



So What's The Difference?"

Grace Fellowship Church Sr Adult Class

Spring 2024

Presenter: Larry Nees

Summary:

So What's the Difference is a survey of differing beliefs and practices among local churches with a focus on the doctrine and culture of Grace Fellowship Church.

Purpose:

This study will explore the what-why-how of the local church to better understand theological differences and the biblical basis for Grace Fellowship Church's teaching and practice.

Need:

Local churches demonstrate immense variety in their forms, beliefs, and structures that result in confusion among churchgoers. It's possible even after decades of faithfulness in one church to still be unaware of the theological and traditional elements that shape that church family. This study will help one to better grasp these nuances.

Content:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. How do we interpret the bible? | Hermeneutics |
| 2. What is God's role in salvation? | Calvinism – Arminianism – Provisionism |
| 3. How do we find salvation? | Calvinism – Arminianism – Provisionism |
| 4. How can I be sure of my salvation? | Free Grace – Lordship |
| 5. What are Covenant theology distinctives? | Covenants – Creeds – Reformed |
| 6. What are Dispensational distinctives? | Dispensations – Israel – Eschatology |
| 7. How does a believer grow spiritually? | Wesleyan – Keswick |
| 8. Summary & Discussion | |

Session 1: How do we Interpret the Bible?

Introduction & Preliminaries

Respect

Disclaimers

Why is this Study important?

Important Terms

Hermeneutics

Eisegesis

Exegesis

Grace Fellowship Church Statement of Faith

“We believe in.....”

The only true God, the almighty Creator of all things existing eternally in three persons Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The unique divine inspiration entire trustworthiness and authority of the Bible.

Verbal Plenary Inspiration

The Key Question in sound biblical hermeneutics

Is not:

But is:

God wants to be known! (Revelation)

Principles of Interpretation

#1

#2

#3

#4

Golden Rule of Interpretation:

“When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise.”

David L. Cooper

Example #1 Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for prosperity and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

Example #2: Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

8 τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως.

καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν, θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον.

9 οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μή τις καυχῆσται.

Calvinist Interpretation:

Non-Calvinist Interpretation:

Questions and Discussion

Session 2: What is God's Role in Salvation?

Review & Reminders

Important Terms

Soteriology	the study of the doctrine of Salvation
Calvinism	the theological system of John Calvin which emphasizes the sovereignty and glory of God.
Arminianism	the theological system of Jacob Arminius which emphasizes the responsible free will of man.
Provisionism	the theological system of traditionalists which bridges the Calvinist-Arminian gap.

Grace Fellowship Church Statement of Faith

"We believe in....."

The dignity and brokenness of all people created in God's image to live in love and holiness but alienated from God and each other because of our sin and guilt, and justly subject to God's wrath.

Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine who lived a perfect life, who took upon Himself the judgment due sinners on the cross, who was bodily raised from the dead, and ascended as Savior and Lord.

Eternal life which is a free gift given immediately and permanently to all who, wholly apart from any works, put their faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Example of a Calvinist Local church statement of faith

NOTE: *This statement is provided as an instructional tool to observe differences in local church convictions and to consider the implications within the life of the church. Only points relevant to our study are included for brevity's sake.*

NORTH SHORE BAPTIST CHURCH NY - WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe that the Bible is the sole authority for the church and that it is verbally inspired, inerrant, infallible, and totally sufficient and trustworthy. We maintain unity on the essentials and liberty on the non-essentials. We will not compromise the Word of God for trends. We will not compromise truth for technique. We will not compromise theology for therapy. We are committed to the advance of the Gospel, expository preaching of God's Word, and the development of each other through building relationships in the context of biblical fellowship.

3. Election

We believe that God, before the foundation of the world, for His own glory did elect a great multitude of men and women to eternal life as an act of free and sovereign grace. This election was in no way dependent upon His foresight of human faith, decision, works or merit.....

4. Adam Our Representative

We believe that God made our first father Adam perfect, holy and upright. He was appointed representative and head of the human race, thereby exposing all his offspring to the effects of his obedience or disobedience to God's commands.

5. The Fall and Its Effects

We believe that Adam fell from his original righteousness into sin and brought upon himself and all his offspring death, condemnation, and a sinful nature.

7. Christ Our Representative

We believe that God sent His Son into the world, conceived of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, unchangeably sinless, both God and man, born under the law, to live a perfect life of righteousness on behalf of His elect people.

8. Particular Redemption

We believe that God's Son died at Calvary to effect propitiation, reconciliation, redemption and atonement for His elect people. God bore testimony to His acceptance of His Son's work by raising Him bodily from the dead.

10. Irresistible Grace

We believe that God the Son has poured out the Holy Spirit to work alongside the preached Word. The Spirit of God regenerates elect sinners and draws them irresistibly to faith in Christ the Savior.

11. Justification

We believe the elect, who are called by grace, are justified in the sight of God on account of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is received by faith alone.

12. Perseverance

We believe that all who are regenerated, called, and justified shall persevere in holiness and never finally fall away.

Summary of Calvinist's View of God's Role in Salvation

God gets ALL the glory because salvation is ALL of Him, and nothing of mankind.
God elects, regenerates, calls, draws, gifts with faith, forgives, justifies, glorifies.

