

KING JAMES ONLY

REVISED DISPENSATIONALISM

DISMANTLED



David E. Walker

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PREFACE

Most believers raised in churches that contend for the King James Bible as the infallible word of God are familiar with 2 Timothy 2:15 and the idea of dispensationalism. In fact, most Bible believers are so familiar with their Scofield Reference Bibles they can tell you which side of the page a certain passage is on from memory. For many Bible believers, dispensationalism, as a theological system, answers “problem passages” that clearly teach salvation by means other than **“by grace...through faith”** in the finished work of Jesus Christ. At the same time, many King James Only believers remain unsettled or unsure about the differences in salvation under the various dispensations. Their pastors may not emphasize or teach these distinctions, or they may have fallen prey to King James Only preachers and authors who teach just the opposite. Some of these authors have been teaching this faulty dispensational position for years while others have more recently modified this as their position.

In this booklet we will briefly trace the development of dispensationalism as it relates to salvation under the various dispensations. We will show that the dispensationalism being taught by many King James Only preachers and authors is nothing more than a revised dispensational position rooted in Calvinism. We will also dismantle the faulty premises of this revised position by addressing the major points and examining their books in light of THE Book.

1 A LITTLE BACKGROUND

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

Anyone familiar with church history understands the truth of progressive revelation: that we know more about the Bible now than the church did in the first few centuries (see Psalm 119:99). Sometimes this is glossed over by reformed theologians attempting to discredit dispensational theology on the grounds that dispensational teaching was not voluminous until the nineteenth century and is therefore a modern movement and thus invalid. They do so by ignoring documented facts showing “historical references to that which eventually systematized into dispensationalism,”¹ pretending early church fathers like Justin Martyr (110–65), Irenaeus (130–200), and Clement of Alexandria (150–220) did not make any dispensational divisions. However, church fathers like Tertullian (160–220), Hippolytus (170–235), and Cyril of Jerusalem (313–386) taught the dispensational truth that Israel would be restored and revived.² And pre–Darby theologians like Pierre Poiret (1646–1719), John Edwards (1637–1716), and Isaac Watts (1674–1748) made clear

¹ Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 63.

² James C. Morris, *Ancient Dispensational Truth: Refuting the Myth that Dispensationalism is New* (Taos, NM: Dispensational Publishing House, Inc., 2018), 50–62.

dispensational partitions.³ Covenant or replacement theology adherents have to disregard these men and other abundant evidence showing clear pre-Darby “dispensational systems” in the writings of Samuel Hutchinson (1590–1667), Henry More (1614–87), and William Penn (1644–87) to name a few.⁴

Dispensationalism, as a theological movement, arose within premillennialism and the fundamentalist movement.⁵ It was distinctively a part of the last phase of the Philadelphia Church Age (Revelation 3:7–13) and, as critics point out, was “dependent in many ways on the King James translation of the Bible.”⁶ The dispensationalism of this period (1878–1940s) was primarily an *English* Bible study movement with an emphasis on *belief* in the Bible. The many Bible conferences and revivals of this time did not originate from seminaries or their academic dissertations. They surfaced to meet a hunger to learn the Bible from both layman and preacher alike. And the Bible that most people had, read, and believed was the text of the Authorized King James Version. The fruits of this period were not just personal light for the believer, but light for the world. The many Bible institutes with a dispensational emphasis pushed missions and evangelism way beyond what other groups were doing at the time.

But as the lights of the Philadelphia period went out, the Bible institute and missionary movement gave way to the dead seminary movement. Dispensational teachers aspired to be “scholars” and as such, did not retain the simple honest belief in the word of God as it is

³ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 65–67.

⁴ William C. Watson, *Dispensationalism before Darby* (Silverton, OR: Lampion Press, 2015), 119, 124–25.

⁵ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 48–62.

⁶ Ben Witherington III. *The Problem with Evangelical Theology* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 95.

written. The revised period of dispensationalism saw a rise in criticism of the King James text, and, with the publication of the *New Scofield Reference Bible* in 1967, “a toning down of Scofield’s material.”⁷ The revised period of dispensationalism dropped the torch of honesty and belief in the Bible. Instead, their scholarship got the best of them and they began apologizing for the obvious implications of dispensationalism — namely that people were saved differently under the different dispensations.

Scofield and Chafer (and they are not alone) left an impression that salvation comes in various ways. These were unfortunate statements. It may be argued that they were said early in the debate and were not thought through well. It must also be admitted that the dispensationalism of today is not the same as the dispensationalism of Scofield, Chafer, Walvoord, and other early writers. There has been additional study and revision.⁸

BIBLE-BELIEVING DISPENSATIONALISM

Bible-believing (KJV only) dispensationalism, as a movement, was a reaction to this revised dispensationalism apostasy much like the fundamentalist movement was a counter to modernism. To the Bible believer, the logical conclusions of **“rightly dividing”** were only as good as the Bible itself. Inspiration was correctly understood to not merely apply to the original manuscripts, but to an actual book that can be “studied” (2 Timothy 2:15) — the King James Authorized Version. This meant that “pastor popes who privately interpreted the scripture with their cute sayings”⁹ could be challenged because the power was in the word of God, not the word of men. This further led to honestly approaching the Bible in humble belief as a student, not a scholar. The

⁷ Todd R. Mangum and Mark S. Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2009), 201.

⁸ Larry R. Oats, “Salvation in Dispensationalism,” *Frontline Magazine* 20, no. 4 (July/August 2010): 10–12, <https://fbfi.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2010.08.FrontLine.pdf>.

⁹ Brian Donovan, “One Book Wrongly Divided...Twice,” *Bible Believers’ Bulletin* 43 (June 2019): 16.

outcome was an ardent belief in dispensational salvation — that salvation conditions *are* different, regardless of what scholarship says or has said in the past.

The King James Only (KJO) movement and this brand of dispensationalism are inseparably linked. Unfortunately, some King James only preachers and authors today are espousing revised or normative dispensationalism. They side theologically with Bible correctors, assuming the distinguishing differences between Israel and the church are only ecclesiological (dealing with the church), or eschatological (dealing with prophecy), and not soteriological (dealing with salvation). In other words, they claim that even “under the Old Testament Law...salvation was available to the sinner...not by the works of the Law but by grace through faith.”¹⁰ They maintain, “in every age, salvation comes by faith and is offered and granted through grace.”¹¹ These authors, by their own admission and obvious absence of quoted source material, or very limited references in their books, are very careful not to name the King James Only authors they are attempting to refute, or the apostates their ideas line up with.¹² They piously profess to be “concerned with what is being taught, not with the men themselves,”¹³ and religiously follow certain “rules for writers” like “Eliminate quotations.”¹⁴

These authors are specifically targeting Bible believers who have either espoused the truths of dispensational salvation personally or been

¹⁰ James W. Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered* (DeLand, FL: The Bible Baptist Church, 2009), 74.

¹¹ Douglas D. Stauffer and Andrew B. Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition* (Knoxville, TN: McCowen Mills Publishers & LTB Publications, 2018), 668.

¹² Dennis Corle, *What Salvation Is* (Claysburg, PA: Revival Fires! Publishing, 2015), 245–264.

¹³ M.H. Tabb, *The Gap Theory* (Fort Walton Beach: Foundation Ministries, 1993), 17.

¹⁴ James W. Knox, *By Definition: A Readers Guide to the King James Bible* (DeLand, FL: The Bible Baptist Church of DeLand, 1996, 2013), 329.

taught it by their pastors. They are attempting to undermine true King James Only dispensationalism and are in effect reverting back to revised dispensationalism (Ryrie, Pentecost, LaHaye, et al.) at worst, or classical dispensationalism (Scofield, Larkin, Haldeman, Blackstone et al.) at best. These preachers and authors are advocating a King James Only (KJO) brand of revised dispensationalism — one that makes no distinction between salvation differences throughout the various ages of human history.

