

Dr. Roger Green, American Christianity, Session 25, The Dispensationalism and the Wesleyan Holiness Tradition

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This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 25 on Dispensationalism and the Wesleyan Holiness Tradition.

Well, thank you, Dr. Green. It's a privilege to actually sit through this class. Also, I think I've enjoyed it as much as you have with Dr. Green's lecture style.

And so, bless your hearts. I'm going to pass these out, and I just put the kind of dispensational premillennialism down on one-page kind of thing. And so, let me just pass these around.

And let me just kind of work through this. Dispensational premillennialism goes back to the late 1800s and starts out; it's kind of a low-church movement. You have a high church, and you have a low church.

This is kind of a low church movement. Basically, this movement focuses on traditional approaches to Israel and the church. And largely, the church gets Israel, which has all these promises in the Old Testament.

Those promises get spiritualized in the church. And so, the church kind of is like the fulfillment of Israel. And the dispensationalists, especially starting out with this guy Darby, who was Plymouth Brethren, Plymouth Brethren movement.

My grandfather was one of the speakers in the Plymouth Brethren. But Darby, from 1800 to 1882, basically started breaking up Scripture and seeing that things were different. There was a difference between the Old Testament, which largely worked, and the New Testament, which largely consisted of grace and faith.

So, what happens is that dispensationalists focus on the differences between the Old and New Testaments rather than the similarities. And so that's kind of their background to this. Each church tradition seems to me to focus on different parts of Scripture.

So, for example, if I were to say to you that you're from a Reformed tradition, what passages of Scripture would your Reformed tradition focus on? There are two. And if you're in that tradition and don't know, let me just inform you. I was also trained in that tradition.

It is largely Romans and Galatians. I've heard it said Romans is one lens and Galatians is the other. And you look at the Bible through the lens of Romans and Galatians.

I think you need to think about that. Anyway, secondly, let's pretend we're like a Mennonite, which is basically a pacifistic kind of thing. Where will the Mennonites camp on? The Sermon on the Mount.

And so, there'll be a lot of teaching on the Sermon on the Mount. And so, what tradition and what passages do they emphasize? But for the dispensationalists, there are two books, Daniel and Revelation. Daniel and Revelation are talked about quite a bit in their tradition.

And so, there's a big distinction then between Israel and the church, a big distinction. That's one of their key-marked things there. Israel gets the land and all the land promises you remember in the Old Testament.

They see those as being fulfilled literally that Israel will be back. By the way, in 1948, Israel took back the land, and that was a big deal for the dispensationalists confirming their thing, that Israel was back in the land. The land is still important for Israel, not swiped over into the church.

So that was a big thing for them. They connected up, as Dr. Green has so well pointed out, with the Niagara Bible Conference. Basically, in these Bible conference movements, a lot of the speakers were dispensationalists, and they were prophecy conferences.

So, you would go and speak on prophecy. So basically, you would have a newspaper in one hand and your Bible in the other, and they would basically do a newspaper exegesis. That is happening today. The locusts in the book of Revelation are the helicopters in Vietnam with stingers in their tail.

And so that was when the Vietnam War was over, and then when the Vietnam War was over, you had to get creative with a new set of stuff. And while I can be kind of humorous about it, partially because I participated in that tradition growing up. My father was a dispensationalist, and my grandfather was part of the Plymouth Brethren movement, a low-church movement.

There are some good things about it. So, I want to just, there's a first movement then, this Darby starting this thing with the seven dispensations. It then moved down into institutionalization, which Dr. Green pointed out in some colleges and other places.

And so, you had people like D.L. Moody and other preachers, these radio preachers that were around the radio that Dr. Green. So, I was in the black-and-white TV era

myself. But anyway, so R.A. Torrey, a very famous name, R.A. Torrey, William Erdman.

You've got Erdman's Publishing Company now. A fellow, what's that? A.J. Anyway, somebody rather there. But we try to disassociate him from dispensationalism now.

Dispensationalism is like, you know, on the outs in a lot of ways. Old Ironsides, and you have to say, old Ironsides was a real Bible preacher who had commentary. My parents had all Ironside commentaries.