Positive Aspects of Calvinism

Problem Areas in Calvinism

Alternatives to Calvinism

Arminianism

Believes that humanity is depraved but able to believe with the help of prevenient grace. Anyone can be saved by believing in Christ, but can resist God's call to salvation, and even lose their salvation if they turn away from the Lord. True faith is verified and sustained by good works. Salvation is synergistic – God works together with the individual.

Provisionism

Believes that all are sinful and separated from God but able to turn to Christ in faith. Salvation is conditioned on faith and all who have this faith are predestined to everlasting life- eternally secure apart from works. Salvation is monergistic – God provides a finished work of salvation which an individual accepts or rejects.

The “Inconsistent” Calvinist

“The Inconsistency of Four-Point Calvinism: Calvinism isn't a produce stand from which we can pick and choose which doctrines we wish to keep and pass over the rest in a sort of hermeneutical reprobation. Calvinism is an interwoven system of theology which must be accepted or rejected as a whole.”
- Banner of Truth

Questions and Discussion

Session 3: How Do We Find Salvation?

Review & Reminders

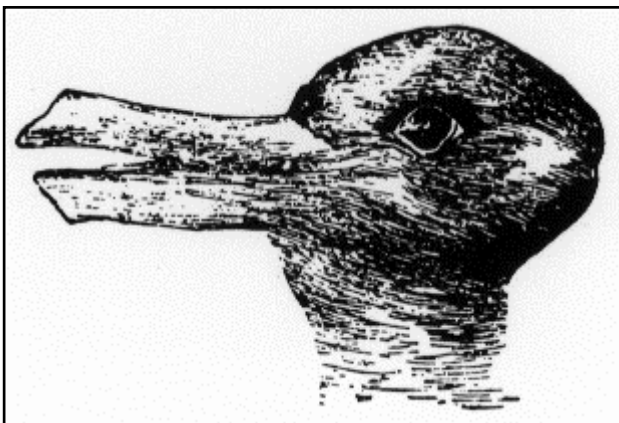
THREE SOTERIOLOGICAL VIEWS		
Calvinism	Provisionism	Arminianism
		

Starting Points

Calvinism → _____ in sin and _____ to believe.

Arminianism → _____ by sin but _____ to believe.

Provisionism → _____ in sin but _____ to believe.



Exploring Key Concepts

DEAD IN YOUR SINS

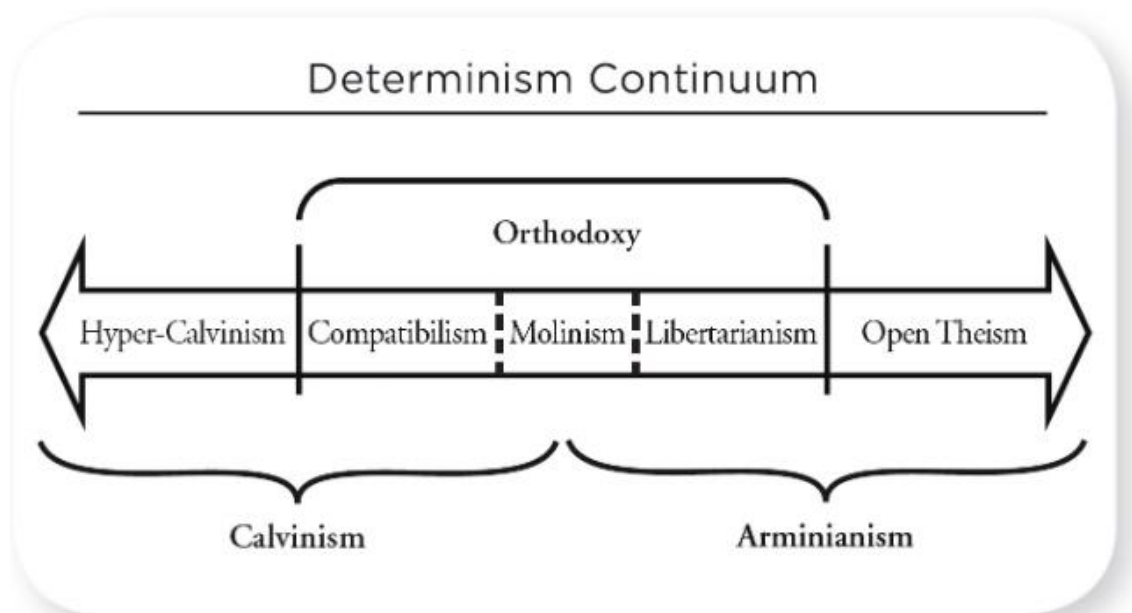
You were **DEAD** in your offenses and sins, in which you previously walked according to the course of this world ...and were by nature children of wrath, just as the rest. Ephesians 2:1-3

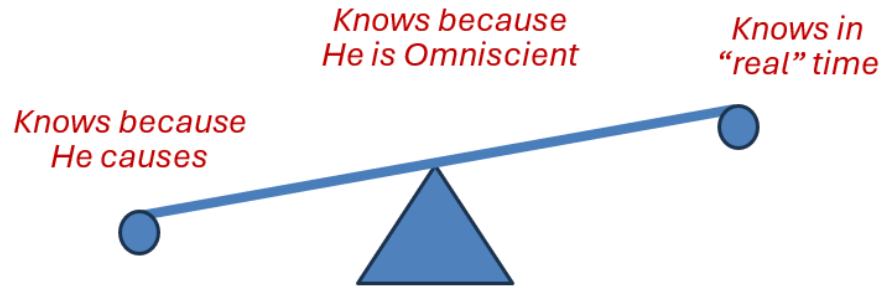
...this son of mine was **DEAD** and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found. Luke 15:24

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Absolutely nothing happens in the universe that is outside of God's influence and authority. *Chip Ingram*

The key question is to what degree does God determine and cause what comes to pass. Your answer dramatically affects your view of salvation, of the local church and of God's character.





