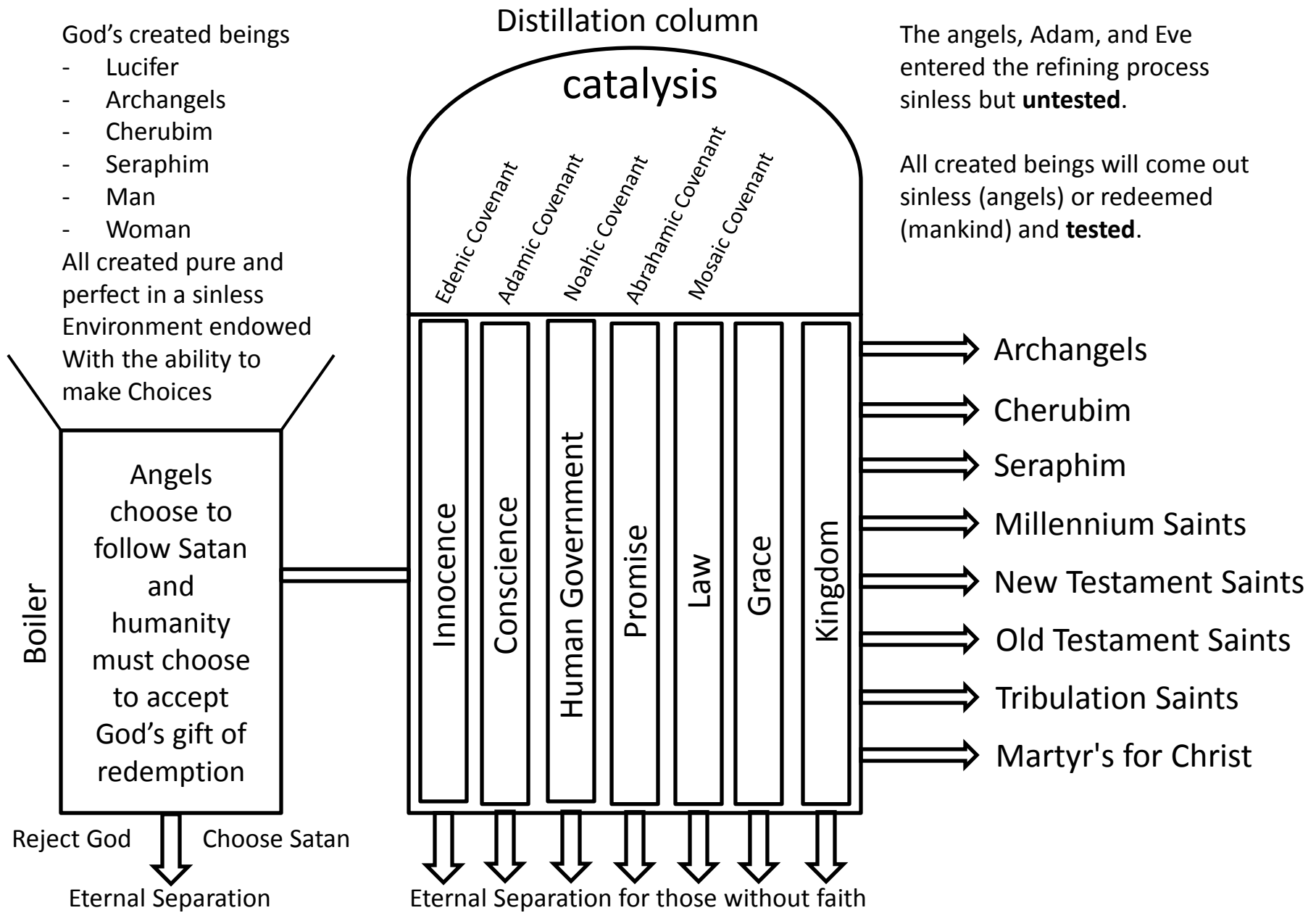
Refining a Creation for Eternity

The Revealed Plan of God from Eternity Past to Eternity Future



www.RefiningaCreation.org

God's Refining Process for His Created Beings



Refining a Creation for Eternity

God's Economies for Mankind

Overview



Edenic



Adamic

Innocence



Noahic

Human Government



Abrahamic

Promise



Mosaic

Law



Postponed

Grace



Fulfillment

Kingdom

Refining a Creation for Eternity

Review of past lessons

The Inspiration & Authority of Scripture

Revelation

Revelation is of necessity and act of God

1. Theophanies (appearances of God)
2. Dreams and visions
3. Direct
4. Miracles and signs
5. Prophets
6. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ
7. The Scriptures

Refining a Creation for Eternity

Review of past lessons

The Inspiration & Authority of Scripture

Inspiration

Revelation is of necessity and act of God

We hold to **verbal** (*the very words, not just thoughts and ideas*) **inspiration** and **plenary** (*equally in every part of the Scriptures*) **inspiration**.