THE CLASSIC DISPENSATIONAL SALVATION POSITION

Although classic dispensationalists failed to pinpoint and clarify the biblical truth of dispensational salvation, they bumped into it on several occasions. C.I. Scofield’s note on John 1:17 was later referred to as “The two ways of salvation debate”¹⁵ because it reflected the biblical idea that salvation is not the same in each dispensation:

Law is connected with Moses and works; grace with Christ and faith...Law demands that blessings be earned; grace is a free gift...As a dispensation, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 3:24–26, 4:24–25). The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation, but acceptance or rejection of Christ...¹⁶

Scofield’s note in 1 John 3:7 likewise highlighted this salvation distinction, stating that “The righteous man under law became righteous by doing righteously; under grace he does righteously because he has been made righteous (Rom. 3:22, 10:3, note).”¹⁷ The Scofield note under the Edenic covenant stated that covenants “condition life and

¹⁵ Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version 1611–2011* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 246.

¹⁶ C.I. Scofield, ed., *Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909), 1115.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1323.

salvation.”¹⁸ And the note under the Lord’s Prayer clarified that it was “legal ground...under law forgiveness is conditioned upon a like spirit in us; under grace we are forgiven for Christ’s sake.”¹⁹

Although unorthodox on several points, E.W. Bullinger (1837–1913) correctly observed that the Law offered a righteousness based on works,²⁰ and others like Robert Milligan (1814–1875) stated that the Law “served to preserve and to sustain in the world the then imperfectly developed scheme of justification by faith; so that, no doubt, hundreds and thousands of Jews were saved through its influence and instrumentality.”²¹ Isaac M. Haldeman (1845–1933), otherwise known during his day as “the Dispensational Pastor,”²² made a similar case, implying that Old Testament Jews under the Law were not saved by faith only, but by their works:

In the Mosaic dispensation, God dealt according to man's work. In the Holy Ghost dispensation, He deals according to Christ's work. In the Mosaic dispensation, God dealt on the basis of Law. In the Holy Ghost dispensation. He deals on the basis of Grace. In the Mosaic dispensation, God said: "Do, and live." In the Holy Ghost dispensation, He says: "Live, and do." In the Mosaic dispensation, the Law brought a work for man to do. In the Holy Ghost dispensation, the Gospel brings a Word for man to believe. In the Mosaic dispensation, all is summed up in a word of two letters, "Do." In the Holy Ghost dispensation, all is summed up in a word of four letters, "Done."²³

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 5–6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1002.

²⁰ E.W. Bullinger, *The Companion Bible* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1990), 248.

²¹ Robert Milligan, *An Exposition and Defense of the Scheme of Redemption*, 3rd rev. ed. (Cincinnati: R.W. Carroll & Co., 1869), 84.

²² *Reese Chronological Encyclopedia of Christian Biographies* (Chattanooga: AMG, 2007), 667.

²³ I.M. Haldeman, *Friday Night Papers, the Second Coming, and other Expositions* (New York: Theo. Audel & Company, 1901), 169.

Even Scofield's protégé Lewis Sperry Chaffer (1871–1952) in his classic systematic theology alluded to the biblical conclusion of clear salvation differences between the Old and New Testaments:

A distinction must be observed here between just men of the Old Testament and those justified according to the New Testament. According to the Old Testament men were just because they were true and faithful in keeping the Mosaic Law. ...Men were therefore just because of their own works for God, whereas New Testament justification is God's work for man in answer to faith (Rom. 5:1).²⁴

Similar remarks by Chafer would later be challenged by five-point Calvinist theologians, causing him to emphatically deny ever teaching two ways of salvation.²⁵ Reflecting the consensus of reformed theology, in 1944 the Southern Presbyterian Church denounced dispensationalism on soteriological grounds:

Dispensationalism rejects the doctrine that God has, since the Fall, but one plan of salvation for all mankind and affirms that God has been through the ages administering various and diverse plans of salvation for various groups.²⁶

Chafer's revised and clarified position was that "the Law was never given as a means of salvation or justification,"²⁷ even though Romans 2:13 stated just the opposite. Much like Scofield²⁸ and Larkin,²⁹ Chafer

²⁴ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 7, *Doctrinal Summarization* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1976), 219.

²⁵ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 108.

²⁶ PCA Historical Center, "1944 PCUS Report on Dispensationalism," accessed August 13, 2019, <http://www.pcahistory.org/documents/pcus1944.html>.

²⁷ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Grace* (Philadelphia: The Sunday School Times, 1922), 113.

²⁸ *Scofield Reference Bible*, 1245.

²⁹ Clarence Larkin, *Rightly Dividing the Word* (Glenside, PA: Rev. Clarence Larkin Est., 1920), 195.

made the mistake of overlooking Romans 2:6–13, thus placing the truth of Galatians back into the period of the Old Testament. This horrendous error is repeated by KJO revised dispensationalists as well,³⁰ and is also supplemented by their misuse of Acts 13:39³¹ — a verse given *after* the Crucifixion to explain New Testament salvation, and Galatians 3:21³² — a verse magnifying New Testament justification and imputed righteousness over Old Testament Law keeping and personal righteousness. In the Old Testament, God judged by **“justifying the righteous”** (2 Chronicles 6:23), while in the New Testament, He **“justifieth the ungodly”** (Romans 4:5). The two are NOT the same.

REVISING THE CLASSICAL VIEW

All professing dispensationalists would admit one of the main tenets of dispensationalism is “a clear, biblical distinction between Israel and the Church.”³³ Revised dispensationalism, with its emphasis on salvation being the same in every dispensation has muddled this clear distinction and aligned its teachings with reformed theology. The revised dispensationalist position that “the people of God [have] always been constituted by those who were joined to Him and to one another by grace through faith”³⁴ supports the replacement theologian’s position that, “there is only one people of God”³⁵ and only one way of salvation after Adam’s fall:

³⁰ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 63.

³¹ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 280.

³² *Ibid.*, 697.

³³ Paul Richard Wilkinson, *For Zion’s Sake* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock 2007), 13.

³⁴ Glenn R. Kreider, “What is Dispensationalism” in *Dispensationalism and the History of Redemption*, eds. D. Jeffrey Bingham and Glenn R. Kreider (Chicago: Moody, 2015), 24.

³⁵ Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 4, *Church, Last Things* (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2005), 500.

Covenant theology traces this single covenant of grace throughout scripture. Although it was administered in various ways throughout the Old and New Testaments, covenant theologians agree on one crucial point — there is one covenant of grace (although a number of administrations) and thus only one way of salvation.³⁶

The revised era of dispensationalism was mainly a “rearticulation and softening of former dispensational discussions such as the overstated dichotomy between law and grace.”³⁷ This adjusting was done to sway the believer from “the charge that [dispensationalists] teach different methods of salvation in different ages.”³⁸ The clearest example of these revisions is seen in the *New Scofield Reference Bible* (now *The Scofield Study Bible III*), where repetitive statements are made affirming that, “there is only one basis of salvation, that is, by grace through faith.”³⁹ The note in John 1:17 was changed to teach salvation by faith in every age while the remark in 1 John 3:7 on personal righteousness under the Law was removed altogether. Then they deleted the part of Scofield’s note on the Edenic Covenant referring to a “condition of salvation” in the covenants. They also cleaned up the note on the Lord’s prayer and added additional notes proliferating the idea that “the method of salvation in O.T. and N.T. is the same.”⁴⁰

Charles Ryrie went to great lengths in his book *Dispensationalism* (originally *Dispensationalism Today*, 1966) to answer charges by reformed theologians, like Gerstner, who understandably observed that,

³⁶ John H. Gerstner, *Wrongly Dividing the Word: A Critique of Dispensationalism, Second Edition*, (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2000), 305.

