



Old Testament: Isaiah 43:1-28
New Testament: Galatians 3:1-29

God Has Spoken

“The Dispensations of the Fullness of Times”

Ephesians 3:1-12

Of the six essential evidences of genuine salvation, *recognizing our sin nature, desire for a changed life, increase in testing, love for other Christians, and a desire to tell others about Jesus*, perhaps the most important one is that ***insatiable hunger for God’s Word***

- John 15:26 – It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict lost men of their need of a Savior, and to see Jesus Christ as the Savior they need.
- John 16:13 – Once a person is born again, the Holy Spirit guides them into all truth regarding who God is and His plan for lost man’s redemption.
- 2 Timothy – 2:15 – It is imperative that a believer be able to ***“rightly divide”*** the Word of Truth if he is ever able to understand God’s purpose for creation, and

therefore God's purpose for his life.

Once the "born-again" believer is able to "rightly divide" the Word of Truth, he will be able to place the events of biblical history in the timeline of human history, and he can see the "big picture" of what God has done, is doing, and is going to do to bring His **plan of redemption** into reality.

- In the Old Testament – the **anticipation** of it
- In the Gospels – the **accomplishment** of it
- In the Epistles – the **application** of it
- In the Book of Revelation – the **achievement** of it

Background from the two previous sermons:

- **"The Word of God Speaks":**
 - The gospel alone has the power to establish men's faith in God – the Bible needs no other authentication.
 - The gospel is Jesus Christ alone – He is the center of human and Biblical history.
 - The gospel reveals God's purpose for mankind; that both Jew and Gentile become united in the family of God.
- **"God's Plan for Man's Redemption":**
 - World History is "linear" not "cyclical" – God is working all things together for His purpose.
 - World History is divided by five empires or kingdoms: Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman, and the Kingdom of God.
 - After the resurrection, the Roman Empire was divided between the East (*Greek Orthodox and Eastern religions*) and the West (*Catholic and Protestant religions*)
 - We are living in the Roman Empire as the Kingdom of God continues to be built through the preaching of the gospel: calling out those whom God has chosen to live with Him forever in that eternal kingdom.

In Ephesians 1:10, Paul used the term "dispensation" to define specific periods of time in which God worked in specific ways, to a specific people and for a specific purpose.

- **This is known as Progressive Revelation** – stages of time where God manifested more of Himself and His plan for man’s redemption – the final revelation being the Person and work of Jesus Christ. (2:9)
- **There are Seven Dispensations from Genesis to Revelation – from Creation to Re-Creation.**
 - **The Age of “Innocence” –**
 - Adam and Eve were created perfect and sinless, and placed in the Garden of Eden, with all their needs provided.
 - God removed them from the garden when they disobeyed Him, but He also provided a blood sacrifice to cover their bodies, and the promise of a Savior to cover for their sins.
 - **The Age of “Conscience” –**
 - After Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, God began to deal with the human race through their “conscience”.
 - When God saw the imaginations of man’s heart were evil, He decided to destroy man from the earth through a flood, but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and he and his family were spared.
 - **The Age of “Human government” –**
 - After the flood, God began to allow humans to “govern” themselves: to establish their own rules of life.
 - When man began to build his own way into heaven, God confused their tongues and divided the people into nations according to their language, yet protecting the Seed of the Savior through the lineage of Shem.
 - **The Age of “Promise” –**
 - God called Abram to leave his father’s family and go to the land we call Israel, to begin a “nation of people” who would be known as “God’s People”, the Jewish race.
 - Abraham disobeyed God in many ways, yet God intervened in human events to preserve the Seed of the Savior through the lineage of Jacob, who was a TYPE of Christ.

- **The Age of “The Law” –**

- The Gentiles continued to be ruled by human government, but God gave the Law to Moses to govern His people.
- Although they promised to keep the Law, they violated it repeatedly.
- God allowed His people to be taken captive, and later scattered throughout the earth.

- **The Age of “Grace” –**

- This is also called the “Church Age” as the Church began at Pentecost, and will end at the Rapture.
- This is also called the “Times of the Gentiles” as salvation is being offered to the Gentile, as well as to the Jew.

- **The “Kingdom” Age” –**

- At the end of the Great Tribulation, Jesus will return to this earth, with His saints, to set up His Kingdom – the Kingdom of God.
- While the “curse” of sin will be removed, humans who survived the tribulation will be able to reproduce, continuing the sin nature of man even during the Millennium, and until the Great White Throne judgment!