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Review of past lessons

The Inspiration & Authority of Scripture

Inerrancy

The Extent of Biblical Inerrancy

1. Inerrancy does not mean uniformity in all the details given in analogous accounts written by different authors.
2. Biblical inerrancy does not exclude the use of pictures and symbols.
3. Biblical inerrancy does not imply the use of an exact technical vocabulary, conformed to present scientific terminology.
4. Apropos of inerrancy, the biblical message has to be put back into its own historical setting.
5. Inerrancy has to do with the whole of the biblical message.
6. Inerrancy does not imply omniscience on the part of the biblical authors.

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Review of past lessons

The Inspiration & Authority of Scripture

The Canon

The word “canon” (taken from the Greek) means a rule which serves as a measure; and then, by extension, that which is measured.

A book is canonical if the Jewish synagogue or the Christian church recognized it as the bearer of the revelation communicated by the Spirit of God.

God grants inspiration to the sacred writers; illumination to the open-hearted individual reader, that he may understand the inspired text; and discernment to the body of believers, for the recognition of the books of divine origin and for the inclusion of these books in the canon.

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Review of past lessons

Hermeneutics – Biblical Interpretation

Observation

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

Why?

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Review of past lessons

Hermeneutics – Biblical Interpretation

Interpretation

Literal

When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, and literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, clearly indicate otherwise.

David L. Cooper

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Review of past lessons

Hermeneutics – Biblical Interpretation

Application

1. Build application on interpretation.
2. Determine what was expected of the original audience.
3. Base application on elements present-day readers share with the original audience.
4. Recognize how God's working varies in different ages.
5. Determine what is normative for today.
6. See the principle inherent in the text.
7. Think of the principle as an implication of the text, and as a bridge to application.
8. Write out specific action-responses.
9. Rely on the Holy Spirit.

Refining a Creation for Eternity

Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Definitions

“A dispensation is a distinct and identifiable administration in the development of God’s plan and purposes for human history.

A closely connected, but not interchangeable word is the word age.

God manages the entirety of human history like a household moving humanity through sequential stages of His administration determined by the level of revelation He has provided up to that time in history.

Each administrative period is characterized by revelation that specifies responsibilities, a test in relation to those responsibilities, failure to pass the test, then God’s gracious provision of a solution when failure occurs.” – Dr. Robert Dean

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Definitions

Covenant

A covenant is a compact or agreement made between two parties binding them mutually to some agreed upon obligations and benefits. Much of the history of salvation can be traced by noting both the presence and the contents of biblical covenants. Covenants may be either bilateral (“two-sided”), where both parties are obligated, or unilateral (“one-sided”), where only one party is bound by the agreement.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Definitions

Tribulation (cont.)

God's [first] purpose for Israel in the Tribulation is to bring about the conversion of a multitude of Jew, who will enter into the blessings of the kingdom and experience the fulfillment of all Israel's covenants. The good news that the King is about to return will be preached (Matt 24:14) so that Israel may be turned to their deliverer. As John the Baptist preached such a message to prepare Israel for the first coming, Elijah will preach to prepare Israel for the second advent.

The second great purpose of the tribulation is to pour out judgment on unbelieving man and nations.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Definitions

Millennial Kingdom

The millennial age is instituted out of necessity in order to fulfill the covenants. The promises in the Abrahamic covenant concerning the land and seed are fulfilled in the millennial age. The promises in the Davidic covenant concerning the king, the throne, and the royal house are fulfilled by Messiah in the millennial age. The promises in the real estate covenant concerning the possession of the land are fulfilled by Israel in the millennial age. The promises of the new covenant of a new heart, the forgiveness of sin, the filling of the Spirit are fulfilled in the converted nation in the millennial age.