³⁷ Herbert W. Bateman IV, “Dispensationalism Yesterday and Today,” in *Three Central Issues in Contemporary Dispensationalism*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman IV (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1999), 34.

³⁸ Clarence E. Mason Jr., *Dispensationalism Made Simple* (Glenside, PA: self-pub.), 1976, 14.

³⁹ C.I. Scofield, E. Schuyler English, and Doris W. Rikkers, eds., *The Scofield Study Bible III* (New York: Oxford, 2003), ix.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 29.

“dispensationalists roundly assert that Old Testament people were saved by Christ, there is no way in their theological system they could be.”⁴¹ Gerstner, referencing the dispensational distinction between Israel and the church, rightly asked, “If these are two different people, how can they have the same salvation?”⁴² Indeed, this is the crux of the matter and emphasizes the soteriological distinctions within dispensationalism.

Ryrie also devoted an entire chapter in his book refining the *dispensational scholar’s* position on dispensational salvation. His summary is as follows:

The basis of salvation in every age is the death of Christ; the requirement for salvation in every age is faith; the object of faith in every age is God; the content of faith changes in the various dispensations...The basis of salvation is always the death of Christ; the means is always faith; the object is always God (though man’s understanding of God before and after the incarnation is obviously different); but the content of faith depends on the particular revelation God was pleased to give at a certain time.⁴³

Ryrie’s unbiblical explanation is mirrored nearly word for word by KJO revised dispensationalists⁴⁴ and progressive fundamental Baptists.⁴⁵ They emphasize that “the difference has been in the object of faith,” and salvation “always has been by grace, never by works.”⁴⁶ Finding commonality with different groups who had “faith” no more proves

⁴¹ Gerstner, *Wrongly Dividing the Word*, 193.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 235.

⁴³ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 115, 121.

⁴⁴ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 55, 652, 668, 794.

⁴⁵ Paul Chappell, *Galatians: No Turning Back* (Lancaster, CA: Striving Together Publications, 2013), 54.

⁴⁶ M.H. Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation* (Ft. Walton Beach, FL: Foundation Ministries, 1991), 1–3.

“Moses was saved just like [we] are”⁴⁷ than that Enoch was in the body of Christ because he was raptured!

There is too much ambiguity in the statements of KJO revised dispensationalists. Everyone knows many Old Testament saints had **“faith”** (Hebrews 11), but many do not know what their faith was *in*. In the Church Age, faith is equated with “trusting” and “believing” (Ephesians 1:12–13) *in* **“the righteousness of God without the law...which is by faith of Jesus Christ...upon all them that believe”** (Romans 3:21–22). A New Testament Christian is one who has **“believed in Jesus Christ”** (Galatians 2:16; Acts 16:1, 17:4, 12, 34, 18:8, 27; 1 Corinthians 15:11; etc.). In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel would all be considered “believers” (like in James 2:19) but they wouldn’t be considered **“righteous”** (Deuteronomy 25:1) unless they did **“that which is lawful and right”** (Ezekiel 18:27). Their **“works”** (Proverbs 24:12) showed whether or not they were **“obedient”** as God’s people (see Exodus 24:7; Numbers 27:20; Deuteronomy 8:20; Isaiah 1:19, 24:24 etc.). A “believer” in the Church Age believes in the resurrection of Jesus Christ (see Acts 5:14) and consciously trusts in what Jesus Christ did on the cross, dying in his place (1 Corinthians 15:2–4). Old Testament saints under the Law trusted **“the righteousness which is of the law”** (Romans 10:5) while New Testament *believers* trust **“the righteousness which is of faith”** (Romans 10:6). Old Testament saints could not have **“the righteousness of God”** because this righteousness does not **“come by the law”** (Galatians 2:21), it comes by faith in Jesus Christ (who wasn’t born, and had not died prior to Calvary):

⁴⁷ James Melton, “Understanding Dispensational Salvation”, Bible Baptist Publications, accessed August 7, 2019, <https://www.biblebaptistpublications.org/dispensationalsalvation.html>.

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (Philippians 3:9)

The contrast between **“grace”** and **“works”** is magnified in the following verse:

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (Romans 11:6)

One KJO revised dispensationalist improvises the text of Romans 11:6 by actually changing it from **“no more of works”** to “not by works.”⁴⁸ And another author, who changed his position on dispensational salvation, went from citing Romans 11:6 five times and teaching that **“no more of works”** indicated “that an element of works was involved at a prior time, but works is *no longer* involved,”⁴⁹ to omitting the verse both in his expanded edition⁵⁰ and his entirely new book by a similar title.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation*, 2.

⁴⁹ Douglas D. Stauffer, *One Book Rightly Divided Second Edition* (Millbrook, AL: McCowen Mills Publishers, 1999, 2000). 47.

⁵⁰ Douglas D. Stauffer, *One Book Rightly Divided Expanded Edition* (Millbrook, AL: McCowen Mills Publishers, 1999, 2000, 2006).

⁵¹ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*.

SALVATION 2 UNDER THE LAW

KJO revised dispensationalists cause confusion instead of clarity with their teaching on the Old Testament Law. They claim that no one could ever keep the Law¹ even though there are many verses that say people *did* keep it (Exodus 20:6, Deuteronomy 7:9; Joshua 22:2; Judges 2:17; 1 Kings 3:3, 1 Kings 11:34; 2 Kings 18:6; and 2 Chronicles 34:2). They further equate keeping the Law with living a sinless life² (which the Bible does not support), and then use a New Testament truth for the Church Age to explain Old Testament salvation (Galatians 2:16). Once this is done, any Old Testament teaching clearly showing justification by works (like the examples described in Ezekiel 18) must be twisted to keep their nominal dispensational views intact.

The KJO revised dispensational position matches apostate dispensationalists who teach that keeping the Law was only “the means of temporal life” and did not affect their eternal salvation.³ Pastor

¹ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 268, 353–4, 521, 621, 623, 703, 715.

² Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 37.

³ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 117.

Donovan correctly refutes the “physical life and death” idea, pointing out “what Christ Himself said about the meaning of dying in your sins in John 8:24.”⁴ When faced with this New Testament cross reference, KJO revised authors warn that “it is dangerous to superimpose New Testament doctrine on Old Testament teachings,”⁵ yet they have no problem aggressively importing salvation by grace (a New Testament teaching) and justification by faith in the blood of Christ (a New Testament teaching) back into the entire Old Testament!

They also purposely avoid the issue that *works* determined whether a person was considered “**wicked**” or “**righteous.**” They waste time on the double usage of the word “**soul**” (ignoring verses like Proverbs 19:16 — “**He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul**”) and how it can “be used to identify and speak of man’s physical being”⁶ as simply a way of avoiding the plain truth of *faith and works* under the Old Testament Law. The fact of the matter is, what an Old Testament saint *did* (see “**doeth**” in Ezekiel 18 and retrospectively in Romans 10:5 and Galatians 3:12) affected his eternal destiny. If a man died “**wicked**” (Ezekiel 18:20, 21, 23, 24...) he went to hell (Psalm 9:17). Furthermore, if an Old Testament Jew died “**righteous**” he went to Abraham’s bosom (Luke 16:22) and would later be redeemed by Christ’s blood sacrifice. KJO revised dispensationalists attempt to turn the truth on its head by using Abraham’s bosom as proof against faith and works under the Law:

So I must ask you, if men before Calvary were saved in some way other than through the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ how is it that they could not go to heaven until the resurrected Christ took

⁴ Brian Donovan, “A Marriage for His Son,” *Bible Believers’ Bulletin* 41 (September 2017): 24.

⁵ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 468.

