



XIII. DISPENSATIONAL SALVATION

A. The Foundation of the Foundation

1. Laying the ground work
 - a. Two fears distinguished
 - (1) Ungodly fear
 - a) Fear of the world, the flesh, and the Devil (Deuteronomy 31:6; Psalm 27:1-3; Psalm 46:1-3; Psalm 56:4; Psalm 118:6; Hebrews 13:6;
 - b) The foe of faith (Matthew 8:26; Revelation 21:8)
 - (2) Godly fear
 - a) Fear of God (Deuteronomy 5:29; Deuteronomy 6:2, 13, 24; Deuteronomy 10:12; Deuteronomy 31:12-13; Psalm 89:7; Psalm 96:4; Psalm 119:120; Hebrews 12:28; 1 Peter 1:17)
 - b) The friend of and, in many ways, the prelude to faith (Exodus 14:31)
 - b. Associated Bible words
 - (1) Dread
 - (2) Anguish
 - (3) Terrified
 - (4) Afraid
 - (5) Dismayed
2. The effects of the fear of God
 - a. Where no fear is
 - (1) Men fear for life over the carnal matters (Genesis 20:11).
 - (2) Men treat others cruelly (Deuteronomy 25:18).
 - (3) Men arrogantly refuse to obey the Lord to their own hurt (Exodus 9:30).
 - (4) Men do what seems right to them (Psalm 36:1-4; Romans 3:10-18).
 - b. When God's fear is present
 - (1) Men obey God regardless of the personal cost (Genesis 22:12).
 - (2) Men tremble at the word of God (Psalm 119:120).
 - (3) Men believe the Lord (Exodus 14:31).
 - (4) Men turn from sin (Exodus 20:20; Deuteronomy 13:11; Deuteronomy 17:13; Deuteronomy 19:20; 2 Corinthians 7:1).
 - (5) Men serve the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:13; Deuteronomy 10:12; Hebrews 12:28).
 - (6) Men associate with others who fear the Lord (Malachi 3:16).
3. The benefits of the fear of God
 - a. In the Old Testament
 - (1) Protection (Psalm 33:18; Psalm 34:7; Psalm 85:9)
 - (2) Provision (Psalm 31:19; Psalm 34:9; Psalm 111:5)
 - (3) Light (Psalm 25:12, 14; Proverbs 2:5)
 - (4) Mercy (Psalm 103:11, 13, 17)
 - (5) Favour (Psalm 147:11)



- b. In the early church
 - (1) For the lost (Acts 10:2, 22, 35; Acts 13:16, 26)
 - (2) For the saved
 - a) Perfecting holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1)
 - b) Working out salvation (Philippians 2:12)
 - c) Serving God acceptably (Hebrews 12:28)
 - d) Improves the future judgment (1 Peter 1:17)
- c. In the tribulation and kingdom (Jeremiah 32:40; Hosea 3:5; Malachi 4:2)
- d. Note: The reason we begin our study of dispensational salvation with the fear of God is because of its common thread throughout the dispensations. It is no coincidence that the “everlasting gospel” preached in Revelation 14:6-7 begins with “Fear God.” If fear precedes faith it becomes perhaps the foremost foundational element of dispensational salvation. Fear transcends every dispensation and it is something that gets the attention of God to offer more truth (Isaiah 66:2).

B. Transdispensational Foundational Elements

1. Faith

- a. The Bible emphatically points out that without faith man cannot and will not please the Lord (Hebrews 11:6).
- b. Though this is true concerning the necessity of faith, the object of man’s faith has necessarily changed according to God’s message for any present generation.
- c. In fact, in spite of the Old Testament emphasis on strict obedience to the law, the New Testament indicates that the greater truth was that the obedience was a result of the necessary virtue of faith (see Hebrews chapter 11)
 - (1) “By faith Abel offered” (Hebrews 11:4)
 - (2) “By faith Enoch was translated” (Hebrews 11:5)
 - (3) “By faith Noah . . . prepared an ark” (Hebrews 11:7)
 - (4) “By faith Abraham . . . obeyed” (Hebrews 11:8)
- d. This confirms and attests to the truth taught concerning Abraham when the Bible says, “he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). This truth is reiterated in Romans 4:3, 17; Galatians 3:6; and James 2:23.

