

Myths About Dispensationalism

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Myth # 1

Dispensationalists
only care about
eschatology

Response

- Our charts often give the panorama of the ages, not just the end times
- **Dispensationalists care about all of biblical history**
- Dispensationalists champion salvation by grace alone through faith alone
- I am Jesus-centered in my theology more than gospel-centered

1 Peter 1:13

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and **hope to the end for the grace** that is to be brought unto you at the **revelation of Jesus Christ.** (KJV)

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and **rest your hope fully upon the grace** that is to be brought to you at the **revelation of Jesus Christ.** (NKJV)

Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, **fix your hope completely on the grace** to be brought to you at the **revelation of Jesus Christ.** (NASB)

Myth # 2

Dispensationalists
like to set dates for the
Second Coming

Four Options of Fulfillment with Respect to Time

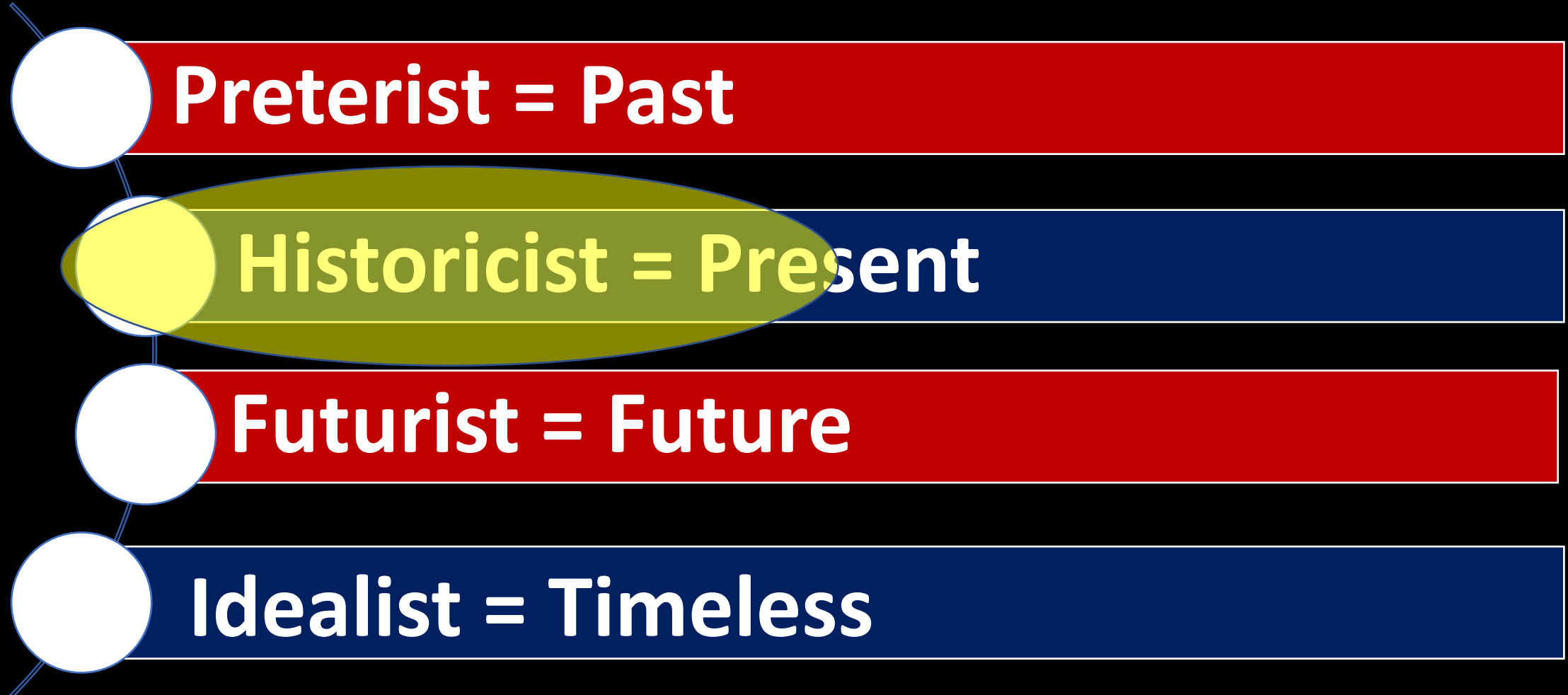
Preterist = Past

Historicist = Present

Futurist = Future

Idealist = Timeless

The View That Sets Dates The Most



Date Setters

Amillennialist

Harold

Camping

Postmillennialist

Jonathan

Edwards

Myth # 3

Dispensationalists
believe in two ways of
salvation

Response

- I have never heard a preacher or teacher teach this doctrine
- The charge is based on a note in the Scotfield Bible which needs more explanation than the note gives (1115)

