

# Dispensationalism: Origins

Based upon the book: "Dispensationalism" by Charles C. Ryrie



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

- The Charge of Recency
- The Charge of Divisiveness



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Recency

## Straw Men

1. Dispensationalists assert that the system was taught in postapostolic times.
2. Pretribulationism is not apostolic; pretribulationism is dispensationalism; therefore, dispensationalism is not apostolic.





# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Recency

## **Early Dispensational-like Concepts**

*Though the system of theology is recent, there are some historical references to that which eventually was systematized into dispensationalism. The following writers spoke of it in their works:*

- Justin Martyr (AD 110-165)
- Irenaeus (AD 130-200)
- Clement of Alexandria (AD 150-200)
- Samuel Hanson Coxe (AD 1793-1880)
- Augustine (AD 354-430)
- Joachim of Fiore (AD 1135-1202)



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Recency

## **Developing Dispensationalism (the Period Before Darby)**

### **Pierre Poiret (1646-1719)**

*L'OEconomie Divine*

1. Infancy-to the Deluge
2. Childhood-to Moses
3. Adolescence-to the prophets (about the time of Solomon)
4. Youth-to the coming of Christ
5. Manhood-"some time after that"
6. Old Age-"the time of man's decay" (5 & 6 seem to be the early and latter part of the Christian dispensation.)
7. Renovation of all things-the Millennium



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

## The Charge of Recency

### **Developing Dispensationalism (the Period Before Darby)**

#### **John Edwards (1637-1716)**

*A Compleat History or Survey of All the Dispensations*

1. Innocency and Felicity, or Adam created upright
2. Sin and Misery, Adam fallen
3. Reconciliation, or Adam recovered, from Adam's redemption to the end of the world
  - A. Patriarchal economy
    1. Adamical, antediluvian
    2. Noahical
    3. Abrahamick
  - B. Mosaical
  - C. Gentile (Concurrent with A & B)
  - D. Christian
    1. Infancy, primitive period, past
    2. Childhood, present period
    3. Manhood, future (millennium)
    4. Old age, from the loosing of satan to the conflagration



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## **Developing Dispensationalism (the Period Before Darby)**

### **Isaac Watts (1674-1748)**

*The harmony of all religions which God ever prescribed to men and all His dispensations towards them*

1. The Dispensation of Innocency, or the Religion of Adam at first
2. The Adamical Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, or the Religion of Adam after his Fall
3. The Noachical Dispensation, or the Religion of Noah
4. The Abrahamical Dispensation, or the Religion of Abraham
5. The Mosaical Dispensation, or the Jewish Religion
6. The Christian Dispensation



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Recency

## **Systematized Dispensationalism (Darby to the 1980s)**

### **John Nelson Darby (1800-1882)**

1. Paradisaical state to the Flood
2. Noah
3. Abraham
4. Israel
  - A. Under the law
  - B. Under the priesthood
  - C. Under the kings
5. Gentiles
6. The Spirit
7. The Millennium



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Recency

## Recent Neo-dispensationalism

### Basic Tenets:

1. The kingdom of God is the unifying theme of biblical history
2. Christ has already inaugurated the Davidic covenant and is now reigning in heaven on the throne of David (Right hand of the Father = the throne of David)
3. The concept of two purposes and two peoples of God (Israel and the church) is not valid
4. ^ Thus, the church is not a separate group of redeemed people, nor was it unrevealed in the Old Testament (just unrealized)
5. There is one divine plan of holistic redemption for all people and all areas of human life (personal, societal, cultural, and political).



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Recency

## **Recent Neo-dispensationalism**

### **Primary Dispensations**

1. Patriarchal to Sinai
2. Mosaic to Messiah's Return
3. Ecclesial to Messiah's Return
4. Zionic
  - A. Millennial
  - B. Eternal



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Recency

## **The Progress of Dogma**

The fact that settled doctrinal positions became "main stream" progressively over the centuries (with eschatology most recent) seems to help in understanding the reason that the systematizing of dispensationalism is relatively recent.



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

## The Charge of Recency

Two answers for recency:

1. Dispensational concepts were taught by men who lived long before Darby
2. It is to be expected that dispensationalism, which is closely related to eschatology; would not be refined and systematized until recent times simply because eschatology was not an area under discussion until then.



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

## The Charge of Divisiveness

An accusation is made that anything that originates in divisiveness cannot be valid. Two concerns of separation are charged:

1. Darby was a separatist (Plymouth Brethren)
2. Many adherents to dispensationalism today are among movements separated from larger denominations



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

## The Charge of Divisiveness

Two conclusions are made by these accusations:

1. Ecclesiastical separatism is always wrong
  - Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5; Titus 3:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:14
2. Dispensationalism has been the principal factor causing ecclesiastical separation.

Both premises are fallacious.



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

The Charge of Divisiveness

"The lives of the men connected with any movement may credit or discredit its teachings, but they do not prove or disprove its truthfulness."



# The Origins of Dispensationalism

Review

## **The Charge of Recency**

- Straw men
- Sources of Early Dispensational-like Concepts
  - Justin Martyr (AD 110-165)
  - Irenaeus (AD 130-200)
  - Clement of Alexandria (AD 150-200)
  - Samuel Hanson Coxe (AD 1793-1880)
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# The Origins of Dispensationalism

Review

## **The Charge of Recency**

- Developing Dispensationalism (the Period Before Darby)
  - Pierre Poiret (1646-1719)
  - John Edwards
  - Isaac Watts
- Systematized Dispensationalism (Darby to 1980s)
  - John Nelson Darby (1800-1882)
  - James H. Brookes (1830-1897)
  - James M. Gray (1851-1935)
  - C.I. Scofield (1843-1921)

Two answers for recency:

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# The Origins of Dispensationalism

Review

## **The Charge of Divisiveness**

- Divisiveness is a common accusation of people who cannot raise valid answers against a concept.
- Though division is sometimes necessary when Biblically necessary, it is not the purpose of dispensationalism.



# The Dispensations

Review

Homework:

- Read the 4th chapter:
  - 3 Questions, 3 observations, 3 Applications
- Know the info in this presentation