Barnhouse was another. These radio Bible preachers at the time captured the imagination of a lot of working people. My father worked in the factory for 16 hours a day.

And so that kind of thing, these people captured his imagination. From there, it kind of went; you got to think about World War I and World War II. People were thinking global things now, and things were like people were being herded into these factories and other things.

And so there was a kind of an apocalyptic thing, like the world is coming to an end kind of thing. And so, with this apocalyptic, by the way, does this apocalyptic go even until this day? I think it's called Star Wars. So, you know, there's a lot of apocalyptic kind of thinking even to this day, which has been de-religionized and now has gone into sci-fi.

But these people were kind of the sci-fi before sci-fi was sci-fi. So, what happened is largely you had a school grow up, Philadelphia College of the Bible, commonly known as PCB, went to Philadelphia Biblical University. Now it's called Cairns University.

The new president put that name on it. Most of the people that I know that are associated with PCB went thumbs down on Cairns, but he has a reason. He's an Old Testament guy, and you know, they're always weird.

So anyway, I speak as one. Okay. So, Philadelphia College of the Bible was big.

Largely, it was big for this guy, C.I. Schofield. Schofield's name, yes, C.I. Schofield. There was the Schofield Bible that came out with the Schofield Bible notes.

And so, a lot of these people were avid Bible readers. My mother reads through to this day. She has read through the Bible every year.

She reads through the Bible, the whole Bible. She was stunned when a Presbyterian pastor came over to visit her house, and the guy said, well, your Bible's really worn. She says, yeah, I read it through every year.

And the guy said to her, wow, I've never read through the Bible myself. This guy was a pastor. My mother's jaw dropped.

She was nice to the guy, but it was like, holy cow, what's this guy preaching? He's a pastor, and he's never read through the Bible. So these people were very biblically based, and they really stressed the teaching of Scripture. And the other thing they stressed, well, these Bible colleges, so let me go back, Philadelphia College of the Bible, Dallas Theological Seminary, classic place, 1924.

Biola, as Dr. Green mentioned, and Moody Bible Institute were also associated. And then, I went to a school called Grace Theological Seminary in Winter Lake, Indiana. Grace and Dallas were this kind of dispensational schools.

Then, from there, Dallas largely was the focus point, Dallas Theological Seminary. And there was an original theologian who actually put a lot of it together named Louis Barry Chafer. And there's like seven volumes of the theology of dispensationalism that Louis Barry Chafer did.

And you can see his dates there up to 1952. Chafer then hands it off to, and these are very famous names if you're in the dispensational movement, Charles Ryrie. Everybody would know him.

John Walvoord was the president of Dallas Seminary for years. Dwight Pentecost wrote a book of about 500 pages called Things to Come, in which you can see right there the focus on the end times and that kind of thing. Dwight Pentecost's book was a kind of a classic on that.

Now, however, Dallas Seminary sends a lot of its people to get educated at Cambridge, Harvard, and other places. And so, Dallas Seminary now, when you say dispensational, it's not really an accurate description. They would call themselves progressive dispensationalists.

There's been a great amount of moderation there. And so, there's been moderation quite a bit. Now, the time chart is what, whenever you think about prophecy and dispensationalism, you have these charts.

And so, this chart is kind of how you tell. C. L. Hammer says that a lot of these people feel like the end is coming. And so, you laid out, and you studied revelation theory seriously.

So basically, these are called dispensations. This is a period of time in which God worked in a certain way. He had a covenant with his people, and those covenants then he agreed to work with the people in a certain way, a sacrificial system.

So, in the Jewish thing, they had to offer sacrifices. In the church, we don't offer sacrifices anymore. So, as a change through these periods of history, we're located around the covenants, the great covenants.

And so, you can see the law in Israel, works in the land were very important. Then, with the church comes grace and faith, grace most in faith in Revelations 2 and Three. Then, you have seven years after the church age passes; the next stage is called the tribulation period.

