



DISPENSATIONALISM

INTRODUCTION

- Dispensationalism: 1830s – present (systematized)
- “Classic” dispensationalism



Darby



Kelly



Scofield



Chafer

DISPENSATIONALISM: HELP OR HERESY?

INTRODUCTION

- Dispensationalism: 1830s – present (systematized)
- “Normative / Traditional” dispensationalism



Walvoord



Pentecost



Ryrie

DISPENSATIONALISM: HELP OR HERESY?

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?



WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE

- Ephesians 1:10: οἰκονομία
- “dispensation” (KJV, NKJV)
- “administration” (NAS)

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE

- Luke 16:1-2
- Verb: οἰκονομέω
(1x - [Luke 16:2](#))
- Noun: οἰκονόμος
(10x - Luke 12:42; [Luke 16:1](#), 16: 3, 16:8; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2; Gal.4:2; Tit. 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10)
- Noun: οἰκονομία
(9x - Luke 16:2, [Luke 16:3](#), 16:4, 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10; 3:2; 3:9; Col. 1:25)

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

- Luke

NOUN FORM #1

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- Noun

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Luke 16:1

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16:1 He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods.

2 So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’

3 “Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg.

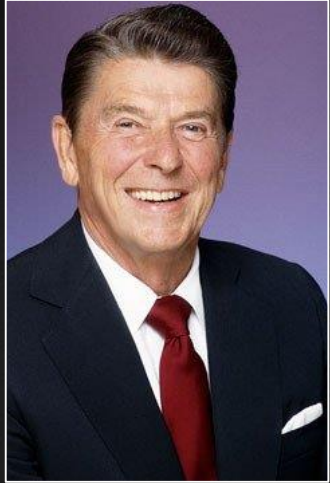
VERB FORM

(Pet. 4:10)

NOUN FORM #2

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE: DEFINITIONS



U.S. Administrations 1980 - Present

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE: FEATURES

- Two parties: One with authority, other with responsibility
- Specific responsibilities which are defined
- Accountability for faithfulness
- The arrangement can change depending on faithfulness

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE: FEATURES

- Man is responsible to God ([Titus 1:7](#))
- Faithfulness is required ([1 Cor. 4:1-2](#))
- Stewardship may be ended at an appointed time ([Gal. 4:2](#))
- Dispensations connected to revelation ([Eph. 3:2](#))
- Dispensation and “age” connected, but not synonymous ([Eph.3:9](#))
- At least 3 dispensations mentioned by Paul ([Eph 1:10](#), [Eph 3:2](#); [Col 1:25-26](#))

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE: DEFINITIONS

Dispensation

A dispensation is a divinely revealed system of morals, values, promises, and rules that God imposes on a particular generation.

John Walvoord

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE: DEFINITIONS

Dispensation

A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose.

Charles Ryrie

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE: DEFINITIONS

Dispensationalism

“A system of theology which attempts to develop the Bible’s philosophy of history on the basis of the sovereign rule of God. It represents the whole of Scripture and history as being covered by several dispensations of God’s rule.”

Renald Showers

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

SCRIPTURAL USE: DEFINITIONS

Dispensationalism

“A theological system,...

derived from a literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic,...

which recognizes that God carries out His plan to bring glory to himself as he establishes His kingdom through a series of phases in history,...

each with its own rules, responsibilities, and promises of blessing as set forth by God,...

as well as judgments against unfaithfulness, wickedness and unbelief.”

Dave James

WHAT IS DISPENSATIONALISM?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A DISPENSATION

Primary characteristics

- Differing governing relationships from God's side, usually through covenants
- Differing responsibilities in the relationship from man's side
- Necessary revelation to institute the changes

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A DISPENSATION

Secondary characteristics

- Various specific tests, but ultimately the same (to reveal the heart)
- Consistent failure because of man's sinfulness
- Subsequent judgment because of God's justice
- A new beginning because of God's grace

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

FEATURES OF DISPENSATIONAL ESCHATOLOGY

- The hermeneutical principle consistently applied
- Literal fulfillment of all OT prophecies (cf. Davidic and New Covenants)
- Clear, consistent distinction between Israel and the church
- The Pre-tribulational Rapture (1 Thess 4, 1 Cor 15, Rev 4)
- The Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20 not the primary issue)

