

Outline and Syllabus for **Dispensations: A study for the Bible Institute**
at Gulf Coast Baptist Church Spring 2021 by Steve Thomas

Introduction:

When the believer understands that the Bible was written from the dispensational perspective, it is easier to keep from error. “Who is God talking to?” and “what does He expect from them?” These are questions whose answers will greatly enrich the believer’s study of the Word. Historically, there have been those who teach differing numbers of dispensations, from 3 to 11. Traditionally, most dispensationalists will teach there are 7 dispensations, 7 different ways that God dealt with his people, providing things for them to fulfill His rule of life. God would select a steward, or manager, to reveal his rule of life. He then dispensed his property to this group based on how they kept His rule of life. He did not dispense the blessings of salvation this way, Romans clearly teaches us that salvation in multiple dispensations was by grace through faith. An excellent example of this can be found in Deuteronomy chapter 28. The first part of the chapter clearly lists the blessings for the Israelite if he will follow God’s law. The second half of the chapter lists the curses for the Israelite if he will not follow that same law. This is not the way God has chosen to bless those under grace. Ephesians 1:3 states that the believer has already been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Understanding these distinctions will allow the believer to interpret the Bible in a way that will make it the most useful to him, having the effect that was intended by God. This class will seek to explain some of these distinctions.

Dispensation 1 - Monday, March 8 Introduction: Definition of Terms, Basic Elements of a Dispensation, and The Seven Dispensations

Dispensation 2 - Monday, March 15 - Dispensational Distinctives: Why Dispensationalism

Dispensation 3 - Monday, March 22 - The Dispensation of Innocence

Dispensation 4 - Monday March 29 - The Dispensation of Conscience

- Monday, April 5 - off for holiday

Dispensation 5 - Monday, April 12 - The Dispensation of Human Government

Dispensation 6 - Monday, April 19 - Midterm Exam and Giants

Dispensation 7 - Monday, April 26 - The Dispensation of Promise

Dispensation 8 - Monday, May 3 - The Dispensation of Law

Dispensation 9 - Monday, May 10 - The Dispensation of Grace

Dispensation 10 - Monday, May 17 - The Dispensation of the Fullness of Times

Dispensation 11 - Monday, May 24 - Summary and Final Exam

Textbook: The Bible, God’s House Plans by Tim Hoelscher (link for the pdf available by request), various charts and notes from the teacher’s files

Cost: None, if you feel led to support the class, designated gifts can be given through the church.

The maximum effect of this class will be realized with faithful attendance and some review of the material through the week before the next week’s lesson.

Introduction to **Dispensations**: *A study for the Bible Institute
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- I. Introduction: Defining some basic terms.
 - A. Dispensation. A dispensation is a phase of God's plan in which He imposes certain rules to govern the daily lives of a household, composed of all or a portion of mankind. Heb 3:1-4
 - B. Age. An age is an epoch or extended period of time during which God manifests something about Himself to intelligent created beings: either the spirit beings or humans.
 - C. Essence, Attributes, and Nature of God : Immutability. God's Nature is the sum total of His Essence (who God is) and His Attributes (What He does). These things will never change.
 - D. Mobility. The change that exists in the way that God deals with His people.
 - 1. Residency.
 - 2. Presence.
 - 3. Diet.
 - 4. Days of Importance.
 - 5. God's People.
 - 6. Sacrifices.
 - E. Literal interpretation. Accepts what God has stated in scripture even if it is contrary to one's own experience. Consistent Literal Interpretation is the basis of biblical dispensationalism. Prov 29:18, 2 Chron 7:14
 - F. Doctrine. Didache vs Didaskalia 2 Tim 3:16, Titus 1:9, 1 Tim 1:10
- II. The four elements necessary for a dispensation Eph 3:2
 - A. Master
 - B. Household
 - C. Steward
 - D. Rule of Life / Test
- III. The Seven Dispensations
 - A. Innocence
 - B. Conscience
 - C. Human Government
 - D. Promise
 - E. Law
 - F. Grace
 - G. Kingdom from the Heavens (Millennial Kingdom - Fulness of Times)