There's a seven-year tribulation period. There's chaos. There are bad things happening globally.

This is when the plagues of the book of Revelation come, those seal plagues, the trumpet plagues, the bold plagues, and the 21 seven sevens, three sevens there, these plagues come in there. By the way, a lot of those plagues are very similar to the plagues in the book of Exodus in Egypt. And so there's a tremendous correlation between the book of Exodus and the book of Revelation.

There is a big debate then: When is Christ coming back? And this was big for these people. When is Christ coming back? One of the things that was really good with them was that these people looked for the return of Christ. One of the things that was really positive about these things is they look for the return of Christ.

A lot of people today don't look for the return of Christ. These people actually expected it. They call it the doctrine of imminency, that Christ could come at any moment.

That Christ could come at any moment. I was raised in a home where my dad would go to the window almost on a daily basis and say, Jesus could come back today. That was a big thing for him.

And he lived his life in light of that. And it changed his life. It changed his life.

So, now, when is Christ coming back? Well, three positions developed during this tribulation period. Here's what's called the pre-tribulation rapture. They talk about the rapture a lot when Jesus is going to come down; one's left behind, and the other one's taken kind of thing.

So, this rapture of when Christ comes back and takes his church out. So anyways, he's Christ's going to come take his church out. There's what they call pre-trib rapture.

That's a seven-year period, and he raptures his church out so that his church does not go through the tribulation. They're spared from the wrath to come, so to speak, and the period of tribulation with the antichrist and all that stuff, 666 written on the back of your hand or on your forehead. Other people like J. Oliver Buswell said, no, we actually think that the first part of the tribulation period, three and a half years, is not going to be too bad.

And so there's a mid-tribulation rapture. In other words, in the middle of the tribulation seven-year period, Christ is going to come down and rapture his church because the first three and a half years aren't too bad. The church is going to be prepared in the middle of it.

And then there was a guy named Gundry, Robert Gundry, out at a school called Westmont, I think. Anyways, at another school called Westmont a guy named Robert Gundry said, no, the church is actually raptured after the tribulation. So he's called post-trib.

So, you have a pre-trib rapture that's largely the hardcore dispensationalist, Dallas Seminary and that kind of stuff, Grace Seminary, pre-trib rapture, mid-trib rapture, and then a post-trib rapture. And those guys were not accepted too well. After the tribulation period, then Christ, by any of these schemes, Christ comes, and there's a thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth.

A thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth in which Satan is bound and put into a pit. This is Revelation chapter 20, by the way, explicitly Revelation 20, which states that Satan is bound and put into a pit. And then at the end, Satan is loosed for a while.

Satan goes out and deceives again. Then there's a final collapse, and then the eternal state starts. So you basically have a seven-year tribulation period during which the Antichrist is kind of ruling.

These plagues are being poured out. You have a thousand-year reign of Christ, and then that falls apart at the end. And then you have the eternal state with new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven and that kind of thing.

So that's their thing. A lot of the people growing up then had this chart as far as their orientation, looking for the end of the world, looking for the end of the world. And so this was a big thing to go through.

There's premillennialism, and I just put these down for your theological reflections. In premillennialism, Christ comes back before the thousand years. And then there's a thousand-year reign of Christ when the lion lays down with the lamb.

There's peace and harmony on the earth for a thousand years. That's called premillennialism, a separate period, a thousand-year reign. There's amillennialism.

Amillennialism means there is no millennium. And so, the amillennialists would say, basically, we're in the millennium now. Christ is ruling his people now in the hearts of his people.

And so a millennial-type position. The postmillennial position says the earth is going to get better and better and better until the earth is finally so good. Christ is going to come back.

Christ is going to come back, and they will welcome him back because the earth has progressed under the preaching of the gospel. So, when you look at the world, it's just getting better and better in case you haven't been able to see that. So, you have then the pre-trib rapture going down to the bottom.

Christ comes back before the mid-trib rapture and the post-trib rapture. In Hal Lindsay's book, there was an old guy named Hal Lindsay in the 1970s, Late Great Planet Earth, sold millions of copies. Church's reading of Christ is coming back and Late Great Planet Earth kind of things.