DISPENSATIONAL ESCHATOLOGY

THE *SINE QUA NON* OF DISPENSATIONALISM (Ryrie)

- A consistently literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic
- The distinction between Israel and the Church
- God's glory as the underlying purpose of history

CHARACTERISTICS OF DISPENSATIONALISM

AGREEMENT / DISAGREEMENT

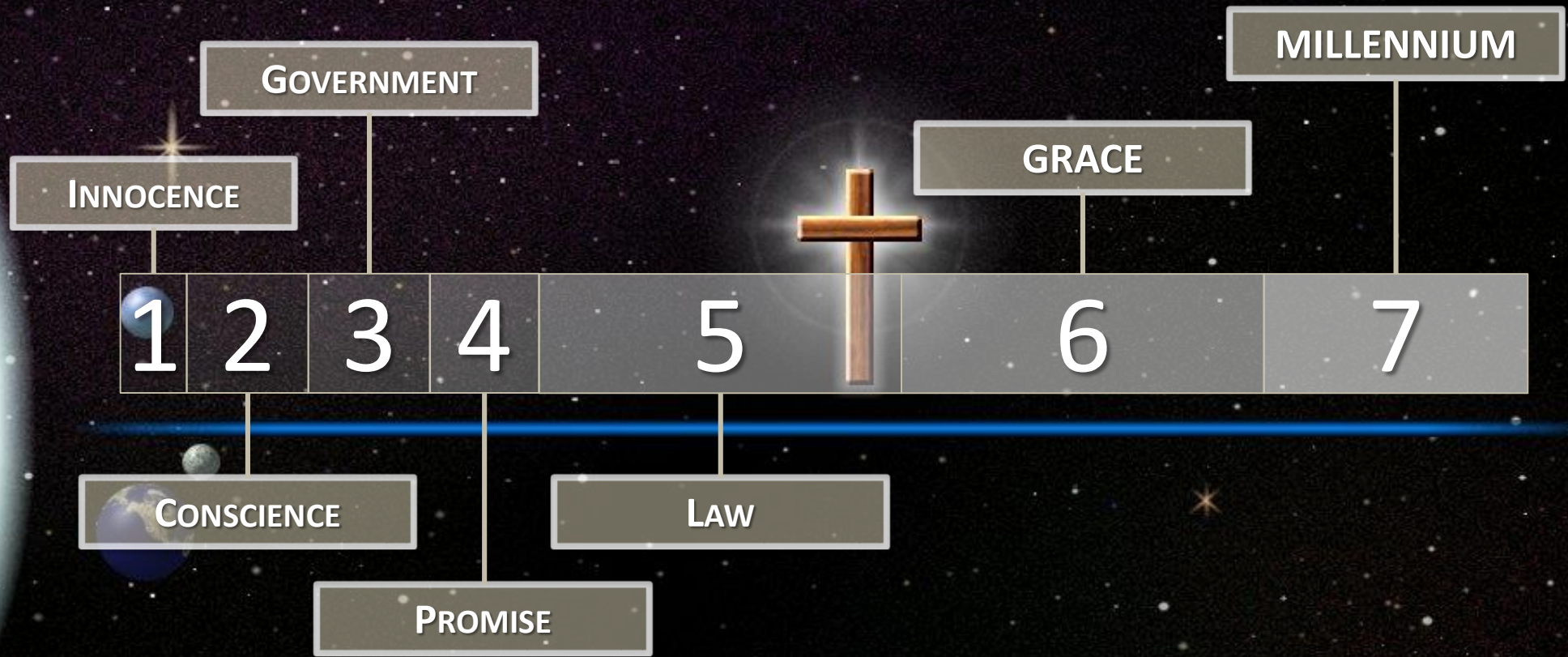
- God's plan: Carried out in successive stages
- Universal agreement: Everyone understands...
- Agreement among dispensationalists...
- Differences among dispensationalists...
- Broad disagreement within Christendom...