⁶ *Ibid.*

them there? Obviously, law keeping or any other system of good works cannot get a man to heaven.⁷

A question in rebuttal would be, how can a man be saved “through the shed blood and finished work” of Christ before Christ was even born and began His work, let alone “finished” it? If the righteousness of God is a gift given to the believer by means of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:17, 6:23; John 7:38–39; Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22 etc.), there is no way any Old Testament saint could have received this **“gift”** before it was given at Pentecost (Luke 24:49; Acts 2:38, 10:45, 11:17, 15:8–9). Are the KJO revised dispensationalists Bible believers or Calvinist sympathizers? Old Testament Jews under the Law never made a conscious choice to turn from their own self-righteousness and believe on Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1–4) for their salvation. Instead, they knew they would be judged according to their personal **“righteousness”** and **“integrity”** (Psalm 7:8, 25:21, 26:11, 41:12, et al.). They were saved from hell, not based on their faith in the blood of Christ, but by their faith and works in keeping the Law while they were on the earth. They never would have been saved from hell and taken “to heaven” (Ephesians 4:8–9) had not they made it to Abraham’s bosom in the first place!

⁷ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 272.

CALVINISM CONTAMINATIONS

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE CROSS

To maintain their position, KJO revised dispensationalists must not only partner with Bible correctors (revised dispensationalists), they must also collaborate with Calvinists. Once a concession is made for salvation by faith in the “finished work” of Christ (before Christ is ever born), other allowances must, of necessity, follow.

The theological reasons for the “saved the same” position of revised dispensationalists seems at first to have some biblical validity. After all, does not scripture say **“it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”** (Hebrews 10:4)? And, are we not **“redeemed...with the precious blood of Christ...who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world”** (1 Peter 1:18–20)? If we are all sinners since Adam, regardless of dispensations, and all sinners are condemned to the same hell, is it not reasonable that the redemption for all sinners would be the same? According to this thinking, it does not matter *when* Jesus actually died, or what truth was dispensed in other ages. His blood is eternal, therefore “salvation is in

Christ...[and] is eternal not dispensational.”¹ Calvinist reformed theologians would agree. In fact, they insist that “believers of the Old Testament looked [to Jesus] and in him they trusted.”² They contend that “the old covenant by which Israel was saved was the blood of Jesus Christ and faith in it, which technically is nothing less than the covenant of grace.”³

The idea of looking forward to the cross for salvation in the Old Testament was partially insinuated in classical dispensationalism (see Scofield’s note in Ezekiel 43:19), but the idea became an entrenched dogma of revised dispensationalism. You see, classic dispensationalists were good at highlighting distinctions between the various covenants, especially those differences between Israel and the Church. And, while they did not positively teach dispensational salvation, at least they presented the verses and formulated reasons that would logically lead to that conclusion. Revised dispensationalists, on the other hand, not only blur these differences, they dispute these teachings and indict classical dispensationalist views as “radical distinction[s].”⁴

J. Dwight Pentecost (1915–2014), taught that “salvation offered in the Old Testament was...accepted by faith, based on blood sacrifice, which sacrifices were the foreshadows of the true sacrifice to come.”⁵ R.B. Thieme Jr. taught that “the gospel existed in the form of promises of the coming Messiah (Gen. 3:15), who was depicted in the animal sacrifices.”⁶ Therefore, he concluded “the means of salvation in every

¹ Corle, *What Salvation Is*, 264.

² Calvin Knox Cummings, "The Covenant of Grace," The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, accessed August 13, 2019, [http:// www.opc.org/cce/covenant.html](http://www.opc.org/cce/covenant.html).

³ Gerstner, *Wrongly Dividing the Word*, 312.

⁴ Robert Dean Jr., “Essentials of Dispensational Theology,” Dean Bible Ministries, accessed August 13, 2019, [https://www .deanbibleministries.org/file-downloads/preview?path =Doctrines%252FEssentials_of_Dispensational _Theology.pdf](https://www.deanbibleministries.org/file-downloads/preview?path=Doctrines%252FEssentials_of_Dispensational_Theology.pdf).

⁵ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958), 265.

⁶ R.B. Thieme Jr., *The Divine Outline of History: Dispensations and the Church* (Houston, TX: R.B. Thieme Jr., Bible Ministries, 1989, 1999), 25.

dispensation has always been faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as He is revealed in that era.”⁷

Many KJO revised dispensationalists still preach that Old Testament saints were saved by looking forward to the cross. This teaching is often referred to as “scarlet thread theology” because of the popularity of W.A. Criswell’s sermon, *The Scarlet Thread through the Bible* (published in 1961). Covenant theologians likewise refer to this “vital thread running through the Old Testament”⁸ and therefore teach that “salvation has always been the same, namely by exercising faith in Christ.”⁹

KJO revised dispensationalists often regurgitate these same Calvinistic ideas, and when the question arises about whether or not they could have really understood Calvary, they answer that, “it is impossible for us to discern what someone who has been dead for thousands of years could understand.”¹⁰ That may be true, but it *is* possible to know that the disciples *did not* understand why Jesus was going to the cross, despite living alongside of Him for three and a half years (Mark 9:32). To postulate that someone prior to the cross, who did not even believe in the resurrection of Jesus, was saved like we are today, when that very belief is said to be a prerequisite of our salvation (Romans 10:9), is preposterous! The disciples did not even believe in the resurrection immediately after it took place (Mark 16:13–14), let alone during the earthly ministry of Christ. Read Matthew 16:21–22 to see how much Simon Peter was looking forward to the cross!

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Phillip D.R. Griffiths, *Covenant Theology: A Reformed Baptist Perspective* (Eugene OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 33.

⁹ Ibid., 197.

¹⁰ Corle, *What Salvation Is*, 253.

SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION

The idea that Old Testament saints were “saved by looking forward to the cross...in type”¹¹ is misleading, and is actually the same argument used by anti-dispensational reformed theologians to propagate their teaching of the Covenant of Grace.¹² Just because there are types of Christ’s sacrifice and prophecies of His sacrifice in the Old Testament (like Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22), does not mean Jesus Christ’s blood was appropriated to sinners before it was ever shed. Jesus Christ was in existence **“from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was”** (Proverbs 8:23), but scripture never states that His blood was shed *before* the foundation of the world like Calvinists and revised dispensationalists teach. Revelation 13:8 does NOT say “the Lamb WAS slain from the foundation of the world.” It says, **“the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”** The context, as well as the object in the passage is **“the book of life,”** not **“the Lamb slain.”** Revelation 17:8 clears up any misunderstanding when it states this truth again, this time omitting the phrase **“the Lamb slain.”** And while His sacrifice might have been **“foreordained before the foundation of the world”** (1 Peter 1:20), scripture is specific about *when* the atonement was made—in time:

Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (Hebrews 9:25–26)

¹¹ Melton, “Understanding Dispensational Salvation.”

¹² Daniel Hyde, “What is the Covenant of Grace,” Ligonier Ministries, accessed August 13, 2019, <http://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-covenant-grace/>.

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Galatians 4:4–5)

At first glance some KJO revised dispensationalists seem to be on the right road when they teach, “it is quite obvious that those who died before the cross were not looking forward to the cross for salvation any more than these apostles were looking forward to it.”¹³ They correctly say, “we must reject the old theory that men before the cross were saved because they looked forward to the cross.”¹⁴ But then they take a wrong turn at Calvin’s crossroads by weaving the “unfolding theme of blood-bought redemption” throughout every dispensation because “it [redemption] was still there in the mind of God.”¹⁵

In effect they are asserting that since “God looked forward to the cross”¹⁶ and knew “about the future redemptive work of the cross from the very beginning,”¹⁷ this means “salvation before the cross was a matter of imputed righteousness, freely given to those who put their faith in the Lord and that such a gift was given without works.”¹⁸

The Calvinistic undertones are hard to miss when they state emphatically that “a person is saved by faith alone in any dispensation” and that “there has only ever been one plan of salvation, and it was worked out and settled before the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:19–20; Rev. 13:8).”¹⁹ So, consequently, according to this teaching, “Old Testament saints had the assurance that if they were gathered unto the

¹³ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 339.