Now, there's been a kind of left-behind movement. You've heard of those left behind books actually mocked out at Gordon College, of course. But if you were down at Liberty University, you would see the whole building named Tim LaHaye, who wrote that series and donated millions to that institution.

And so Tim LaHaye and the left behind the movement. So, there's a lot of play. A lot of this stuff is fanciful, like using modern newspapers.

So now I would work in ISIS. I should have thought about this. ISIS is the beginning of the tribulation.

I'm getting this strange look. That's exactly what you should do. In other words, I'm making this stuff up, and I can do that well because I've been trained in this tradition.

But what I'm saying is whatever they're doing in a newspaper, they read into the Bible. I think that's a problem in terms of, and I hope here you're learning to start. You start with the ancient sources and how they understood them. We can apply this to modern life, but be careful about newspaper exegesis.

Now, what are the, yes, sir. Right. Yeah.

So, the tribulation would be described as where those people would see the book of Revelation, and the tribulation period is apocalyptic literature. Therefore, it was

written as a political satire on what was going on in the first-century church. So the tribulation period that's described there, the 666, probably refers to Nero, and therefore, it does not refer to some future period.

And so the amillennial would be that the millennium is now Christ ruling in our hearts. And so there would not be a tribulation period for them. They would say it's the preterite view of the book of Revelation.

It all happened in the past. It's already done as far as those plagues and stuff. Yeah.

Yes. Of both tribulations? No, no, no, nobody would, nobody would say that now. Okay.

I don't, I don't believe that. I don't know if anybody would say that now. So they look as if there will be a kind of a starting with this antichrist figure.

So, they would look at people like Donald Trump. Okay. Or you've got to have some figure like, by the way, let me go back up.

And by the way, I say that to mock myself. You probably don't know what I think. You don't know what I think.

I am just mocking myself. If you've got a figure like Hitler, if you've got a figure like Hitler and you start thinking about the antichrist, does it match up some of the stuff? Yeah. So, a figure like a Hitler figure would prompt people to say, are we in the tribulation period now? When bombs are blowing up cities and things like that.

So those types of things would happen, but I don't think there's anybody on the horizon right now who rises to that level. So, some of the good things, let me just do pros and cons. Most of all, a lot of people see a lot of cons with dispensationalism.

Let me say there are some pros, and be careful about people swinging from one school to the other and then bad-mouthing the other school and stuff like that. That doesn't happen too much at Gordon. And of course, where there's generosity, usually to both sides and things.

One of the benefits that I got out of being raised in a dispensational home was that I was taught the Bible from a youth. I was taught the Bible. My father, when I was 13 or 14 years old, had me read 21 volumes of Charles Spurgeon when I was 13 and 14.

I memorized huge parts of Scripture, large parts of Scripture. They were really into teaching the Bible, and that was really good. Now you say, well, Hildebrandt, they were teaching the Bible, but a lot of these guys were just trained in high school.

They didn't have college educations. Of course, back then, they didn't, but I was trained in the Bible. The other thing was the focus on eschatology.

I think, in a lot of ways, the focus on eschatology has dropped off in the church. Now, we don't think much about the future. We're very much socially oriented into social justice, and we don't think apocalyptic anymore because everything's focused on social justice and that stuff.

There's been a real move away from and actually denigration of apocalyptic and eschatological thinking, in my opinion. So anyways, I think those two things were wonderful. My father thinks every day Jesus could come back today, and therefore, I need to walk in the footsteps of Jesus even this day.

That transformed his life. It transformed his life in a good way, in the way he loved my mother and the way he did all sorts of stuff. So negative things, I think they kind of missed the apocalyptic genre.

If you're interested in studying the book of Revelation, Dr. Dave Mathewson, who used to teach here, I videotaped him doing 30 hours of lectures on the book of Revelation. They're probably some of the best things out anywhere. He's also got a three-hour summary where he puts in three hours, kind of did in three hours, what he thinks about the book of Revelation.