ELECTION (What is election and is it unconditional?)

Election is God's sovereign choice of a person, group of people, or nation for His purposes. For instance, Israel is an elect (chosen) nation/people to fulfill a specific role. Theological tension emerges from whether God unconditionally chooses those whom He will save, or whether His choice/election is that all who believe will be justified and glorified.

Key Passages to Explore: Ephesians 1 and Romans 9

EPHESIANS 1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

ROMANS 9 (This central passage is left for your personal study)

Questions and Discussion

Calvinism	Arminianism	Provisionalism
<p>Total Depravity – total inability. As a result of Adam’s fall, the entire human race is affected; all humanity is dead in trespasses and sins. He has no free will and is incapable of responding to God’s offer of salvation (Gen 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18).</p> <p>Unconditional Election – Because man is dead in sin and unable to respond to God, in eternity past God elected certain people to salvation. Election and predestination are unconditional - not based on man’s response. It is God’s mysterious (subjective) choice – conditioned on nothing but <u>His</u> good pleasure. (Rom 8:29-30; 9:11; Eph, 1:4-6, 11-12)</p> <p>Limited Atonement – Because God determined that certain ones should be saved as a result of God’s unconditional election, He determined that Christ should die for the elect alone. All whom God has elected and for whom Christ died will be saved (Acts 20:28; Romans 8:32).</p> <p>Irresistible Grace – Those whom God elected He draws to Himself through irresistible grace. God first regenerates one and by doing so makes man willing to come to Him. When God calls, man responds. He does not have the freedom to resist (John 6:37, 44; 10:16). Those whom God chooses not to elect shall be declared guilty and experience eternal condemnation.</p>	<p>Partial Depravity – humanity is depraved but still able to seek God. We are fallen and tainted by sin but not to the extent that we cannot choose to come to God and accept salvation, with the help of prevenient grace from God.</p> <p>Conditional Election – God only “chooses” those whom He knows (by His foreknowledge) will choose to believe. No one is predetermined for either heaven or hell.</p> <p>Unlimited Atonement – Jesus died for everyone, even those who are not chosen and will not believe. Jesus’ death was for all of humanity, and anyone can be saved by belief in Him.</p> <p>Resistible Grace – God’s call to be saved can be resisted and/or rejected. We can resist God’s pull toward salvation if we choose to.</p> <p>Prevenient Grace – the grace of God given to individuals that releases them from their bondage to sin and enables them to come to Christ in faith but does not guarantee that the sinner will <u>actually</u> do so. Thus, the efficacy of the enabling grace of God is determined not by God but by man.</p>	<p>Totally Sinful -- all people are sinful and responsible for their sin, but they are also <u>responsible</u> for and capable of responding in faith to God’s universal call for all to be saved (Titus 2:11).</p> <p>Conditional Election – God chooses that all who respond in faith in Him will be predestined to eternal life where they are holy and blameless before God.</p> <p>Unlimited Atonement – Jesus died for everyone, even those who are not chosen and will not believe. Jesus’ death was for all of humanity, and anyone can be saved by belief in Him.</p> <p>Resistible Grace – God’s call to be saved can be resisted and/or rejected. We can resist God’s pull toward salvation if we choose to. We can harden our hearts.</p>

<p>Perseverance of the Saints – The ones God has elected and drawn to Himself through the Holy Spirit will persevere in faith. Those truly saved will evidence a redeemed life with good works to the end. (Jn 10:27-29; Rom 8:29-30 Jm 2:14).</p>	<p>Conditional Salvation – Christians can lose their salvation if they actively reject the Holy Spirit's influence in their lives. A believer must maintain salvation.</p>	<p>Preservation of the Saints – God immediately grants forgiveness of sin and eternal life to each one who responds in faith in Christ. They are saved by grace through faith apart from any works.</p>
<p>Saving Faith – is belief/trust in Jesus as Savior and inseparable from repentance. True faith is faith <i>that</i> works; it results in a life of good works as evidence of salvation. Faith follows regeneration.</p>	<p>Saving Faith – is belief/trust in Jesus as Savior and is inseparable from good works. True faith is faith <i>with</i> works; it is sustained by a life of good works as evidence of salvation. Faith precedes regeneration.</p>	<p>Saving Faith – is belief/trust in Jesus as Savior apart from good works. Works are not a part of salvation which is a finished work of Christ. A believer is exhorted to live a life of good works. Faith precedes regeneration.</p>
<p>Free Will – only God has free will to determine and choose what He wishes. Man's will is in bondage to sin and cannot choose faith in Christ; such faith must be given to him from God.</p>	<p>Free Will – God has chosen to give man free will that is able to exercise saving faith in Christ. Man's will <u>is</u> fallen, under condemnation, and unable to please God, but is able-to-respond (responsible) to the Gospel with faith.</p>	<p>Free Will – God chose to give man free will. Though man is fallen, under condemnation, and unable to please God, he is (responsible) able to respond to the Gospel with faith. These choices are self-determined, not from factors beyond the accountable agent's control.</p>
<p>Monergism – salvation is of the Lord alone, not a cooperation of man and God. If anyone is to be saved Jesus must grant everything we need for salvation, including a new heart to believe. If faith comes from man's choice, it would then be a "work" and diminish God's gift of salvation.</p>	<p>Synergism – God works together with us in effecting salvation, with man's only responsibility to exercise faith in God's finished work of the atonement. (Note: Calvinists view faith as a work, and so dismiss synergism).</p>	<p>Monergism – salvation is of the Lord alone, not a cooperation of man and God. However, the finished work of salvation must be accessed by man through faith. In contrast to Calvinism, this faith is not a "work" (Romans 3:27-30 confirms it is the opposite of works) but is a necessary condition for forgiveness of sin. Thus salvation is fully of God, but accessed by faith.</p>
<p>Sovereignty – God's absolute freedom to do whatever He wants which results in His control over everything in the universe - He determines and decrees and causes all that takes place.</p>	<p>Sovereignty – God is absolute in authority and unrestricted in His supremacy. Everything that happens is, at the very least, the result of God's permissive will. This is true even if things are not what He would prefer. God's right to allow mankind's free choice is just as necessary for true sovereignty as His ability to enact His will, wherever and however He chooses.</p>	<p>Molinism – God sovereignly controls a world of free creatures by knowing (middle knowledge) how they would freely choose in various circumstances and then deciding to create certain people and put them in those circumstances so that he can actualize that situation without having to unilaterally determine it himself.</p>