2. Grace

- a. Old Testament grace
 - (1) The emphasis on grace being found
 - a) There overriding emphasis of the Old Testament is that grace was “found” (Genesis 6:8; Genesis 19:19; Exodus 33:12-13, 16-17; Exodus 34:9).
 - b) There is only one reference to grace being found in the New Testament (Hebrews 4:16).



- c) The message seems to be that grace was found of those who sought it.
 - (2) The examples of grace being found
 - a) Noah (Genesis 6:8)
 - b) Moses (Exodus 33:13, 17)
 - c) Gideon (Judges 6:16-17)
 - b. New Testament grace
 - (1) The emphasis on grace being given
 - a) There are fourteen New Testament references to grace being given.
 - b) There are only two Old Testament references to being given (Psalm 84:11; Proverbs 3:34).
 - (2) The examples of grace being given (Romans 12:3, 6; Romans 15:15; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 1 Corinthians 3:10; Galatians 2:9; Ephesians 3:2, 7-8; Ephesians 4:7; 2 Timothy 1:9; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5)
- 3. Blood
 - a. Though some have attributed salvific power to the blood of animals in the Old Testament sacrifices, the Bible clearly refutes this teaching when it refers to the impossibility “that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4).
 - b. In fact, the blood of Christ not only had to be shed for the sins of those living after the cross under the New Testament, but also for the redemption of the transgressions of those under the first testament (Hebrews 9:15).
 - c. Though the timing of the shedding and application of the blood of Christ changed historically as it relates to the cross of Christ, the souls of Old Testament saints could not be delivered from paradise (in the heart of the earth) until the blood of Christ was placed upon the mercy seat in heaven (Matthew 27:52-53; Ephesians 4:8).
 - d. This in no way suggests that men looked forward to the cross. They simply had no knowledge of the blood of Christ, nor were they required to trust in the blood of Christ in order to know God.
 - e. However, there is not one soul spending his eternity in heaven apart from the shed blood of Christ.

C. Progressive Revelation and Looking Forward to the Cross

- 1. Progressive revelation
 - a. Picture, if you will, the history of mankind as a giant puzzle.
 - (1) God has unveiled Himself and His plan for man one piece at a time.
 - (2) Of course, Adam and Eve were eyewitnesses as the initial pieces formed together.
 - (3) With each additional new piece of the puzzle, the truth became more evident and God manifested Himself more clearly.



- b. Yet, the very real danger exists when the new pieces and their associated light are retroactively forced upon those who had already lived and died.
 - (1) One of the most prominent examples this retroactive application involves the teaching that Old Testament saints placed their faith in the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross (also known as looking forward to the cross).
 - (2) The idea is that, beginning with Adam, there has been a continuous set of beliefs to which all men must subscribe in order to be saved.
 - (3) Though this may be true in a general sense, this teaching seeks to make the object of faith so specific that it in turn makes God a liar and the Bible a fable.
- 2. Looking forward to the cross
 - a. Contrary to the customary teachings of our day, those living prior to the cross could not have been looking forward to the cross.
 - b. In order to validate these claims, consider the object of Simon Peter's faith.
 - (1) Certainly Peter would have had more light than the Old Testament saints.
 - (2) After all, he sat at the feet of Jesus for just over three years as He taught.
 - (3) Most would agree that Peter was one of the leaders of the disciples.
 - (4) Surely he understood and believed in the death, burial, and resurrection prior to the cross . . . or did he?
 - (5) Consider these problematic areas of contention for those who teach Peter was looking forward to the cross.
 - a) Peter rebuked the Lord when He foretold His death, burial and resurrection (Mark 8:32).
 - b) Peter fought to stop the soldiers from taking Jesus prisoner which would ultimately lead Jesus to the cross (John 18:10).
 - c) Peter thought that the resurrection account was an "idle tale" (Luke 24:11) after the women testified to him what they had seen at the sepulcher.
 - d) Peter wondered what had happened to Jesus' body after the resurrection as he looked into the empty sepulcher (Luke 24:12).
 - c. No preacher who understands the import of Christ's death, burial and resurrection would suggest that a man blind to the truth presented in Luke 18:31-33 was a saved man.
 - (1) However, the context in the next verse plainly states that the disciples did not understand the message of Luke 18:31-33.
 - (2) In fact, the Bible clearly says that Christ's death, burial and resurrection was hidden from them (Luke 18:34).