He's one of the best people in the world. It'll spin your head for a while. He's not dispensational, but it'll make you think in new ways.

So, I think the dispensational movement that there gets to be a fascination with, we are in the end times, and it gets to be very much newspaper exegesis. I think I have real problems with that. So that's kind of how things have progressed.

There are not a lot of hardcore dispensationalists anymore, really, coming out of the schools. Some of the pastors in various churches, John MacArthur, some of the people will be more hardcore, but most of those guys have moderated quite a bit by now. Are there any questions or comments, or have some of you grown up in this tradition? Yes.

Yes and no. Most of their people are seeing while the dispensationalists are still seeing much more continuity, and that's actually how we would hold it. So, a lot of the people in Dallas today could teach here.

You wouldn't know the difference. But they see a lot of the continuity between the Old Testament and New Testament and view it very much the same way as I would, or Dr. Phillips would, or something like that. So, a lot of the hardcore separation of the church and Israel, not so much anymore.

Most of those guys died off with the Walvoord, Ryrie, kind of like my parents' movement. Now, people have all of them; some of them are educated at Harvard and Cambridge, and they look at it very differently today. But they'll still give homage to the guys that started the school, though.

So, they won't denigrate those people, but their thinking has become more nuanced, and that's a good thing. Yeah. The social justice people don't really camp on eschatology.

So, their eschatology is muted because they're so focused on that. So they, yeah, where post-millennialism will come in is some of the hardcore reformed people will do post-millennial type stuff that things are getting better and better. Most of those people have died off.

Actually, this is talking, it was largely in the late 1800s that things were getting better. When World War I and World War II hit, that kind of ended a lot of that thinking. But a lot of that thinking then got transformed, I think, into the social justice movements and those kinds of things now, which are not really apocalyptic in nature.

So, but yeah. Yes. I think a lot of the schools have never really accepted it.

You had the kind of schools with the intellectuals; the intellectuals really never accepted it. It was more of a preacher thing going on and it grabbed the populace because they could see things falling apart. Therefore, it didn't have staying power.

And there were also, I think, just some theological problems with it that needed to be worked out. As those problems were worked out by various intellectuals who embraced the tradition, the nuances came in. When the nuances came in, a lot of the people backed off from some of the speculation, this newspaper speculation.

By the way, does anybody remember just two years ago when Dr. Camping said that Christ was coming back on May 12th? And so, all my students said, don't study for your final exams. Christ is coming back, man.

And so, you get these kinds of speculations. What happens is that when these people make these kinds of speculations, people laugh at them. And when it goes past the date, you realize how bogus this is.

So, I think the point is not to set dates. Jesus said nobody knows the day or the hour, not even the sun. And so, when that stuff goes down, you realize it's wrong.

However, you give up on the hope that Christ is going to return and prepare yourself to make yourself pure just, even as he is pure. And so, therefore, I think, you know what I'm saying? I worry sometimes that we throw the baby out with the bathwater. And I think the hope for the return of Christ is a wonderful thing.

It needs to be contemplated. Yes. Yes.

Yeah. And that's why I would say Dr. Mathewson is what they would call a historical premillennial. And that's what Dr. Green was talking about last time.

It doesn't get into, I should say, all the details of the tribulation period and what's going on and trying to connect those with present-day events and things. It's more, I don't know. So, Dr. Mathewson would be that many, many of the people would probably be in that camp.

I would probably have moved into that camp if I could figure out what was going on, but I haven't moved. As I'm saying, I don't know a lot of answers to a lot of these questions myself now. And I think I've had to admit that to myself.

So, I don't know where I am, but I think I have moved over kind of in the historical premillennialism, but everything's kind of like, yeah. All right. Well, yeah.

Yeah. Again, Grace was dispensational when I went through it. They also then embraced at Grace, they embraced the young earth theology.

Okay. Young earth that the earth is 20, 30, 50,000 years old and things. I taught there for 20 years.

I was chairman of the Bible department for much of that time. When you didn't agree with them, they're very kind of like you're in their camp or you're out of their camp kind of thing. And it's kind of the doctrine of what they call separation.