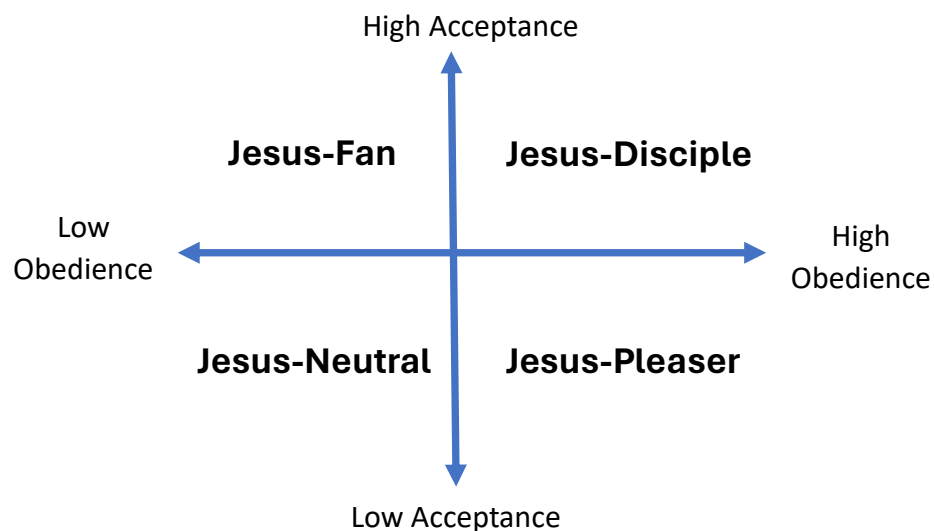
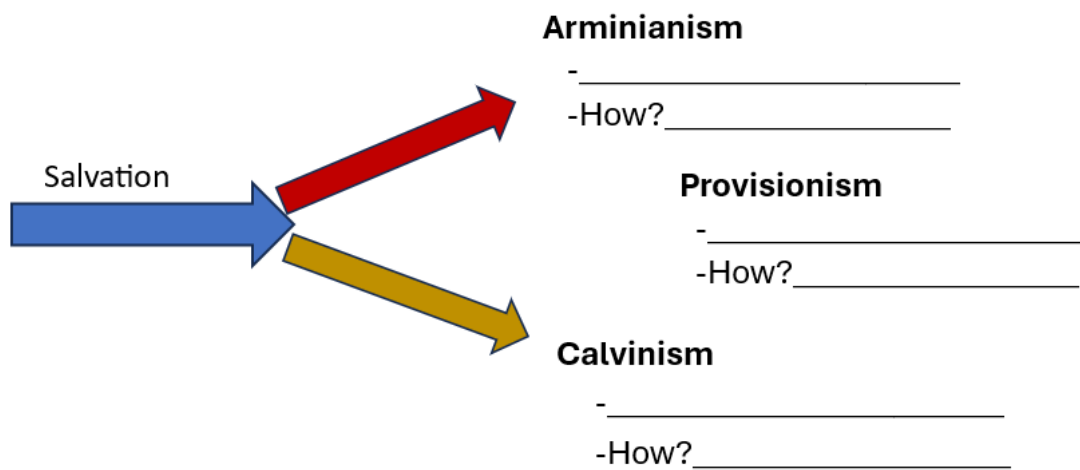
Theistic Determinism – God determines everything that a person will choose. God is glorifying Himself in all that he ordains. He is the ultimate cause.	Libertarianism – God determines not which choice people will make but that they will be free to make it.	Libertarianism – God determines not which choice people will make but that they will be free to make it.
Foreknowledge – is not merely God’s knowing beforehand, but rather His “foreloving” (ie. Foreordaining, determining). The ultimate cause of one’s faith is God not man.	Foreknowledge – God’s omniscience means that He knows ahead of time all that will take place in the future. His election of individuals to salvation is based on His knowing who will choose to believe.	Foreknowledge is Middle Knowledge – God’s knowledge of what people would do freely in any set of circumstances. It is not dependent on what he foresees people will do (foreknowledge). It is called middle knowledge because it is in between what is called God’s natural knowledge and free knowledge. Natural knowledge is where God knows all things that are possible and logically necessary. Free knowledge is the knowledge that he has of the actual world whether past, present, or future logically subsequent to his decree to create a certain world. It is not due to his omnipresence.
Common Adherents		
Presbyterian – Reformed Baptists – Primitive Baptists– Reformed & Covenant Churches -- Congregational – Lutheran=Similar & different	Methodist – Wesleyan – Nazarene – Church of God – Assemblies of God –Free Will Baptists	Non-denominational churches – Southern Baptist – Independent Baptists --
John Calvin -- Jonathan Edwards – C. Spurgeon -- James Boyce – J.I. Packer -- John Piper – R.C. Sproul – John MacArthur – Tim Keller – Wayne Grudem – David Platt – Mark Driscoll	John Wesley – Charles Finney -- A.W. Tozer – Oswald Chambers – F.B. Meyer -- Billy Graham – Dwight Moody – Rick Warren – Wm Lane Craig --	Zane Hodges -- Andy Stanley – Leighton Flowers – Norm Geisler – Chuck Swindoll -