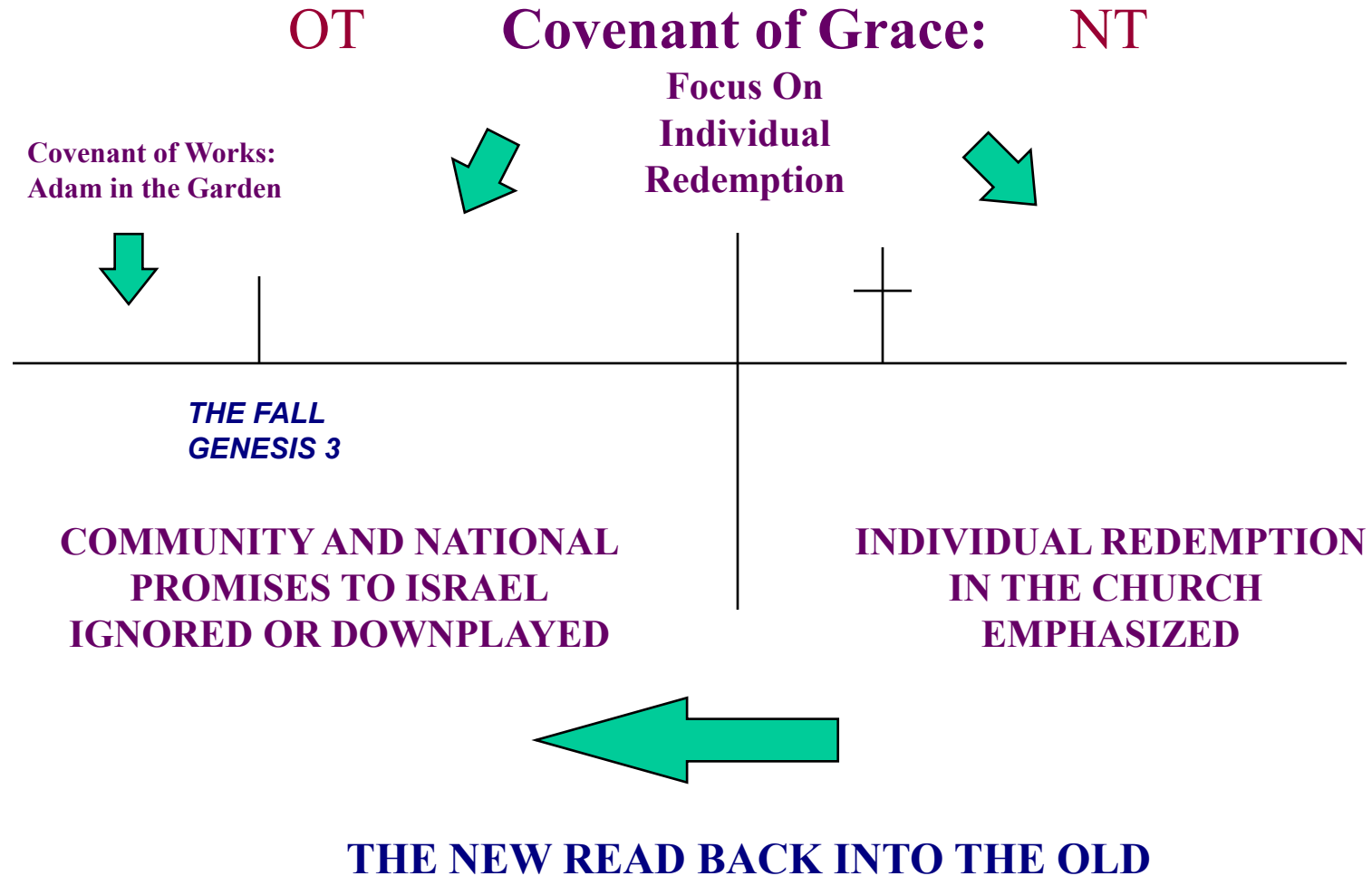
Response

- The charge is also based upon a poorly worded paragraph in Chafer's *Systematic Theology*, VII, 219
- Arno C. Gaebelein – “...no condition is mentioned; for their (OT saints) salvation as well as ours, is ‘not of works’ but of Grace alone” (*Book of Exodus, 21*)