So, a lot of my friends, to be honest with you, a lot of my friends were fired. Actually, almost all my friends were fired. And when I left to come to Gordon, I still remember I asked the dean of the seminary, I said Ken, how come I never got fired? I mean, you know, because I don't, you know, when you talk about a young earth position, I don't hold these things.

I mean, how can you know the Scripture isn't clear? On the pre-trib, mid-trib, post-trib rapture, how can you be clear? I've studied that stuff. There isn't enough data in Scripture to say this is where I stand. And I guess I have a policy where Scripture speaks, I want to speak.

Where Scripture doesn't speak, I have to learn to keep my mouth shut because I don't know. God's bigger, and there's stuff going on out there. And so, I focus on the mystery and wonder of God.

So, when I look at the creation account, I move to doxology. When I see the creation account, I move to doxology. I don't move from the creation account in Genesis 1.2 to dating.

The other problem I have is I was trained in science. I was trained as an electrical engineer. And so, a lot of their arguments don't make sense to me scientifically.

So, I asked Ken, I said, how come I didn't get fired? He said, Ted, you were so far out there that nobody knew where you were. And so, they just let me go. I think the thing is, and this is one of the things I think is really important.

What are you going to emphasize in your life? And what I would suggest is major on the major, minor on the minors. Major on the major things where Scripture says the same thing over and over and over again. Major on the glory of God, major on the majors, minor on the minors.

When you get minor things, you can get sidetracked so easily. And what I'm suggesting is I can work with dispensationalists because I respect them. I respect them.

It's one thing to say you respect them, and I say, I don't know, I'm still trying to figure out a lot of this myself. It's not because I haven't studied it. It's just the data is not crystal clear.

Especially when you try to understand it from a first-century perspective. This is a new dispensation. We are so grateful.

Grace's loss was our gain many years ago, and we have been rejoicing in Dr. Hildebrand being with us all these years. It's been wonderful. And I love this access that you can have to things that he has taped or taped or video, is this video or whatever this is.

Thank you, Ted. Thank you, Ted. And likewise, I tell you, likewise, this is a friendship that's developed through the years.

We are grateful. Well, thank you. I asked Ted if he wouldn't mind, or Dr. Hildebrandt, if he wouldn't mind when we get to this dispensational premillennialism because I know it is only kind of intellectual to give you some names and some events, but he knows it existentially in terms of his growing up in it and his grandfather being Plymouth Brethren.

And that is pretty amazing. I don't know if any of you come from Plymouth Brethren background. You know, many people at Gordon College and Barrington College of the older group came through Plymouth Brethren backgrounds and may have evolved into other things now.

But boy, there's a large Plymouth Brethren background to Gordon and to Barrington as well. So, but thank you, Ted. We really appreciate this.

So, you have your three groups here. So, dispensational premillennialism to start with. So let me if I could just add one little thing because I'm going to say this about the other two as well.

But dispensational premillennialism really was a mirror image to modernity in a sense. And we'll see this with all three. But in modernity, there was a very optimistic view of the modern world, where the modern world was going, and kind of advancements in human beings.

But in dispensational premillennialism, there was a realistic view that the world wasn't really going in a great direction. And it's very interesting. I don't know if we, Ted and I haven't talked about this, but it's very interesting that he mentioned, you know, Hitler coming to power and so forth.

The dispensationalists were pretty savvy about the evil of the Hitler regime right away, while other Christians, even theologians in Germany, were saying, well, maybe, you know, maybe he's going to bring Germany back and so forth. But the dispensational premillennialists were pretty savvy about this guy is evil. And they had their antenna up for that.

But this is a mirror image of the modern world thinking that history is going somewhere, getting better, and so forth. And so, and I agree to Dr. Hildebrand said that there's a tendency to kind of just disregard dispensational premillennialism by the kind of the intellectuals and everything. But you can disagree with dispensational premillennialism, but you need to respect what they were all about, who the founders were, and why.