Session 4: How Can I Be Sure of My Salvation?

(Free Grace or Lordship Salvation)

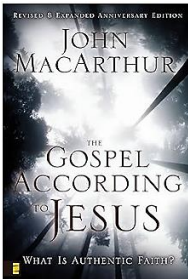
Review & Reminders

Introduction



The Case for Lordship Salvation

- Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits. Matthew 7:19-20
- Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Matthew 7:21
- Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. James 2:17
- If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1John 2:15
- How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Romans 6:2
- They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us 1John 2:19



“A sinner who rejects Christ’s authority in his life does not have saving faith, for true faith requires a surrender to God.”

“The gospel requires more than making an intellectual decision or mouthing a prayer; the gospel message is a call to discipleship. The sheep will follow their Shepherd in submissive obedience.”

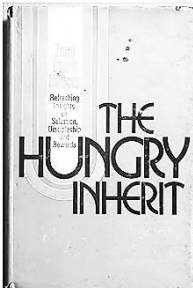
“A true believer has a desire to surrender. This is what distinguishes true faith from a bogus profession. ... The genuine believer displays an eagerness to please Christ by abandoning everything to His lordship.”

Lordship Implications

- “Flush out” those who think they are saved but aren’t
- Insecure about security
- Tendency toward legalism and elitism
- Stark call to full commitment – appeal to younger generation

The Case for Free Grace Theology

- For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16
- “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. John 5:24
- Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. John 6:47
- I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. Rev 21:6



Eternal life is *free*. Discipleship is immeasurably hard.

The former is attained by faith alone; the latter by a faith that *works*.

The former cost man nothing; the latter could cost him everything, including life itself.

The former assured one of entrance into God's kingdom; the latter assured him of heirship there. – Zane Hodges

Free Grace Implications

- Risk false security
- Accused of “easy-believism”
- Tendency to downplay full commitment and call to lordship
- Clear and firm sense of security
- Understanding of biblical “rewards”

Questions and Discussion

Session 5: What are Covenant Theology Distinctives?

Review & Reminders

Introduction

BRANCHES OF THEOLOGY

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| • Roman Catholic | • Covenant | • Methodism |
| • Eastern Orthodox | • Reformed | • Lutheranism |
| • Neo-orthodox | • Dispensational | • Pentecostal |
| • Liberal | • New Covenant | • Liberation |

OUR FOCUS

Session 5: Covenant theology distinctives – Covenants, Reformed, Creeds

Session 6: Dispensational distinctives – Dispensations, Israel, Eschatology

Important Terms

Calvinism – a view that the sovereignty and glory of God comes before all else and is defined by the 5 theological points of TULIP.

Reformed – any system of belief that traces its roots back to the Protestant Reformation.

Covenant – a framework for interpreting scripture through the grid of covenants.

Dispensationalism – a view of 7 unfolding eras with distinctive ways God administered His governance of the world.

Creed – A authoritative summary statement of religious belief.

OUR PURPOSE

Gain a clearer understanding of the meaning and relationship among common Covenant Theology distinctives.