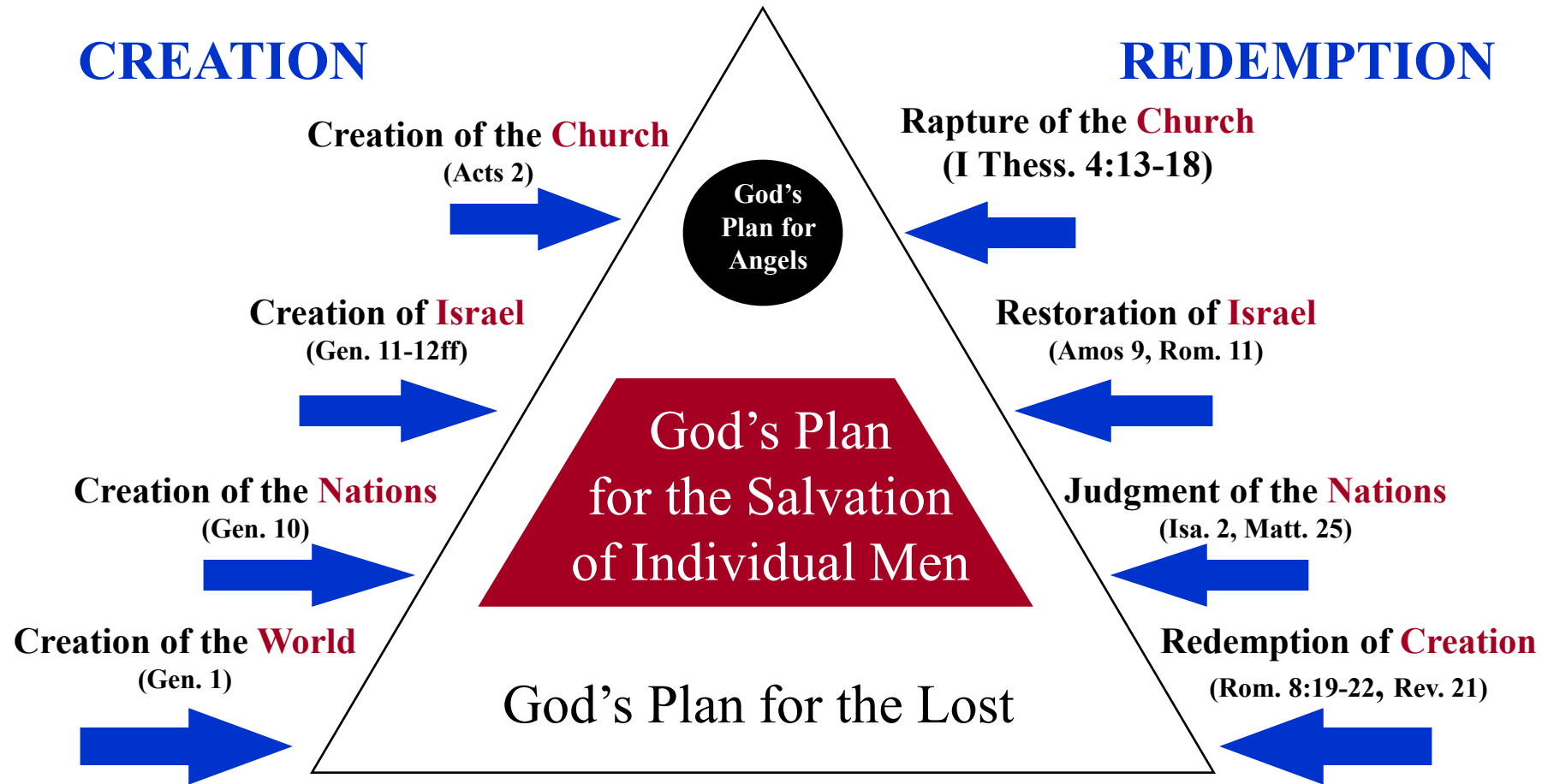
Myth # 4

Dispensationalists
destroy the unity of the
Bible (like higher
criticism)

THE FOCUS ON INDIVIDUAL REDEMPTION IN COVENANT THEOLOGY



THE FOCUS ON THE GLORY OF GOD IN DISPENSATIONALISM



Myth # 5

Dispensationalists
believe in “cheap” grace

Response

- The charge against us is that we believe that a person can get saved and never live for Christ (this is a valid concern)
- It is true that some dispensationalists may have gone to extreme positions on salvation by grace but many are balanced in this matter (Charles Ryrie, for example)

Response

- On the other hand, the Bible does teach that a true believer can die in rebellion against God
 - ✓ 1 Cor. 5:1-5 The immoral man
 - ✓ 1 Cor. 11:30 Lord's Supper cases
 - ✓ 1 John 5:16 Sin unto death

Myth # 6

Dispensationalists are too pessimistic about social action

Dispensationalists are pessimistic about mankind's ability to overcome social problems like racism because they are sin problems

Dispensationalists are optimistic about God's plan for history to deal with sin and all the problems that mankind has created