OUTWORKING OF GOD'S PROGRAM

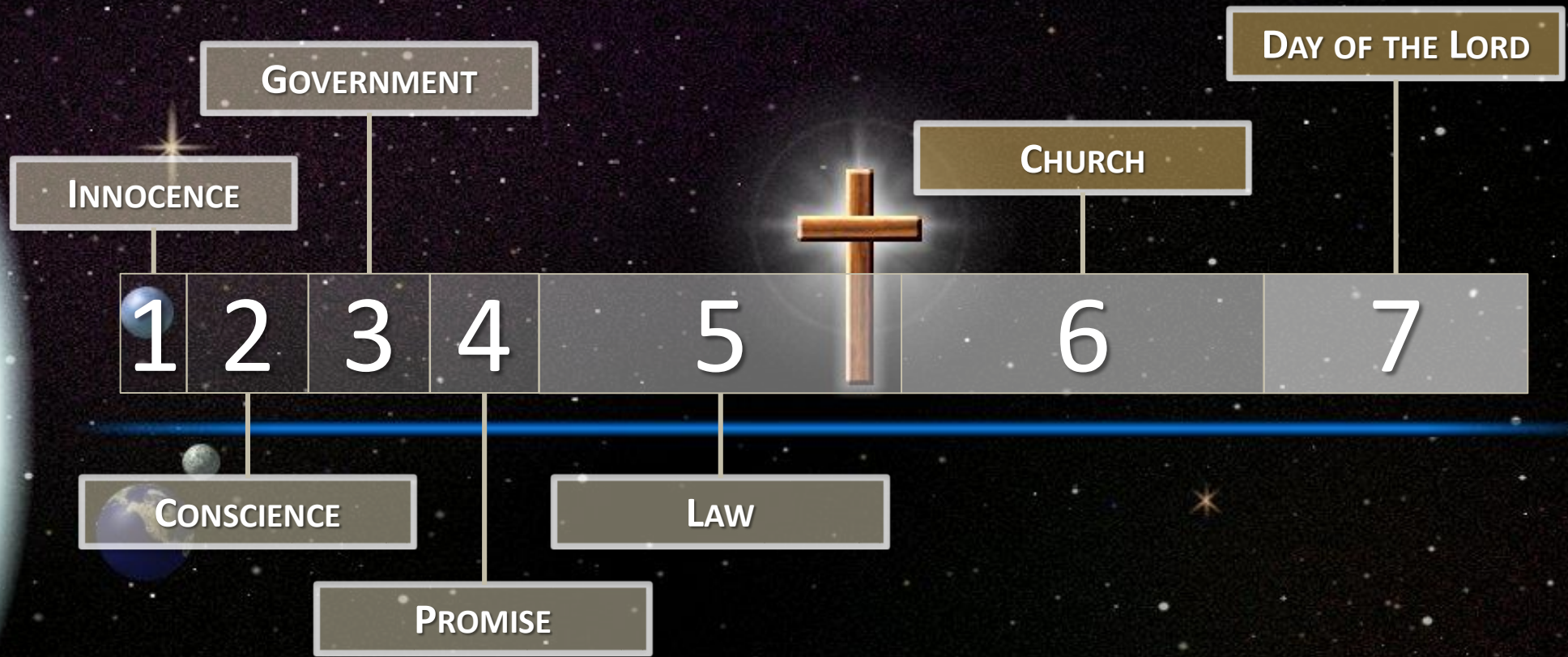
WHAT ARE THE DISPENSATIONS?



WHAT ARE THE DISPENSATIONS?



The dispensations



The dispensations

SOME ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

The Eternal State

- “Fullness of times (Eph 1:10)
- Tests are completed
- Redemption is complete
- Sin is finally judged
- God’s kingdom is established



WHAT ARE THE DISPENSATIONS?

SOME ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

The Tribulation

- Revival of OT (Dan. 70th wk)?
- A separate dispensation?
- The end of Disp. of Grace?



WHAT ARE THE DISPENSATIONS?

THE MATTER OF “CARRYOVERS”

- Some promises aren't fulfilled (Abrahamic Covenant)
- Some things continue across dispensations (Justification by faith)
- Some things may be expanded (Capital punishment)
- Some things may be repeated (9 of 10 commandments)
- Some things are completely ended (Circumcision)

WHAT ARE THE DISPENSATIONS?

THE MATTER OF TRANSITIONS (NOT IN NOTES)

- Dispensations generally have transition periods
- Some transition periods are fairly clear (Innocency - Conscience)
- Some transition periods are less clear (Government – Patriarchs)
- Transitions periods may have characteristics of both dispensations

WHAT ARE THE DISPENSATIONS?



DISPENSATIONALISM