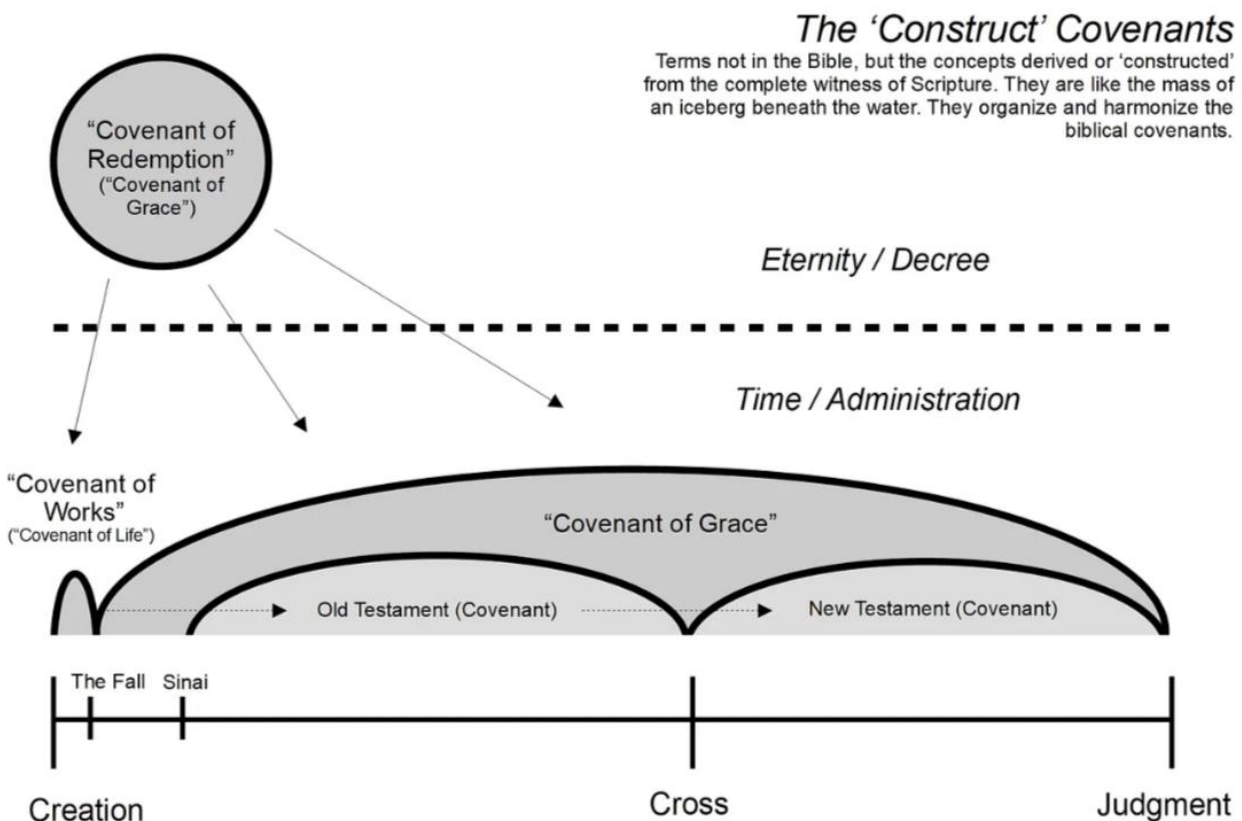
Understanding Covenant Theology

3 DIVINE COVENANTS

Covenant of Redemption: Eternal agreement within the Godhead in which the Father chose a people to save, appointed his Son to redeem them, and the Spirit applying this redeeming work to this elect people.

Covenant of Works: God's promise of eternal life for Adam's (federal head of mankind) obedience and death for disobedience.

Covenant of Grace: God's promise of eternal life for all who have faith in Jesus Christ who is the second Adam.



Claims of Covenant Theology

- It views the bible as a covenant book describing the divine-human relationship
- It is centered on Jesus Christ and his redemptive work
- It unifies God's plan through the lens of the Old and New Covenants
- It unifies God's work of redeeming one people - Israel/Church (the elect)

Understanding Reformed Theology

- To be Calvinist is to hold to the 5 points of Calvinism.
- To be Covenantal is to hold to the covenantal framework of the bible.
- To be Confessional is to hold to one of the historic creeds of the faith.
 - Westminster Confession
 - Canons of Dort
 - London Baptist Confession of Faith
- To be Reformed is to be Calvinistic, Covenantal, Confessional, and to hold two additional convictions:
 - #1 the ordinary means of grace through corporate local church practices
 - #2 the distinction between the law and the Gospel

Questions and Discussion

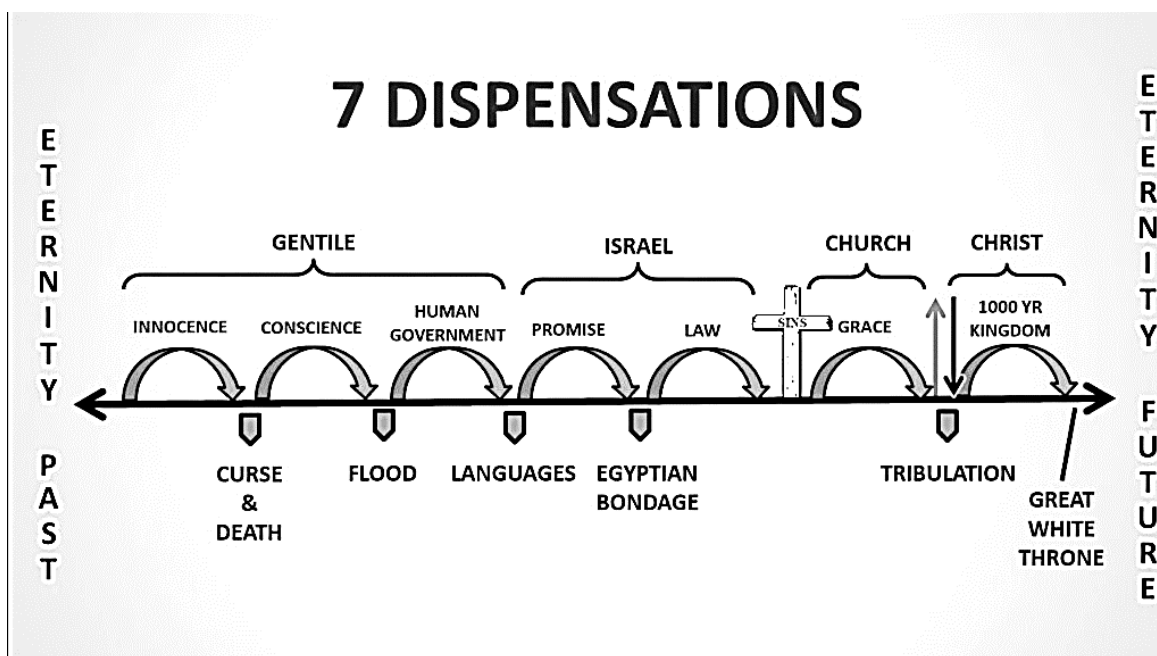
Session 6: What are Dispensational Theology Distinctives?