It will thus be observed that the millennial age finds the complete fulfillment of all that God promised to the nation Israel.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Definitions

Rapture

John 14:1-6

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. “And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Definitions

Rapture

The Pretribulation Rapture Theory

The pretribulation rapture holds that the church, the body of Christ, in its entirety, will, by resurrection and translation, be removed from the earth before any part of the seventieth week of Daniel begins.

Pretribulation raptureism rests essentially on one major premise – the literal method of interpretation of the Scriptures.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Definitions

Second Advent of Christ

Premillennial view

The Premillennial view is the view that holds that Christ will return to earth, literally and bodily, before the millennial age begins and that, by His presence, a kingdom will be instituted over which He will reign. In this kingdom all of Israel's covenants will be literally fulfilled. It will continue for a thousand years, after which the kingdom will be given by the Son to the Father when it will merge with His eternal kingdom. The central issue in this position is whether the Scriptures are to be fulfilled literally or symbolically. In fact this is the essential heart of the entire question.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

History of Dispensational Features

1. Literal interpretation
2. Israel and the Church
3. Dispensational Distinctions
4. Patristic Premillennialism
5. Imminent Intribulationism

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Characteristics of a Dispensation

Primary (1)

The different governing relationship into which God enters with the world in each economy.

Primary (2)

The resulting responsibility on mankind in each of these different relationships.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

Characteristics of a Dispensation

Secondary

Test - every part of the revelation belonging to each dispensation is a part of the test, and the totality of the revelation is the test.

Failure - The failures are in at least two realms—the realm of governmental economy and the realm of salvation.

Judgment - if there is a climactic failure, then there is also a climactic judgment.

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Review of past lessons

Dispensational Theology

The Indispensable Positions of a Dispensationalist

1. A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the church distinct.
2. This distinction between Israel and the church is born out of a system of hermeneutics that is usually called literal interpretation.
3. The underlying purpose of God in the world is to manifest His divine glory.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

The Indispensable Positions of a Dispensationalist

1. A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the church distinct.

The Word of God distinguishes between earth and heaven, even after they are created new. Similarly and as clearly it distinguishes between God's consistent and eternal earthly purpose, which is the substance of Judaism; and His consistent and eternal heavenly purpose which is the substance of Christianity, and it is as illogical and fanciful to contend that Judaism and Christianity ever merge as it would be to contend that heaven and earth cease to exist as separate spheres. Dispensationalism has its foundation in and is understood in the distinction between Judaism and Christianity.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

The Indispensable Positions of a Dispensationalist

2. This distinction between Israel and the church is born out of a system of hermeneutics that is usually called literal interpretation.

Dispensationalists follow a consistently literal method of interpretation, which extends to eschatological studies. ... *Literal interpretation recognizes both literal and figurative language. Dispensationalists insist on literal interpretation for prophetic Scriptures even though they abound with figurative language. One reason for this, besides consistency, is the demonstrable literalness of prophecies already fulfilled in Christ's first coming. There is every reason to expect the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Christ's second coming to be literal as well.*

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

The Indispensable Positions of a Dispensationalist

3. The underlying purpose of God in the world is to manifest His divine glory.

To the normative dispensationalist, the soteriological, or saving, program of God is not the only program but one of the means God is using in the total program of glorifying Himself. Scripture is not man-centered as though salvation were the main theme, but it is God-centered because His glory is the center. The Bible itself clearly teaches that salvation, important and wonderful as it is, is not an end in itself but is rather a means to the end of glorifying God

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Clear Divisions in Epistles

Kingdom – Fullness of the Times (Ephesians 1:9-10)

Ephesians 1:9-10

He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the **fullness of the times**, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Clear Divisions in Epistles

Church – Stewardship of Grace (Ephesians 3:2)

Ephesians 3:1-3

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles if indeed you have heard of the **stewardship of God's grace** which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Clear Divisions in Epistles

Prior to Church – Past Ages (Colossians 1:26)

Colossians 1:25-26

Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the **past ages** and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints,

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Common throughout all Dispensations

1. History is from the viewpoint of God.
2. Clear time when one ends and another begins but allowing for transition.
3. God is moving everything in His ordained direction.
4. New revelation designates shift from one dispensation to another.
5. Some things remain the same but other things differ. Salvation always by faith.
6. Each has own responsibilities and tests.
7. Each dispensation moves God's plan closer to completion.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Replacement Theology

Replacement theology “is the view that the church is the new or true Israel that has permanently replaced or superseded Israel as the people of God.” Another term, often found in academic circles, for replacement theology is supersessionism.