¹⁴ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 257.

¹⁵ Melton, “Understanding Dispensational Salvation.”

¹⁶ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 254.

¹⁷ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 667.

¹⁸ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 281.

¹⁹ Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation*, 90.

fathers...they would one day be gathered unto Christ.”²⁰ Their claim is that salvation in any age is “facilitated only through the perfect, spotless blood of Christ,”²¹ even if the person did not actually put his faith in that precious blood! KJO revised dispensationalists cannot give *one Bible verse* from the Old Testament showing anyone putting faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. The implications of this “saved the same” scenario are absurd.

ETERNAL SECURITY IN EVERY AGE

Revised dispensationalists have an answer to the obvious faith and works salvation paradigm as presented in scripture. As we have already seen, they see “the punishment threatened” in Ezekiel 18 to “refer only to physical death rather than to eternal death,”²² even though the rational conclusion of spiritual death is implied by the use of the word **“soul”** and the truth that spiritual circumcision is only applicable *after* the resurrection of Christ (John 7:38–39; Colossians 2:11–12). Before a person is saved his soul is stuck to his flesh. Consequently, every sin he commits in the flesh affects his soul. It is only after the resurrection of Jesus Christ that a believer has the promise of the sealing and permanent indwelling Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22). This means every Old Testament Jew under the Law had a dead spirit and was never born again, regardless of his “righteousness” or “wickedness,” or whether he was considered “saved” or “lost.” The word **“saved”** is not exclusive to believers in the Church Age. Noah was **“saved”** (2 Peter 2:5), the Jews that came out of Egypt were **“saved”** (Jude 5), and future **“nations”** will be **“saved”** (Revelation 21:24) after the Millennium is over. No one could be **“born again”** (John 3) until after the resurrection of Christ, and the sealing work of the Holy Spirit which

²⁰ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 500.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 654.

²² *The Scofield Study Bible III*, 1063.

guarantees eternal security is *only applicable to Church Age saints!* KJO revised dispensationalists think people during the earthly ministry of Christ were born again because of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.²³ They maintain "Jesus did not preach 'keep the Law and be born again', He called on men to believe on him,"²⁴ while leaving out the fact that Peter was not **"converted"** during that time (Luke 22:32) even though he did **"believe"** (John 6:69). Furthermore, they fail to notice that the ones **"who first trusted in Christ"** (Ephesians 1:12) were NOT "believers" who followed Christ prior to the resurrection. No "believer" who followed Jesus in His earthly ministry **"trusted in Christ"** in the same way we do today, and neither were they blessed with eternal security by being in the body of Christ like believers are today.

The honest student of the Bible will not overlook the purpose of John's gospel (John 20:31), nor *when* it was written. Moreover, the unbiased reader will not ignore Paul's personal testimony when he states he was **"born out of due time"** (1 Corinthians 15:8), or the fact that when John wrote his books he had access to all of Paul's epistles containing the revealed truth of the mystery of the body of Christ, and was writing *after* salvation by grace through faith without works had been accepted by all the apostles (Acts 15:11).

If "a man who is sanctified by the blood of Christ NEVER loses that sanctification"²⁵ then no Old Testament saint ever lost his salvation, and no future Tribulation saint will ever be in danger of losing his salvation. This madness necessitates the teaching that a man can be saved, born again, and headed to heaven (via. Abraham's bosom) even though he loses the Holy Spirit (see Saul — 1 Samuel 16:14, 28:15–16). The fact

²³ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 715.

²⁴ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 68.

²⁵ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 221.

that an apparition conjured up by necromancy (which was forbidden—Deuteronomy 18:10–11) told Saul **“to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me”** (1 Samuel 28:19) does NOT “indicat[e] that Saul lost the Spirit but did not lose his salvation.”²⁶ I thought salvation was the same in all ages? If *we* can never lose the Spirit of God, how can Old Testament saints lose the Spirit of God? David was sure worried about losing the Holy Spirit after he committed a pair of sins with no allowance of a sacrifice (Psalm 51). Besides, even if the words of “Samuel” were true, they would have a broader application because everyone before the cross went to the center of the earth at death (see Matthew 12:40 and Acts 2:27). Scripture refers to divisions in the heart of the earth as **“lower parts”** (Psalm 63:9; Isaiah 43:23; Ephesians 4:9), including both a **“place of torment”** (Luke 16:28) and Abraham’s bosom and **“paradise”** (Luke 23:43). If Saul was “saved” why is he not mentioned in between Samuel and David in the heroes of the faith chapter (Hebrews 11)? Samson is mentioned, because, even though he lost the Spirit of God (Judges 16:20), he got it back after he prayed and was filled with strength (Judges 16:28).

These errors lead to the heresy of Lordship salvation and a denial of the biblical teaching of standing and state. And, as far as eschatology is concerned, Calvin’s crossroads lead to the reformed roadway and merge all doctrinal lanes into one. Once this false position on salvation is accepted, similar counterfeit ideas emerge. If the theological thesis is that salvation is the same in every age, then other similarities must also be true. There must be eternal security for every believer, even the Old Testament Jew under the Law, or the future Jewish remnant in the Great Tribulation.²⁷

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 239.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 221.

WORKS BECAUSE OFFAITH

The Calvinism contamination continues with the KJO revised dispensationalist's perspective on faith and works. This twisted Calvinistic perspective has been adopted by the revised position out of necessity. Again, once you accept the idea that salvation is the same in every age, you must also deduce that all elements of salvation operate the same. If we, in the Church Age, after Calvary, are **“justified by faith without the deeds of the law”** (Romans 3:28), then everyone in all ages must also be justified by faith without works. The problem then arises, how do we deal with the plethora of verses that teach just the opposite, such as Romans 2:6–13, which chronicles previous dispensations prior to Calvary when the Jew followed the Law and the Gentile followed his conscience. The scripture says, **“the doers of the law shall be justified”** (Romans 2:13), not just those who “believed” or “had faith.” And, when you consider the teaching of James, who taught, **“by works a man is justified, and not by faith only”** (James 2:24), you have a choice. You can either be honest and approach the Bible as a believer, laying aside any preconceived system that forces all verses to fit *your salvation*, or you can wrestle the scriptures to fit your ideas. Once you dismiss the idea of any soteriological dispensational divisions then it really does not matter if the book of James is addressed to **“to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad”** (James 1:1). Once you resolve that “the shed blood of Christ is the one constant throughout every period”²⁸ even though Jesus shed His blood *in time*, you are finished as far as being a Bible student.

Therefore, the KJO revised dispensationalists adopt the Calvinist cliché' and theological idea that “True faith is never alone. It always manifests itself in works.”²⁹ This axiom has been repeated for years by

²⁸ Ibid., 794.

²⁹ R.C. Sproul, *What Is Reformed Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997, 2016), 83.

hillbilly Baptist preachers who never study the Bible, as well as pseudo Independent Fundamental Baptist intellectuals. The verbiage, “perseverance and works are the *evidence* of salvation”³⁰ is practical Calvinism, plain and simple. If someone does not have good works (like theirs!) and quits coming to church or tithing, the pious pastor might say, “Well, they were never ‘truly saved’ to begin with.” It is the old “profession without possession” line and is often put this way:

Someone can claim to be saved and go through the outward motions of believing without truly being saved...[they] indicate by their actions that they were never truly saved.³¹

This is how they approach and mangle the book of James to fit doctrinal teachings for this age. They say, “Works do not save, but true salvation always produces good works.”³² Once this idea is taken to its logical conclusion you have a nice “p” on the ending of the word “Tulip.” Perseverance of the saints (the “p” in the Tulip acronym explaining Calvinism) is the teaching that a *true* believer *will* persevere and live a life of good works “unto the end.” It’s a good thing that John Mark did not die right after he defected, or we would have never known he was “truly saved” (Acts 13:15).