Review & Reminders

Introduction – Understanding Dispensational Theology

Dispensationalism organizes history and theology around a series of distinctive ways God administered His governance of the world as He revealed His character and His plan for mankind. These are called dispensations.

Each Dispensation begins with an offer of blessing by God and ends with mankind's failure and its consequences.



What are the Seven Dispensations in the Bible?

- 1) Dispensation of Innocence – this dispensation covers creation of man to the fall of man. All of creation lived in peace and innocence with one another. This dispensation ended when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's law to abstain from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and they were expelled from the Garden.

- 2) Dispensation of Conscience –began just after Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden. Man was left to rule by his own conscience, which was tainted by sin. This Dispensation ended in total disaster – with a worldwide flood. During this time man was totally corrupt and evil.
- 3) Dispensation of Human Government –started just after the flood. God established capital punishment and commanded mankind to fill the earth. They did not fill the earth but instead bound together to create a Tower so that they could reach God on their own accord. God ended this dispensation by causing confusion with their languages so that they would be forced to spread to other areas.
- 4) Dispensation of Promise –started with the Call of Abraham. It includes the Patriarchs and the Bondage in Egypt. Once the Jews fled Egypt and officially became the Nation of Israel the Dispensation was complete.
- 5) Dispensation of Law – lasted for 1,500 years - from the Exodus and to the Resurrection of Jesus. God delivered the Law to Moses. It was given to show Israel that they must depend on God to save them because they could not ever be holy on their own. The sacrifices of bulls and goats did not save the people, but pointed them to the spotless Lamb and who was able to take away their sins.
- 6) Dispensation of the Church Age – started at Pentecost and continues with more than 2,000 years of history between the 69th and 70th weeks in Daniels prophesy. Most Dispensationalists hold to a Pre-Tribulation and Pre-Millennial Rapture. Meaning Christ will snatch away believers into the air before the Tribulation and before the Millennial Reign of Christ.
- 7) Dispensation of the Millenia Reign of Christ – begins with the defeat of Satan followed by 1,000 literal years of peace where Christ will reign as King on the earth. After the 1,000 years, Satan will be released. People will follow him in a great battle against Christ, but they will be defeated again. Then comes the final judgement, after which the earth and heaven will be destroyed and replaced by a new earth and a new heaven. Satan will be cast into the Lake of Fire and the Eternal Kingdom begins.

Claims of Dispensational Theology

- It stresses a literal not figurative/allegorical hermeneutic
- It views Israel and the Church as two separate entities
- It sees OT promises to Israel fulfilled literally – not by Church
- It views the Church as a parenthesis– a mystery – in God's plan
- It affirms that salvation is always through faith but the content of that faith changes through progressive revelation
- It understands the Mosaic Law as fulfilled and superseded

Areas of Impact – Covenant or Dispensational Theology

- Framework for understanding whole storyline of Scripture
- Promises to Israel of the LAND and THRONE
- Church practice: law, sabbath, tithes, infant baptism
- View of the KINGDOM present and future
- Prayer for God - not for us - to bring in His kingdom
- Prophetic expectations of next events

Grace Fellowship Church Doctrinal Statement

We Believe in....

The future: anticipating the coming of Christ for His church at any moment, followed by the examination of believers for the purpose of rewards, the physical return of Christ to establish His kingdom on earth, the final judgment of unbelievers, and the creation of a new heaven and new earth all to the eternal glory of God.

North Shore Baptist Church, NY (Example)

We Believe....

Eschatology: We believe in the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord truthfully prophesied that at His return the dead would be raised bodily, and that the righteous would enjoy everlasting life and the wicked would endure everlasting punishment.

Progressive Dispensational View

This mode of thought emerged in the 1980s and holds to Four major dispensations. While this variant is more closely aligned with Classical Dispensationalism, it does have a few key differences. While Classical Dispensationalists will use a literal hermeneutic, Progressive Dispensationalists will use a Complementary Hermeneutic.

The key difference is the issue over David's throne. In the Davidic Covenant, God promised to David that He would never cease to have a descendant on the throne. Progressive Dispensationalists say that Christ is right now sitting on David's throne and ruling. Classical Dispensationalists say that Christ is ruling, but not that He is on the throne of David.

Questions and Discussion

Session 7: How does a Believer Grow Spiritually?

Review & Reminders

Introduction –

Charles Wesley – Love divine, all loves excelling

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down;
Fix in us thy humble dwelling;
All thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit,
Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit;
Let us find that promised rest.
Take away our bent to sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its Beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

Augustus Toplady – Rock of Ages

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save me from its guilt and power.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All could never sin erase,
Thou must save, and save by grace.
Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

Sanctification

Sanctify literally means "to set apart for special use ", to make holy or sacred. Sanctification refers to the process of being made holy, as a vessel, full of the Holy Spirit of God. It is the change into holiness brought about by God in a believer, begun at salvation and continuing throughout the life of the believer.