Replacement theology has been the fuel that has energized Medieval anti-Semitism, Eastern European pogroms, the Holocaust and contemporary disdain for the modern state of Israel.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Replacement Theology

Preterist and covenant theologian, Kenneth Gentry defines replacement theology—to which he holds—as follows: “We believe that the international Church has superseded for all times **national** Israel as the **institution** for the administration of divine blessing to the world.”

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Replacement Theology

Gentry adds to his initial statement the following embellishment:

That is, we believe that in the unfolding of the plan of God in history, *the Christian Church is the very fruition of the redemptive purpose of God*. As such, the multi-racial, international Church of Jesus Christ *supersedes* racial, national Israel as the focus of the kingdom of God. Indeed, we believe that the Church becomes “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16), the “seed of Abraham” (Gal. 3:29), “the circumcision” (Phil. 3:3), the “temple of God” (Eph. 2:19-22), and so forth. We believe that Jew and Gentile are eternally merged into a “new man” in the Church of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:12–18). What God hath joined together let no man put asunder!

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Covenant Theology

Covenant theology is a system of interpreting the Scriptures on the basis of two covenants: the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. Some covenant theologians specify three covenants: works, redemption, and grace. Covenant theology teaches that God initially made a covenant of works with Adam, promising eternal life for obedience and death for disobedience. Adam failed, and death entered the human race. God, however, moved to resolve man's dilemma by entering into a covenant of grace through which the problem of sin and death would be overcome. Christ is the ultimate mediator of God's covenant of grace.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Covenant Theology

God's People

God has two people –
Israel and the church.
Israel is an earthly
people, and the church
His heavenly people

God has one people,
represented by the saints
of the Old Testament era
and the saints of the New
Testament era.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Covenant Theology

God's Plan for His People

God has two separate peoples, Israel and the church, and also has two separate plans for these two distinct peoples. He plans an earthly kingdom for Israel. This kingdom has been postponed until Christ's coming. During the church age God is calling out a heavenly people.

God has one people, the church, for whom he has one plan in all the ages since Adam: to call out this people into one body in both the Old and New Testament ages.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Covenant Theology

The Place of Eternal Destiny for God's People

There is disagreement among dispensationalists regarding the future state of Israel and the church. Many believe that the church will sit with Christ on His throne in the New Jerusalem during the millennium as He rules over the nations, while Israel will be the head of the nations on earth.

God has but one place for His people, since He has but one people, one plan, and one plan of salvation. His people will be in His presence for eternity.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Covenant Theology

The Birth of the Church

The church was born on the day of Pentecost and did not exist in history until that time. The church, the body of Christ, is not found in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament saints are not part of the body of Christ.

The church existed prior to the New Testament era, including all the redeemed since Adam. Pentecost was not the beginning of the church but the empowering of the New Testament manifestation of God's people.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Covenant Theology

The Purpose of Christ's First Coming

Christ came to establish the messianic kingdom. Some dispensationalists believe that this was to be an earthly kingdom in fulfillment of the Old Testament promises to Israel. If the Jews had accepted Jesus' offer, this earthly kingdom would have been immediately established. Other dispensationalists believe that Christ did establish the messianic kingdom in some form in which the church participates but that the earthly kingdom awaits the second coming of Christ to the earth. Christ always intended the cross before the crown.

Christ came to die for our sins and to establish the New Israel, the New Testament manifestation of the church. This continuation of God's plan placed the church under a new and better covenant, which was a new manifestation of the same Covenant of Grace. The kingdom that Jesus offered was the present, spiritual, and invisible kingdom. Some covenantalists (especially postmillennialists) also see a physical aspect to the kingdom.

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Important Assumptions and Prerequisites

Dispensational Theology

Comparison between Dispensational and Covenant Theology

The Fulfillment of the New Covenant

Dispensationalists differ over whether only Israel is to participate in the New Covenant, at a later time, or whether both the church and Israel jointly participate. Some dispensationalists believe there is one new covenant with two applications: one for Israel and one for the church. Others believe that there are two new covenants: one for Israel and another one for the church.

The promises of the New Covenant mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31ff. Are fulfilled in the New Testament.