³⁰ David Cloud, *What About Ruckman* (Port Huron, MI: Way of Life Literature, 2012), 32.

³¹ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 251.

³² *Ibid.*, 274.

4 TRIBULATION SALVATION

GOOD FOUNDATIONS

The climax of *recognized* progressive revelation ended with Scofield and Larkin. The crescendo fell during the revised era where scholars replaced students and apostate dispensationalists rejected the purity of the Authorized Version. They could only take so much truth, and as far as premillennial dispensationalism was concerned, they never took it to the next level by **“rightly dividing”** soteriology, especially as it related to eschatology (the study of last things).

Dispensational premillennialism precisely and accurately defended the truth of the pre-tribulational rapture of the church.¹ Classic dispensationalism reinforced the significant boundaries between the Church Age and the future Great Tribulation, noting that a different gospel would be preached after the rapture. Haldeman correctly identified the gospel that will be preached to Jews after the rapture as the gospel of the kingdom.² Both Scofield and Larkin taught differences

¹ Richard R. Reiter, “A History of the Development of the Rapture Positions,” in *Three Views on the Rapture*, ed. Gleason L. Archer Jr. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 11–33.

² I. M. Haldeman, *Sermons on the Second Coming* (New York: Charles C. Cook, 1916–1917), 306–7.

between the four gospels and Scofield outlined all four in *The Scofield Reference Bible* note on Revelation 14:6 where he defined each gospel. This note is changed in *The Scofield Study Bible III* to reinforce the revised position:

the word ‘gospel,’ therefore, includes various aspects of the good news...[and] does not mean that there is more than one Gospel of salvation. Grace is the basis for salvation in all dispensations.³

SHIFTING SAND

KJO revised dispensationalists likewise have rejected the truth of “a faith-and-works setup in the Great Tribulation (Daniel’s Seventieth Week) which does not match the faith-and-grace setup found in the Church Age in the Body of Christ.”⁴ They, as many good Independent Baptists, believe there are no verses “in either Testament which teach[ing] salvation can be lost,”⁵ even though prophetic portions of the New Testament are replete with them (Matthew 10:22, 32–33, 19:29, 24:13–14; Hebrews 2:1, 3, 3:6, 14, 4:1, 9–11, 5:9, 6:4–12, 10:23–27, 12:14–15; James 2:14–26, 5:8–9, 12; Revelation 1:3, 2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:3, 5, 11–12, 21, 12:17, 14:12, 22:14 et al.). Some KJO revised dispensational authors, in an attempt to prove “Paul’s intended audience” in Hebrews 6 was *only* Church Age believers say, “Paul did not write, ‘*For it is impossible for US...If WE shall fall away,*’ etc.”⁶ in Hebrews 6 while ignoring the personal pronouns **“us”** and **“we”** in Hebrews 4:1–14 and Hebrews 10:22–26. Their exegesis of Hebrews 10:26 removes the **“we”** out of the passage altogether, stating that “the Jews in danger of the willful sin

³ *The Scofield Study Bible III*, 1672.

⁴ Peter S. Ruckman, “The Big Flap,” *Bible Believers’ Bulletin* 7 (November 1984): 1.

⁵ Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation*, 74.

⁶ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 232–33.

were Jews who knew that Jesus was the Christ.”⁷ KJO revised dispensationalists follow in the steps of apostate Bible correctors (although “dispensational”) like Dwight Pentecost who taught that “Salvation in the Tribulation will certainly be on the faith principle.”⁸ Diverting from the plain truth of the verses, revised authors revert to the “physical life” argument, accenting “the difference between the earthly promises and eternal salvation”⁹ while upholding eternal security for all Tribulation saints. According to their teaching, only “the lost” can take the mark of the beast.¹⁰

To skirt around the many verses teaching faith and works as a requirement for salvation in the Great Tribulation, KJO revised dispensationalists employ a couple of tactics. Some simply pretend these verses are not in the Bible. One author, in his 613-page book on Revelation could not seem to locate Revelation 12:17, 14:12, and 22:14. He only commented on Revelation 12:17 by merely mentioning what “Larkin suggests”¹¹ about the groups being different. He skipped over Revelation 14:12 completely (page 480) as well as Revelation 22:14 (601–602). Another KJO revised dispensationalist wrote a book that supposedly covers “the passages from the book of Revelation used to teach a works salvation in the Tribulation period and the coming kingdom age”¹² while somehow neglecting to discuss Revelation 22:14 altogether.

⁷ Ibid., 217.

⁸ Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 269.

⁹ James Knox, *The Book of Revelation* (DeLand FL: The BIBLE Baptist Church of DeLand, 1999), 475–476.

¹⁰ Doug Stauffer, “The Tribulation Salvation Controversy”, Sermon Audio, accessed July 10, 2019, <https://media-cloud.sermonaudio.com/text/1319212404681.pdf>.

¹¹ Knox, *The Book of Revelation*, 445.

¹² Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation*, 3.

Most KJO revised dispensationalists follow their predecessors like the editors of the *New Scofield Reference Bible*, or fundamentalists like Oliver B. Greene,¹³ and M.R. DeHaan, who taught the passages (like Hebrews 6) referred to losing a “reward”¹⁴ instead of losing salvation. They also insist that Revelation 2:7 along with 2:11, 17, and 26 has “to do with rewards,”¹⁵ and make the blunder of consigning parts of New Testament prophecy to the historical church in this age.¹⁶ Passages in Hebrews, James, and Revelation that are prophetic *most certainly* “apply to Daniel’s Seventieth Week,” regardless of “the intended recipients of the epistle when it was written.”¹⁷ If the Bible only has application to the people in the days or years in which it was written, then most of it is entirely irrelevant and useless to us today! There are prophecies in the minor prophets (Hosea — Malachi) still awaiting fulfillment. Similarly, there are portions of prophecy in the gospels (Mathew 24 for instance), Paul’s epistles (2 Thessalonians 2 for instance), and Hebrews — Revelation that are *not* Church Age doctrine because they are prophetic, dealing with salvation *after* the rapture of the body of Christ.

When commenting on the few verses in Revelation (12:17, 14:12) that clearly prove faith and works, one reviser twisted the phrase “**testimony of Jesus**” to mean that the remnant has “the testimony that they ‘keep the commandments of God.’”¹⁸ That is NOT what the verse said at all. This same teacher used the example of a believer today getting baptized to prove his point:

¹³ Oliver B. Greene, *Revelation* (Greenville: The Gospel Hour, 1963), 70.

¹⁴ E. Schuyler English, ed., *The New Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford, 1967), 1315.

¹⁵ Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation*, 81.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 227.

¹⁸ Doug Stauffer, “Tribulation Salvation: Nothing but the Blood,” Doug Stauffer Ministries, accessed July 10, 2019, <http://www.dougstauffer.com/2019/04/tribulation-salvation-by-blood.html>.

Those who keep the commandments of God are identified as the saints. This is similar to a Christian who follows the Lord in believer's baptism today. Getting baptized does not save but it surely identifies the believers and sometimes brings the persecution. Keeping the commandments in Daniel's Seventieth Week does not make someone a saint but it surely identifies the believers and will bring the persecution.¹⁹

This identical lame logic is used by KJO revised dispensationalists when dealing with salvation under the Law, and it is Calvinistic at its core. The Calvinistic Reformation mantra from Luther (who was a Calvinist Augustinian monk before his conversion) was, "Salvation is by faith alone, but not by a faith which is alone." KJO revised dispensationalists echo the same sentiment, avowing that "faith, real faith, includes works."²⁰ So, if you are "truly saved" or "really saved" then you will have good works in any dispensation. Therefore, according to them, the reason Tribulation saints keep the commandments is because they are saved to begin with. Pastor Donovan rightly debunks this thinking:

So, we are to believe that under grace, with no pressure of life or death on him today, a saint of God can commit all kinds of sins and still be saved, but if one is saved during the tribulation period, he will not commit these sins and will endure to the end, waiting for the coming of Christ.²¹

KJO revised dispensationalists do not really care that the scripture defines **"the testimony of Jesus Christ"** as **"the spirit of prophecy"** (Revelation 19:10). They claim that "their testimony is that they do what God tells them to do,"²² even though the actual verse refers to two

¹⁹ Stauffer, "The Tribulation Salvation Controversy."

