



### Session 3: The Dispensation of Innocence

#### A Quick Review

- A dispensation begins when a fundamentally new revelation is given by God which changes mankind's responsibility to God and man.
- Neither a richer understanding nor a fulfillment of prophecy constitutes the beginning of a dispensation.
- A failure to recognize the fundamental change is the most common error in Biblical interpretation, leading to painful and drastic consequences of Christian thought and practice.

#### The First Dispensation

- The first major revelation in the Bible is that of the created order.
  - What existed before "God created the heavens and the earth?"
  - The creation of heavens and earth was the creation of the three fundamentals of our physical world:
    - Time
    - Space
    - Matter
  - A Biblical worldview requires God as "ultimate reality," since God predates time, space, and matter.
- The revelation includes a clear understanding of the created order in its original state.
  - With the beginning of creation, it became "formless and void."
  - In three days, God created the "form" of the earth
    - Day 1 = light
    - Day 2 = separation with a "firmament"
      - An "atmosphere" or, more literally, a "stretched out" place or plate
      - This firmament separated waters above from waters below
    - Day 3 = land, sea, and plant life "after its kind"
  - In the next three days God "filled" the "form"
    - Day 4 = Sun, moon, and stars as signs, seasons, days, and years (filled the form of light and darkness of the 1st day)

- Day 5=Fish and fowl (filled the form of "below and above" of the 2nd day)
  - Day 6=Animal life and man (filled the form of dry land with vegetation on the 3rd day)
- What is fundamentally or by revelation true for all time? (what "carries over?")
  - If the sun, moon, and stars contained "sign" information, they must still.
    - Psalm 19:1-7, Luke 21:25
    - These signs are enough to leave one "without excuse" (Romans 1:20) and "their sound went into all the earth" (Romans 10:18), thus all mankind is without excuse.
  - Man's dominion over the created order (and the work that goes with that dominion).
  - Humans are made "male and female" and "in the image of God" (Gen 1:27).
  - Marriage of a man and a woman as the priority and foundational element of society.
- What has changed since this dispensation? (what doesn't "carry over?")
  - Death and dying has entered the world through sin (Rom 5:12) and must be overcome, individually and collectively.
    - If you can't figure out a way to overcome death, it will overcome you.
    - John 11:25 is a good start!
  - Access to God was broken and needs restoration (such restoration promised in Genesis 3:15 and restored in the completed work of Christ).
  - A bountiful earth with a harmonious existence of the animal world.
    - The climate did not immediately change, but the cursed ground did
    - The harmonious existence of the animal world remained until after the next dispensation
- Conflicts revealed in this dispensation with today's society
  - Human beings are individually and fundamentally superior to all the created order
  - Gender and marriage are defined by God in creation
  - Mankind/society cannot "goodness" himself/itself back to God
- Conflicts if you remove this dispensation
  - We have to make up everything about God and man (Theology and anthropology).