REALISTIC

Myth # 7

Dispensationalists
throw away the

Ten Commandments

Response

- All Scripture is applicable (2 Tim. 3:16-17), so we apply the OT as wisdom application and not as a direct law code to our lives today
- Test Case: All 10 commandments are repeated in the NT except “keep the Sabbath”

A Similar Test Case

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” ([2 Chron. 7:14](#))

Myth # 8

Dispensationalists

throw away the

Sermon on the Mount

Response

- Some dispensationalists see Matthew 5-7 as describing how things are going to be in the millennium (and do to some degree eliminate the Sermon from present application)
- Some dispensationalists see the Sermon as having some things for the present time and some things for the millennium (Gaebelein)

Response

- Some dispensationalists (most perhaps) see Matthew 5-7 as describing how many things are going to be in the millennium but see the Sermon as teaching us how to live in light of God's coming kingdom (6:10 – "Thy kingdom come")

Myth # 9

Dispensationalists
reject the local church



Response

- John Nelson Darby and the Plymouth Brethren (early 1800s) on paper seemed to deny the local church
- This flowed from their rejection of organized religion (i.e., Anglican Church)



Response

- In real life they still practiced functioning assemblies or churches
- Darby was even a “church-planter”
- This myth is way overstated

Myth # 10

Dispensationalists
believe the Church is
Christ's Plan B

DISPENSATIONALISM'S VIEW OF DISPENSATIONS



**CHURCH AGE IS A PARENTHESIS
IN GOD'S PLAN WITH ISRAEL**



UNITY IN GOD'S OVERALL MULTI-FACETED PLAN



Myth # 11

Dispensationalists
are the cause of ongoing
violent conflict in the
Middle East

Teaching from Bruce Waltke (covenant view)
An Old Testament Theology (558-59)

1. The survival of the United States depends upon rejecting the dispensational understanding of the Land of Israel.

2. Dispensationalists treat the Arabs as Canaanites to be conquered.

Teaching from Bruce Waltke (covenant view)
An Old Testament Theology (558-59)

3. Dispensational support for Israel's claim to the land leads to Arab dissatisfaction.
4. Dispensationalism therefore helped lead to 9-11 and may help lead the U.S. to a tragic future.

RESPONSE

- All that we need for peace in the Middle East (other than Jesus coming back) is for the Moslems to leave Israel alone.
- There are two million Arab citizens who live in Israel, mostly satisfied with the nation and not interested in living in the Palestinian Authority.

RESPONSE

- To be fair, if covenant teachers accuse dispensationalists of causing lack of peace in the Middle East, it would be appropriate to charge covenant teachers with fomenting anti-Semitism with their replacement theology.

Myth # 12

Dispensationalists
oppress Palestinian
Arabs in the Middle East

RESPONSE

- But who is doing the oppressing?
- 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1976, 1982, 1987, 1993, 2000, 2006, 2008, on and on



Myth # 13

Dispensationalists support an unbelieving, imperialistic nation when it supports Israel

RESPONSE

- Israel must return in unbelief for the temple to be rebuilt to follow Mosaic sacrifices
- Passages suggest the return in unbelief
 - ✓ Zeph. 2:1-2
 - ✓ Ezekiel 20:33-44

RESPONSE

- Is Israel really an imperialist nation?
- Is not the land Israel's ancient homeland?
- Why does no one ask about the imperialism of the Arab Islamic take over of all of North Africa?

Myth # 14

Dispensationalists believe that God's future kingdom is only 1000 years

“But a little later there followed the chiliasts [premillennialists], who limited the reign of Christ to a thousand years.”

John Calvin

The Institutes, Book 3, XXV, 5

“Now their fiction is too childish either to need or to be worth a refutation. And the Apocalypse, from which they undoubtedly drew a pretext for their error, does not support them. For the number “one thousand” does not apply to the eternal blessedness of the church but only to the various disturbances that awaited the church, while still toiling on earth.”

“On the contrary, all Scripture proclaims that there will be no end to the blessedness of the elect or the punishment of the wicked.”

How long is God's coming kingdom?

**If you say "one thousand years,"
what about all of the passages that speak
of an everlasting kingdom?**

**If you say "forever," what does all that
stuff about 1000 years mean?**

PREMILLENNIALISM



Myth # 15

Dispensationalism is a
rather recent doctrinal
innovation

Response

- That's what Catholics say about covenant theology
- Irenaeus – 2nd century – has almost all features of modern dispensationalism except the rapture
- Pseudo-Ephraem – as early as late fourth century – teaches a two-phase Second Coming

Response

- **Brother Dolcino** -- 1300 – teaches a pre-tribulation rapture
- **1600s-1700s English writers** – many pretribulation references to consider (see William Watson, *Dispensationalism Before Darby*)
- It is the biblical text that matters and it is fairly early in time

**Is dispensationalism
the most caricatured
approach to the Bible?**