

seen as mistakes or unexplainable differences, but rather distinctions that God has made in his purposes for mankind.

Here are a few things that are different in this Grace dispensation.

- **There is no difference between Jew and Gentile.** The Jew does not have the position of priority over the rest of mankind. All people who are saved are on equal status in Christ's church (Acts 15:9; Romans 3:23-24; 10:12).

- **There is a difference between Israel and the Church.** Many today teach that the Church replaces Israel in God's purposes. But the Bible says, *'The Jews are still his chosen people because of his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For God's gifts and his call can never be withdrawn'* (Romans 11:25-28). Israel is still God's chosen nation and will be blessed in the future reign of Jesus on earth (Romans 11:26-27).

God's program today is that of calling out of the Gentiles a people for his name called *'the Church'* (Acts 15:14). The Church is not spiritual Israel.

- **There is a difference between Law and Grace.** From Moses to the coming of Jesus the people of God lived under the system of Law. Salvation came

via the Jews (John 4:22) and it involved obedience to the Law of Moses and the Levitical System (Hebrews chap. 7-10).

God instructed Paul to teach the Church that they were not under the Law system but under the Grace system—in the new age called the *'dispensation of the Grace of God'* (Ephesians 3:2 KJV).

The Church age believers do not try to keep the Jewish Law in any way at all (Galatians 5:4), but rather live by the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit within them (Galatians 5:18).

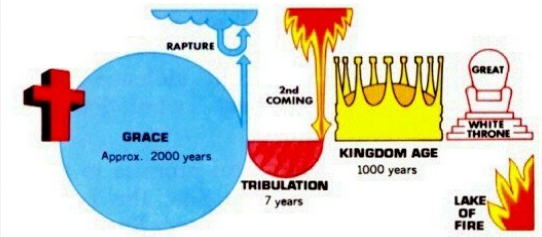
We believe that when we distinguish the dispensations, everything falls into place and the Bible makes sense. Much confusion can be avoided if Christians study the Bible Dispensationally.

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PRISON MISSION
So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. - John 8:36 ASSOCIATION

What We Believe *concerning* **DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH**



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WHAT WE BELIEVE CONCERNING

DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

This is just a brief introduction to Dispensational Truth. For many people the Bible just doesn't seem to make sense. It seems to be filled with contradictions.

As Dr. Baker writes, "In one place in the Bible it states that man should eat only fruits and vegetables; in another it says that every moving thing that lives shall be meat for people; and in still another a long list of animals, birds and fish are classified as unclean and forbidden as food (Genesis 1:29; 9:3; Leviticus 11).

Then Paul comes on the scene and announces that every creature is good and nothing is to be refused (1Timothy 4:4).

In one place the Bible states that if a man is not circumcised he shall be cut off from God's people (Genesis 17:13-14) and in another that Christ will be of no profit to a man who goes and gets circumcised (Galatians 5:2).

In one place Christ tells his disciples to preach only to Israelites and not to Gentiles (Matthew 10:5,6) and in another place he tells them to go to all men

(Matthew 28:19)."

What is the explanation for these and many other seeming contradictions?

The Bible itself instructs us to rightly divide the Word of truth (2Timothy 2:15). This means that we must distinguish between the various dispensations of God's dealings with mankind.

The word 'Dispensation' is found in the KJV translation of the Greek word '*oikonomia*' (1Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10, 3:2, Colossians 1:25). The Greek word '*oikonomia*' is made up of two parts '*oikos*' which means 'house' and '*nomos*' which means 'rules or laws.' The word simply means God's rules, laws or instructions for a certain household, at a certain time. The household of God for this dispensation is called the "*Church, which is the [spiritual] Body of Christ*" (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:23-26; 1Corinthians 12:27).

The English word 'Dispensation' was taken from the field of medicine, where people were dispensed medicines to take for a certain period of time until they were physically well. Hence the idea of handing out instructions to specific people at a certain time. It was important not to mix medications or

share them with others, to whom they did not apply.

There are many dispensations of God recorded in the Bible, in which he has dispensed, or given out instructions for each group of people, at a certain time, for a definite length of time.

As mentioned earlier, in the first dispensation, before man fell into sin, God limited his food to fruits and vegetables. After the flood, he also permitted man to eat all kinds of animal flesh. Later He placed Israel under the Law and limited their diet to certain animals. (See Leviticus 11).

When Israel rejected Christ, he set the nation aside and turned to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). He gave to the Apostle Paul the revelation of truth for this present dispensation, which is called the "*dispensation of the grace of God*" (Ephesians 3:2-9).

In this dispensation God instructed Paul to tell the members of the predominantly Gentile Church that there were no restrictions regarding the kinds of food they should eat, but with a prayer of thanksgiving, "*nothing is to be refused*" on religious grounds (1Timothy 4:4).

When we discern the things that differ, the so called contradictions are not