²⁰ Melton, "Understanding Dispensational Salvation."

²¹ Donovan, "A Marriage for His Son," 24.

²² Stauffer, "Tribulation Salvation: Nothing but the Blood."

separate things: keeping the commandments, *and* their testimony of Jesus Christ (which correlates with the two songs sung by Tribulation saints — Revelation 15:3 — **“the song of Moses...and the song of the Lamb”**). The appeal is made to Revelation 12:11 to prove “overcoming is based solely upon the blood of the Lamb,”²³ but that is only a *partial* rendering of the verse. Notice in the passage there are *three* aspects to their overcoming, and the last one refers to them being willing to die rather than take the mark of the beast:

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. (Revelation 12:11)

WASHED PEOPLE OR ROBES?

As clear as Revelation 22:14 is, you would think it would cause some Bible teachers to pause and consider its obvious implications — namely that obedience (works) gives access to both **“the tree of life”** and **“the city,”** New Jerusalem. Instead, apostates dismiss the AV because of the obvious truth it is proclaiming and accept the Revised Version’s rendering: “Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right *to come* to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.” Darby called the RV’s translation of Revelation 22:14 “the true reading”²⁴ and Ironside said it was “in accordance with the best manuscripts”²⁵ which is simply not the case! The RV reading was based on the corrupt Siniaticus (⌘) and Alexandrinus (A) manuscripts which both contain the apocrypha! William Pettingill called this perversion of the truth a “very important correction,”²⁶ but there is nothing in the

²³ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 555.

²⁴ John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, vol. 5, *Colossians—The Revelation* (London: G. Morrish, n.d.) 565.

²⁵ H.A. Ironside, *Lectures on the book of Revelation* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1920), 364.

²⁶ William L. Pettingill, *Simple Studies in Revelation* (Harrisburg: Fred Kelker, 1906), 132.

verse to be “corrected.” The King James reading is defended by the majority of extant manuscripts, the Harclean Syriac, the Bohairic (a Coptic version), and it was quoted by the church father Tertullian — proving it existed in AD 220 (*prior* to the inception of \aleph and A).²⁷ Gaebelein expounded on the reason they all rejected this text by saying, “the Authorized Version here is faulty...[because] eternal life and eternal glory cannot be obtained by keeping commandments.”²⁸

The sewage from those corrupt manuscripts never stopped being spewed. The problem was not a misunderstanding of what the AV was saying. The problem was actually believing the text. Jack Van Impe did not believe it,²⁹ John R. Rice called it a “mistranslation”³⁰ because he did not believe it. Oliver B. Greene did not believe it,³¹ and neither did Henry Morris, who stated, “it is surely true that any person who is genuinely saved will love His commandments and seek to keep them.”³²

KJO revised dispensationalists side with those who find fault with the Authorized Version. But instead of faulting the AV text as being incorrect, they just deny it via word play. One KJO revised dispensational author said of Revelation 22:14 that, “The doing of God’s commandments does not convey salvation...This may refer to those who in his life have turned to Christ...”³³ Another KJO revised dispensationalist bypassed the clear teaching of those verses much like

²⁷ Eberhard Nestle et al., eds. *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th rev. ed. (Stuttgart Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993), 680.

²⁸ Arno C. Gaebelein, *The Revelation: An Analysis and Exposition of the Last Book of the Bible* (New York: Our Hope, 1915), 173.

²⁹ Jack Van Impe, *Revelation Revealed* (Royal Oak, MI: Jack Van Impe Ministries, 1982), 252.

³⁰ Herbert F. Evans, *Dear Dr. John: Where is my Bible?* (Harlingen, TX: Wonderful Word Publishers, 1976), 3–4.

³¹ Greene, *Revelation*, 535.

³² Henry Morris, ed., *The Defenders Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Word, 1995), 1468.

³³ David H. Sorenson, *Understanding the Bible: Hebrews through Revelation* (Duluth: Northstar Ministries, 2008), 566–567.

Morris. He said tribulation saints “are simply saved, obedient, saints. Is not that our case today? Are we who are saved not also obedient to the Lord?”³⁴ Professing to be dispensationalists, these men are actually riding down a reformed theology roller coaster that compliments the false teaching of Lordship salvation. So, according to them, any tribulation saint will most certainly overcome and endure till the end, and if he does not endure, he never was saved to begin with.

The group that **“washed their robes”** are said to have come **“out of great tribulation”** (Revelation 7:14). The Church Age saint will not go in or come out of the Tribulation; and neither will he wash his robe, because *he himself has been washed* by the blood of Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Peter 1:18–19; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5). There are two “washings” mentioned in connection with the Church Age saint (Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5), and neither is done by the saint — they are done by the Saviour! Furthermore, if our robes were washed, they would not be washed by us, for that would be works and faith, as opposed to **“faith only”** (James 2:24). Also, a robe is an outer garment and is different than the inner garments (2 Corinthians 5:2–4) which are connected to our works, **“for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints”** (Revelation 19:8).

The truth of the matter is that keeping and doing God’s commandments during the Tribulation grants two things: partaking of the tree of life (which gives eternal life — Genesis 3:22) and entering into New Jerusalem. The believer in the Church Age is granted eternal life by *faith*, through the ear canal, not orally through the digestive system! Also, we are not waiting to go through the gate, we *are part of the gate!*

³⁴ Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation*, 83.

...Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife...shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. (Revelation 21:9–10)

PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE — *WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?*

KJO revised dispensationalists rightly defend the teaching of the pre-tribulation rapture of the church, correctly asserting that Christ will return “to the air to deliver His people from the tribulation to come.”³⁵ However, KJO revised dispensationalists believe the plan of salvation in the Great Tribulation will be exactly the same as it is presently in the Church Age. They believe people in the Tribulation are “saved by putting their faith in the blood shed on the cross,”³⁶ and will have eternal security just like those of us in the Church Age. On the other hand, Bible believing dispensationalists accept the fact that “the Holy Spirit laid out 240-plus verses in the New Testament, to the effect that a saved sinner is kept saved by WORKS.”³⁷ Bible believing dispensationalists correctly apply many of these verses to people living either in the Tribulation or the Millennium.

So, if the revised position is correct; if people in the Great Tribulation will be saved just like us today, why make such a fuss over the doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture of the Church? Why is it such a major doctrine to separate over and clarify in a church statement of faith? If we are wrong, and the Church is not raptured before the Great Tribulation, then oh well, we are still safe even if the Antichrist appears on the scene and the mark of the beast is instituted.

³⁵ Brent Logan, “Arguments Against that Blessed Hope,” in *That Blessed Hope: Teaching and Defending the Doctrine of the Rapture of the Church*, ed. James W. Knox (DeLand, FL: The Bible Baptist Church, 2016), 259.

³⁶ Stauffer, “Tribulation Salvation: Nothing but the Blood.”

³⁷ Peter S. Ruckman, *How to Teach Dispensational Truth* (Pensacola: Bible Believers Press, 1992), 65.

The Bible-believing dispensational approach explains and answers what the revised position cannot. It also retains the integrity of the biblical divisions and distinctions between Israel and the body of Christ. For, if salvation is the same, then tribulation saints are indwelt and sealed by the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30) and also **“joined unto the Lord”** (1 Corinthians 6:16), and therefore IN THE BODY OF CHRIST. But how could they be in the body of Christ when Christ’s body has been taken to heaven?