And, you know, these people were biblically shaping what they felt was biblical truth. So sometimes this, this tendency to disregard all three of the groups we're going to talk about, but we need to really respect where they came from, what they were biblically, and so forth. So, our thanks to Dr. Hildebrandt for this morning for dispensational premillennialism.

I'll fast forward this. One thing I had, and we've looked at all of this. Okay, we're just doing okay, there we are.

We're coming to the holiness tradition. So, okay. Oh, I had the various dispensations in the lecture.

So now let's see where we are. Okay, so let's just go here. Okay, so in your outline here, we're going to go to the second group now the holiness movement group.

And I'll make the same confession that Dr. Hildebrandt made. He was lecturing about what his growing up was like. Now, I lecture on the holiness movement as a movement that shaped fundamentalism from what I grew up in, too.

So, you are getting firsthand stuff here today, no doubt about that. So, so the holiness movement. Let's say a couple of things about this.

First of all, this is another kind of mirror image movement to the modern world. In the modern world, there is really a stress on morality. And there was a stress on being good people.

And there was a stress on following Jesus. He's our good model. He's a good moral man, and we should be good moral people as well.

So, there was this kind of stress in modernity and in theology about the goodness of human beings, the ability to follow Jesus and live a good moral life, and so forth. So this movement comes along, and this holy movement comes along and is the mirror image of that. Because the holiness movement said, first and foremost, we are not good people, first and foremost, we are sinners in rebellion against God.

And so, we cannot construct kind of a moral system that is going to help the world unless the sin problem is taken care of. So, it was a real mirror image of the modern view of morality and people's ability to be good. Now, one of the persons that we mentioned is some names associated with dispensational premillennialism.

Well, of course, the person who is associated with the holiness movement is John Wesley. And we've talked about Wesley, and those are the dates for John Wesley. This is not John Wesley down here, by the way, so forget that picture, but John Wesley, 1703 to 1791.

So now the basic kind of thesis, in the sense of the Wesleyan tradition, is that there are two great works of grace in the heart of the believer. And the first great work of grace, of course, is justification by faith. So that's the first great step that the Reformation emphasized, of course, and that people like Luther emphasized.

But, but people like Wesley taught that there was also a second work of grace available to the believer. And that work of grace was to be cleansed from sin. Therefore, morality is not something naturally embedded in human beings.

We are sinners in rebellion against God. So, sin has to be taken care of, and it's taken care of as we are justified by grace through faith. But Wesley found that there is this kind of pilgrimage in the Christian life by which one conforms more and more to the image of Christ and by which one is not only saved but sanctified.

So, he taught that initial sanctification begins at the moment of justification. One then grows in God's grace, and one then becomes fully sanctified by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. So, this kind of mirror image, of course, for Wesley was important.

Now, one of the reasons we, I think we've mentioned this in the course before as well, but one of the reasons for this was, well, there were actually two reasons for this, but one of the reasons was Wesley found, he was an ordained Anglican priest, of course, and he found in his ministry that Anglicans were baptized, and 30, and 40, and 50 years later, they didn't know anything more about God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the Bible, and Christian living than they did on the, you know, when they were baptized, usually baptized as infants. There had been no growth, and there had been no development. These are people who call themselves Christians but don't demonstrate any kind of theological or ethical sense of the Christian life.

And so, Wesley kind of began to search the Bible and feel, well, there is something, there is something more here to the Christian life than this, than just living kind of a flat life. So, the second reason why he began to proclaim this, the same with the dispensationalists, is because he knew the Bible. And so he looks at particular Bible biblical texts, like the Matthew 528 text, be perfect as God is perfect, or the Matthew 22 text, love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.

So, he looks at these texts to be perfect and love supremely, love God, love your neighbor as yourself. He said that Jesus' commands are not to be ignored but to be followed. Now, the problem that he encountered, of course, was the word perfect in English does not really get at the heart of the matter in terms of what perfect is in the text.

Because perfect in English is perfect like a diamond. There's a diamond, and there's not one scratch in the diamond. Well, that must be a perfect diamond.

