



EXPOSITION

Monthly e-Bulletin from Virginia Beach Theological Seminary



From My Window

The 1905 book titled, *The Story of the Welsh Revival*, is a collection of authors who were eyewitness of God's great work of revival in South Wales. G. Campbell Morgan wrote the chapter, "The Lesson on the Revival." He writes that the revival was not about "preaching, order, hymn-books, choirs, organs, collections, and advertising." Rather, he shares, "It is a church revival." What he means is "the life of church" was dramatically changed. Church members became godly (looking like Christ), evangelistic (caring about the souls of their neighbors), and focused on the things that are important to God. Morgan noted that this change produced "20,000 new converts enrolled in local churches within five weeks." My heart cries to God for such a revival—our churches need this. May God light a fire in us today!



Virginia Beach Theological Seminary has been blessed by God with an outstanding and hard-working faculty and staff. Each member of the VBTS leadership team is committed to training the next generation of pastors and missionaries in the context of a local church. Thank you for your prayers this semester as we seek to sharpen the next generation for His Body.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

- Mrs. Susann DePriest* – Assistant to the Librarian
- Dr. Roger DePriest* – Faculty Associate in Biblical Counseling
- Mr. Edward Estes* – Director of Admissions & Registrar
- Capt. Tony Brazas (Ret., USN)* – Director of Operations
- Dr. Eric Lehner* – Academic Dean & Professor of Theology
- Dr. Brent Belford* – Faculty Associate in New Testament
- Dr. Mark Hassler* – Associate Professor of Old Testament
- Dr. Tom Dailey* – Professor of New Testament
- Dr. Daniel Davey* – President & Professor of Bible Exposition
- Dr. Michael Windsor* – Librarian & Prof of Historical Theology
- Mrs. Gloria Schrader* – Administrative Assistant
- Mr. Joel Dailey (Not Pictured)* – Assistant Office Manager



Truth for the Agora: *Why I Am a Dispensationalist*

Guest Author: *Dr. Michael Windsor, Professor of Historical Theology*

I am a dispensationalist in my theological conclusions — not because I carried a *Scofield Reference Bible* to church as an 18 year-old, nor because the man that led me to Christ was a dispensationalist, nor because I attended a dispensational seminary for my theological education. Each of the preceding factors encouraged me along the way, but they were not decisive. Let me share three concepts that cause me to see dispensational contours in the pages of Scripture.

Progressive revelation. God gave revelation over the course of time. When looking at the progress of revelation, we find that at times, God chose to alter His relationship to mankind. This divinely chosen adjustment of mankind's relationship to God, rooted in divine revelation, we call dispensationalism. The word for dispensation is *oikonomia*. The word implies a management of a home environment or a stewardship. God grants a stewardship of life to men and women grounded in the boundaries of His revelation. This is what Paul meant when he wrote "of the dispensation of the grace of God" and how God "by revelation . . . made known to me the mystery" so that Christians can "read" and "understand" what God was doing (Eph. 3:2–4). God gave revelation in order to adjust mankind's relationship to Himself and His work. Dispensational interpreters are endeavoring to understand Biblical history marked by God's revelatory transitions.

Hermeneutics. A dispensational reader of Scripture consistently uses a normative approach for all of Scripture. The difference between a dispensational hermeneutic and a non-dispensational hermeneutic can be illustrated in Isaiah 11. Note how each approaches the three sections of this passage. (1) Both hermeneutic approaches take the first 5 verses literally, understanding that the Messiah will come from the stem of Jesse (11:1), will have the Spirit rest upon Him (11:2), will judge with righteousness (11:4), and will be faithful in all he does (11:5). (2) In verses 6–10, non-dispensationalists are divided; some join the dispensational reader's conclusion and accept Isaiah's promise as literal realities of the future kingdom, while others view the paragraph as allegorical blessings for the church. (3) In verses 11–16, non-dispensationalist readers usually agree that these verses should be rendered in a more allegorical sense. Dispensational readers, on the other hand, accept Isaiah's promise as the literal reunification of Israel and its regathering in the Holy Land during the coming kingdom. In short, the dispensational hermeneutic maintains the same normative hermeneutic throughout Chapter 11, while the non-dispensationalist struggles whether or not to adopt a figurative hermeneutic after verse 5. Since consistency ought to be the norm for the interpreter, the dispensational approach seems most satisfying.

Church and Israel. As a dispensationalist, I recognize an exegetical distinction between the Church and Israel. Scriptures may use similar imagery for both Israel and the Church, but the Scriptures never identify the Church as Israel. Both spiritual communities may share similar features because they both relate to the same God. For example, Peter exhorted Christians to be holy because God is holy (1 Pet. 1:15), just as Moses earlier exhorted the people of Israel to the same spiritual state (Lev. 11:45). Holiness was expected of a person walking with God, whether that person was an OT saint or NT saint. Recognizing the distinction between these two spiritual communities leads me to see distinctions in their eschatological destinies. When Jesus returns in His Second Advent, He will establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The nation of Israel will be regathered in the Holy Land and the Church will reign with the King.

Having been in the ministry for over 40 years, I can say that following the dispensational contours of God's progress of revelation has allowed me to appreciate what God has accomplished in the OT and will yet accomplish under his New Covenant. I treasure the Scriptures as being directly from the mind of God to the heart of mankind. Therefore, I want to know exactly what God says and what he means by what he says—there is no greater joy!