The greatest proof for the pre-tribulation rapture of the Church is not ecclesiological or eschatological; it is soteriological. In other words, the Church has to be removed from the earth prior to the rapture in order to escape **“the wrath to come”** (1 Thessalonians 1:10). There are different gospels being preached during the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6); there is a distinction between Jews and Gentiles during the Great Tribulation (see Revelation 7 and 14), and “servants” can lose their salvation during this period (Matthew 24:45–51). KJO revised dispensational authors make these servants “Jews who fail to trust in the Lord,”³⁸ even though the wicked and faithful servants are both called **“his own servants”** (Matthew 25:14) before they are judged by their works.

³⁸ Douglas D. Stauffer and Andrew B. Ray, *When the End Begins: Refuting a Rapture in Matthew 24–25* (Knoxville, TN: McCowen Mills Publishers & LTB Publications, 2017), 177.

5 TRUTH MISAPPLIED

GALATIANS 3 AND ROMANS 4

Over and over, KJO revised dispensationalists misapply truths for the Church Age into other dispensations. They use verses like Galatians 3:11 (**“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.”**) to prove that “it was never God’s intent that one should seek to gain eternal life through the keeping of commandments,”¹ even though Galatians 3:11 is in the present tense, dealing with justification by faith in the Church Age. Romans 2:6–13 shows that prior to Calvary, if Jews or Gentiles wanted **“immortality”** and **“eternal life,”** they had to be **“doers of the law.”** And while Galatians 3:21 is absolutely true (**“...for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”**), the rest of the Bible is true as well.

The confusion stated by the revisers comes from a few basic errors. First, is the acceptance (consciously or ignorantly) of the Calvinistic notion of God’s “eternal decrees.” Revisers use John 14:6 and sermonize, “Jesus did not say, **‘Now I am the life.’** He said, **‘I AM THE**

¹ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 63.

LIFE!” He did not say, ‘*From now forward, I am the way.*’ He said, ‘*I AM THE WAY!*’² This type of Bible exposition is unconscious of progressive truth, and is really non-dispensational at its foundation. Jesus is **“the way”** (John 14:6), and men **“must be born again”** (John 3:7), but prior to Calvary no one, not even Nicodemus, could have been **“born of the Spirit”** (John 3:6) because **“the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified”** (John 7:39). Yes, the disciples **“believed”** (John 16:27), but they did not believe the resurrection at first (Mark 16:13–14), until He physically appeared unto them.

Secondly, the error is made by taking two types of our salvation (Abraham and David) to the extreme. Abraham is a type of our salvation in the sense that he was given righteousness by God, not by believing in Christ’s shed blood for his atonement, but by believing God would give him thousands of descendants (Genesis 15:5). David is a type of our salvation in the sense that God did not impute sin to him that he deserved (Romans 4:6–8). Paul could just as easily used Phinehas as an example of someone who had righteousness **“counted unto him”** (Psalm 106:31). And Phinehas no more believed on Jesus Christ for salvation than Abraham or David. He was given righteousness for stabbing and killing two fornicators (Numbers 25:7–8).

KJO revised dispensationalists assume the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was preached to Abraham because of Galatians 3:8.³ But **“the gospel”** that was preached to Abraham is actually stated in the verse as, **“In thee shall all nations be blessed.”** Types are just that — types. Abraham had faith in God’s word and he was given righteousness for believing God. It’s that simple. Granted,

² James W. Knox, “The Church’s One Foundation” in *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, Stauffer and Ray, 610.

³ *Ibid.*, 275.

“there is significance to the little phrase in Genesis 22:8, ‘provide Himself a Lamb,’”⁴ but that does not prove “salvation has always been by grace through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ.”⁵ Later in the same passage, Paul stated that **“the faith”** employed now, during the Church Age, is *after* the Law:

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should **afterwards be revealed**. (Galatians 3:23)

Also, the nonsensical idea that “David under law is shown to have been saved exactly the same way in which Abraham was”⁶ is about as crazy as taking the type of Abraham and David as far as to say they were saved just like we are. Neither Abraham nor David were born again. David was worried about losing the Holy Spirit (Psalm 51:11). And Abraham might have been given imputed righteousness by faith, but he was **“justified by works”** (James 2:21) so he could be a *dual type*. Note Pastor Donovan’s comment:

Paul uses Abraham as a picture of the “father” of those of faith for the Church age in Romans and Galatians, while James uses Abraham as the literal physical **“father”** (James 2:21) of **“the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad”** (James 1:1) and the two examples are NOT the same.⁷

The differences of salvation in the different dispensations are apparent to anyone willing to set aside their theological biases and be *honest* Bible believers. There is a difference in an Old Testament saint’s personal righteousness during the dispensation of the Law (see Deuteronomy 6:25, 24:13; 1 Samuel 26:23; 2 Samuel 22:21; 1 Kings 8:32;

⁴ Corle, *What Salvation Is*, 250.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 253.

⁶ Tabb, *Dispensational Salvation*, 6.

⁷ Donovan, “One Book Wrongly Divided...Twice,” 15.

2 Chronicles 6:23; Psalm 106:30–31), and a New Testament saint’s imputed righteousness by faith (Romans 3:25–26). The **“righteousness”** spoken of in Galatians is not the personal righteousness by works of Old Testament saints. The **“righteousness of God without the law is manifested”** (Romans 3:21) NOW, after Calvary, not before! Old Testament saints could not have the righteousness of God because **“the righteousness of God...is by faith of Jesus Christ”** (Romans 3:22), and Jesus Christ had not come, bled, died, and been resurrected yet!

Dr. Ruckman clarified these points many times. He noted there is a reason “Paul omitted **‘his’** from **‘his faith’** (Hab. 2:4)” and that “it was no longer **‘his’** it was God’s”⁸ (based on Ephesians 2:8–9). There is a reason Old Testament saints could not go directly to heaven at death — their sins were not cleared and they were not redeemed (Exodus 34:7; Hebrews 10:4). And, while **“the prophets and Moses”** foretold of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Acts 26:22–23), they only bore witness of **“him”** (Acts 10:43), not the change in dispensational salvation. For that **“gospel of the grace of God”** (Acts 20:24) dealt with a **“salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently.”** They did not understand and believe by looking forward to it, rather, they prophesied about it, because it was a **“grace that should come,”** not one they were already experiencing:

Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the **grace that should come unto you:** (1 Peter 1:10)

⁸ Peter S. Ruckman, *The Death of Biblical Doctrine* (Pensacola: BB Bookstore, 2007), 31–32.

CONCLUSION

“CHARITY BEFORE THE CHURCH” (3 John 6)

In conclusion, I would like to be a bit more charitable to those brethren who are indeed King James Bible believers but are espousing the revised or classical dispensational position.

I am aware some of these men have made accusations against us — that we are “not Bible believers” because we “remain blinded to the truth;”¹ that we “got it all wrong” and are teaching “heresy;”² that we are not “respectable Bible teachers” because we “throw out all semblance of sanity” and “civility;”³ that our “viewpoint...is the pinnacle of hypocrisy;”⁴ that we “have neglected elements of the truth,” causing us to be “careless” and “private interpret[ers];”⁵ and that we follow a “man-made philosophy”⁶ that “is tenaciously held by a fringe group within fundamental Christianity.”⁷

But I know some of these men and know them to be good men who love God, love the Bible, and love the truth. It’s my prayer that they might add **“honesty”** (1 Timothy 2:2) to their qualities, search their

¹ Stauffer and Ray, *One Book Rightly Divided Prophetic Edition*, 201.

² *Ibid.*, 488.

³ *Ibid.*, 490.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 504.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 516.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 227.

⁷ Knox, *The Law and Rightly Dividing the Word Reconsidered*, 257.

heart, and be *honest with themselves* in front of the Book they are called to preach and rightly divide.

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