The First Question is “Why Grow – what difference will it make?”

*I was a Christian for 22 years, but instead of being a 22-year-old Christian,
I was a one-year-old Christian 22 times! Peter Scazzero*

#1 Growth is the path to the _____.

#2 Growth is the path to _____.

#3 Growth is the path to _____.

#4 Growth is the path to _____.

The Second Question is “How Does Growth Happen?”

Common Answers

Try Harder

Trust and obey

Let go and Let God

Be Baptized by the Holy Spirit

Speak in Tongues

Study the Bible

Pray a lot

Surrender your life to God

Isolate from the World

Revive and rededicate yourself

The Process of Sanctification

Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation. 1 Peter 2:2

As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted, now being built up in Him and established in your faith. Colossians 2:7

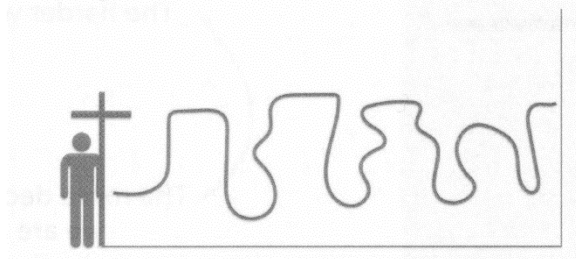
For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work among you will complete it by the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6

...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13

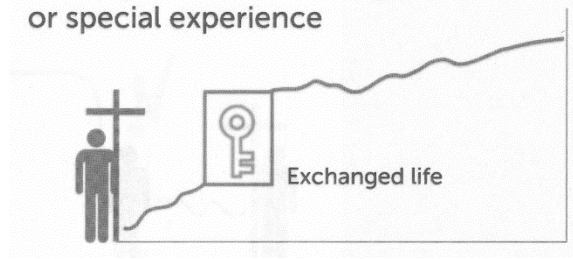
Approaches to Spiritual Growth



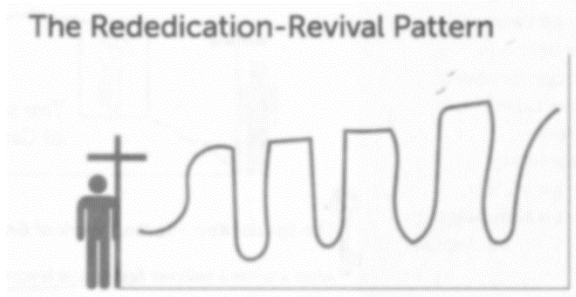
The Try-Harder Pattern



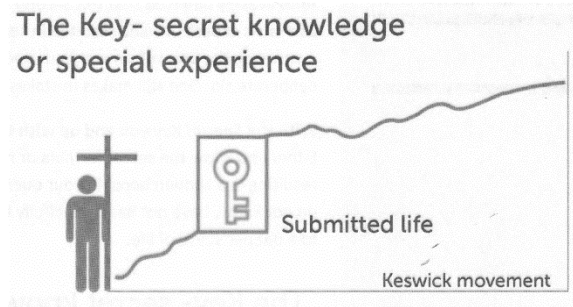
The Key- secret knowledge or special experience



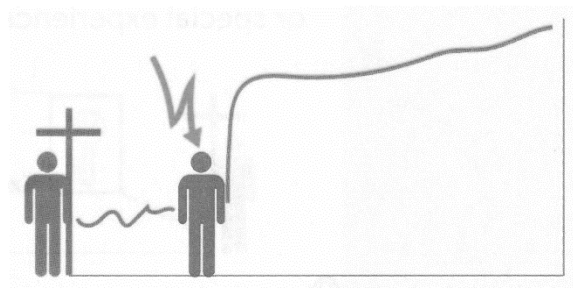
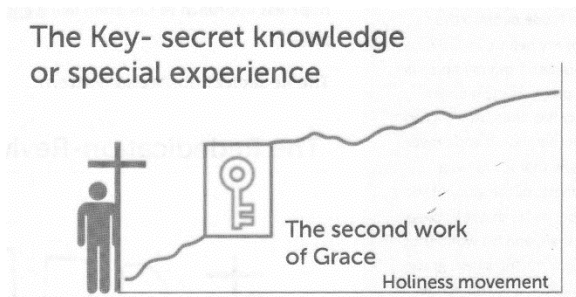
The Rededication-Revival Pattern



The Key- secret knowledge or special experience



The Key- secret knowledge or special experience



Facts about Spiritual Growth

Spiritual Growth is a _____.

Spiritual Growth is a _____.

Spiritual Growth is a _____.

Spiritual Growth is _____.

Growth Cycle



Questions and Discussion

Session 8: Summary and Dialog

Review & Reminders

Content:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. How do we interpret the bible? | Hermeneutics |
| 2. What is God's role in salvation? | Calvinism – Arminianism – Provisionism |
| 3. How do we find salvation? | Calvinism – Arminianism – Provisionism |
| 4. How can I be sure of my salvation? | Free Grace – Lordship |
| 5. What are Covenant theology distinctives? | Covenants – Creeds – Reformed |
| 6. What are Dispensational distinctives? | Dispensations – Israel – Eschatology |
| 7. How does a believer grow spiritually? | Wesleyan – Keswick |

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3

Questions and Dialog