

Dominion or Departure?

The Kingdom – Part 1

Eschatology

- Our understanding of the end of the world.
- Our expectation of the future.

The most common eschatology in the American church today is dispensationalism, which teaches that:

- Jesus is coming back at any moment.
- The world will continue to get worse until Jesus returns.
- The Antichrist is a person who is alive somewhere today.
- The church will be raptured out of here.

4 Major Problems with Dispensational Teaching

1. The authors are questionable people.

- Manuel Lacunza
- Edward Irving
- John Darby
- Cyrus Scofield

2. Didn't exist prior to 1820.

- The most modern eschatology.
- Augustine: "The clouds roll with thunder that the House of the Lord shall be built throughout the earth. We are the shapers of world history. God has re-made man in His image for world dominion. He has committed to us the Gospel of the Kingdom, and commissioned us to take over the world. If we trust and obey Him, there is no possibility of failure."
- Old cathedrals in Europe.
- Great Hymns filled with dominion thinking.

3. Church leaders condemned it.

- Philip Mauro: “It is greatly to be regretted that those who, in our day, give themselves to the study and exposition of prophecy, seem not to be aware of the immense significance of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which was accompanied by the extinction of Jewish national existence, and the dispersion of the Jewish people among all the nations. The failure to recognize the significance of that event, and the vast amount of prophecy which it fulfilled, has been the cause of great confusion. The result of missing the past fulfillment of predicted events is that it leaves on our hands a mass of prophecies for which we need to contrive fulfillments in the future.”
- Charles Spurgeon: “We will never know what we shall hear next, and perhaps it is a mercy that these absurdities are revealed at one time, in order that we may be able to endure their stupidity without dying of amazement. Why, every child of God in every place stands on the same footing; the Lord has not some children best beloved, some second-rate offspring, and others whom he hardly cares about.”
- Gal. 3:23 – There is neither Jew nor Gentile...for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
- Rom. 10:12 – For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him.
- Charles Spurgeon: “It would be easy to show that at our present rate of progress the kingdoms of this world never could become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Indeed, many in the church are giving up on the idea of it, except on the occasion of the Second Coming of Christ. As it chimes in with our own idleness, this is likely to become a popular doctrine. I myself believe that King Jesus will reign, and the idols be utterly abolished. But I expect the same power which turned the world upside down once, will still continue to do it. The Holy Spirit would never suffer the imputation to rest upon His holy name that He was not able to convert the world.”
- David Chilton: “The unbiblical idea of ‘spirituality’ is that the truly spiritual man is the person who is sort of non-physical, who doesn't get involved in earthly things, who doesn't work very much or think very hard, and who spends most of his time meditating about how he'd rather be in heaven. As long as he's on earth, though, he has one main duty in life: Get stepped on for Jesus. The ‘spiritual’ man, in this view, is a wimp. A Loser. But at least he's a Good Loser.”

4. Clearly unbiblical.

- Ps. 110:1 – The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

- Dan. 7:13-14 – I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and populations of all languages might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.
- Dan. 2:34-35 – You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.
- Matt. 13:33 – He spoke another parable to them, “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.”

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The Kingdom – Part 2

1. What about the Book of Revelation?

- About the future? No, apart from chapters 21-22.
- Rev. 1:1 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His servants the things which must soon take place.
- Rev. 1:3 – Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
- Rev. 22:6 – Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.
- Soon, shortly, near.
- Rev. 22:10 – Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.
- J. Stuart Russell: “Was a book sent by an apostle to the churches of Asia Minor, a bunch of unintelligible jargon? That can’t be true. Yet if the book were meant to unveil the secrets of distant times, it would have been unintelligible to its first readers – and not only unintelligible, but even irrelevant and useless. If it spoke about all sorts of future events, as some would have us believe, what possible interest could it have for the persecuted Christians to whom it was sent? What purpose would there be in sending them a document which they were urged to read and ponder, if that document was mainly about events hundreds or thousands of years in the future? Is it conceivable that an apostle would mock the suffering Christians of his time with dark parables about distant ages? If this book were really intended to minister faith and comfort to the very persons to whom it was sent, it must unquestionably deal with matters in which they were practically and personally interested. The only tenable, the only reasonable, hypothesis is that it was intended to be understood by its original readers, and it must be focused on the things happening in their own day.”

2. What about the Antichrist?

- 1 John 2:18-22 – Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us,

but they did not really belong to us....Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist – he denies the Father and the Son.

- 1 John 4:4 – Every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.
- 2 John 7-11 – Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.
- 2 Thess. 2:3-7 – Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship....Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.
- Claudius Caesar / restrains = claudere
- The beast of Revelation is both a kingdom & a person.
- Rev. 13:1 – [John] saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads.
- Rev. 17:9 – The seven heads are seven mountains...
- Rev. 13:18 – ...calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.
- Hebrew alphabet is both alpha & numeric.
- Nero Caesar = Nrwn Qsr
- Rev. 13:7 – ...make war with the saints...and he was given authority to continue for 42 months.
- It's an historical fact that Nero starting persecuting Christians in December of AD 64, and he died in June 68, exactly 42 months.

3. What about the last days?

- 2 Tim. 3:1-5 – But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power. Avoid such men as these.

- 1 Tim. 4:1-3 – But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth... In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus.
- Heb. 1:2 – God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
- 1 Peter 1:20 – He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.
- 1 Peter 1:21 – For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who are believers in God.

2 time periods: (1) The Age of the Law & the Prophets
(2) The Age of the Messianic Kingdom

- Matt. 4:17 – Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.
- Mark 1:15 – The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe.
- Matt. 16:28 – Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom.

4. What about Matthew 24?

- Disciples asked, “What are the signs of the end of the age?”
- Matt. 23:36 – Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.
- Matt. 24:34 – Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.
- Luke 21:20-21 – When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are in the midst of the city must leave...

Habakkuk 2:14 – For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

David Chilton: “The focus of the Book of Revelation is upon the contemporary situation of St. John and his first-century readers. It was written to show those early Christians that Jesus is Lord – “ruler over the kings of the earth” (Rev. 1:5). It shows that Jesus is the key to world history – that nothing can occur apart from His sovereign will, that He will be glorified in all things, and that His enemies will lick the dust.

But the Book of Revelation speaks powerfully to us as Christians today. And its message to us is the same as it was to the early Church: that there is not a square inch of ground in heaven or on earth or under the earth in which there is peace between Christ and Satan; that our Lord demands universal submission to His rule; and that He has predestined His people to victorious conquest and dominion over all things in His name. We must make no compromise, and give no quarter in the great battle of history. We are commanded to win.”

Augustine: “We are the shapers of world history. God has re-made man in His image for world dominion. He has committed to us the Gospel of the Kingdom, and commissioned us to take over the world. If we trust and obey Him, there is no possibility of failure.”