

Dispensationalism

History, Tenets, Implications

History of Dispensationalism

- **John Nelson Darby (1800 – 1882)**
 - **Early history & Plymouth Brethren**
 - **Ideas**
 - **No apostolic succession**
 - **No “clergy” – all can preach**
 - **Recovery of the true church necessary**
 - **The Second Coming was near**

Spurgeon on the Plymouth Brethren Movement

“As on all hands, with a diligence never exceeded, and a subtlety never equaled, they are laboring to seduce the members of our churches to the subversion of the truth and the overthrow of the needful order and discipline of our Zion, it may be well to disseminate information concerning their sentiments and tactics.”

Spurgeon on the Plymouth Brethren Movement

“There is nothing which they have so much to dread as being thoroughly unearthed and exposed; for their grosser errors are not generally made known to their dupes until they are fairly in their meshes.”

Spurgeon on the Plymouth Brethren Movement

“Mr. Grant has done real service to the churches by his treatise on “The Heresies of the Plymouth Brethren,” which we trust he will publish in a separate form. It is almost impossible for even his heavy hand to press too severely upon this malignant power, whose secret but rapid growth is among the darkest signs of the times.”

(Sword & Trowel, vol. 2, Jan. 1869)

C. I. Scofield (1843 – 1921)

- Brethren Movement in America produced the Niagara Bible Conferences in the 1870's. Scofield heavily influenced.
- Released the “Scofield Reference Bible” in 1909 (full Bible with notes finished in 1917).

Lewis Sperry Chafer

(1871 – 1952)

- Became involved with the Southland Bible Conference in 1904, met and began working with Scofield.
- Moved to Dallas, TX and pastored church started by Scofield in 1877 (still there).
- Founded the Evangelical Theological College (now DTS) in 1924.
- Wrote his 8-volume Systematic Theology in 1948.

Major Tenets of Dispensationalism

- Definition and outline of dispensations
- Literal interpretation of the Bible
- Church and Israel are completely separate
- God's goal in history is the manifestation of His glory *on earth* (doxological).

Implications of Dispensationalism

- Grace is a test
- All of God's plans on earth end in failure
- Grace and Law are total opposites
- The New Covenant has nothing to do with the church
- The church is not the fulfillment of God's plans on earth.