But in the text, of course, perfect means a goal, having the same goal as God, or having the same end in view as God has. Love what God loves and hate what God hates. So Wesley felt when the Bible calls us to perfection in that way, be perfect as God is perfect, Sermon on the Mount, or love God supremely, Matthew 22, because

Christ calls us to that, Wesley felt that that call was meant to be fulfilled in our lives here and now.

So, he called it Christian perfection. So that was the term that he used most, Christian perfection, or he called it perfect love. So, sanctification is Christian perfection or perfect love.

Now, notice he didn't use the term human perfection because this is not the perfection of the human being, but it is Christian perfection. It's the perfection of the work of Christ in the heart of the believer. Now, so there is Wesley.

Now, what happens is that this message has a great appeal to the poor because it's loving God supremely and loving your neighbor as yourself. And when Wesley was asked, well, who is my neighbor? The Bible says, love your neighbor. So, who is my neighbor? Wesley's answer to that was, your neighbor is the poorest among you.

That's your neighbor. That's who you are to love supremely like you love God supremely. So, in the Wesleyan tradition, there was a reaching out to the poor and a reaching out to the poorest of the poor.

And so, you translate that into the American life and American culture, life and culture. This reached out to the poor, and there were a lot of poor people. We've already talked about that in terms of the industrial revolution that was going on here in America as well.

So, there was a lot of poverty. Reaching out to the poor was very important for them. Now, it's interesting that this movement in America spawned a lot of denominations.

So let me just mention some of the denominations that grew out in America, on American soil, and some denominations that grew out of this kind of Wesleyan traditional teaching. Okay, you're familiar with one of them, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1843. Now, remember, who was the founder of the Wesleyan Church? Who was the founder? Do you remember that? You do remember that.

I know you remember that. We've talked about it. Who was the founder? Orange Scott.

Yeah, so Orange. Remember we said who would name their kid Orange? Orange. It's hard to forget that name.

So, Orange. We've already talked about that because it was a church founded as an abolitionist church. We haven't talked about the others, so let me just mention a couple of others.

The next one was the Free Methodist Church, the Free Methodist Church. The Free Methodist Church was founded in 1860. It was also founded on a couple of principles. one principle was it was an abolitionist church, the Free Methodist Church, but it also was founded on the principle of not paying for pews.

Because in those days, in a lot of churches, people paid for their pew and were, you know, depending on the money they gave, that's where they were able to sit in the church. And this Free Methodist Church wanted none of that. A third church you might be familiar with. I might be speaking to some of the choir here; I don't know; maybe some of you are Wesleyan Methodists, maybe some of you are Free Methodists, who knows? You never know.

But a third church that you might be familiar with is the Church of the Nazarene. The Church of the Nazarene was founded in 1895. Here in America, all three of these now are American-formed churches and denominations, so the Church of the Nazarene, 1895.

A fourth church was the Pilgrim Holiness Church, founded in 1922. The Pilgrim Holiness Church, 1922. Again, an American church was founded to teach the teachings of John Wesley.

Now, besides those, there were a lot of other churches. Those are pretty major ones that were founded to teach and preach the Wesleyan doctrine of perfect love. There are a lot of others.

Now, what they did in America was form an association called the Christian Holiness Association. So, the Christian Holiness Association was an association of Wesleyan churches. Now, that has morphed.

That term has now morphed into another term, and that group is now called the Wesleyan Holiness Consortium. So, it's a consortium of churches that preach and teach the doctrine of perfect love. And that, of course, is still going on.

Now, let me say something else about the Holiness tradition. There was also a Reformed kind of emphasis in the Holiness tradition. So there were people like Charles Grandison Finney, who preached about sanctification, or our founder, Gordon, who preached about sanctification.

However, because these people were more kind of from the Reformed tradition, they made a couple of distinctions. One distinction the Reformed people made is they talked about sanctification, but they said that's never going to take care of inbred sin. In other words, inbred sin is always going to be a part of our nature until the day we go to be with the Lord.

We just have to wrestle with that until the day we go to be with the Lord. Whereas the Wesleyan said, no, your inbred sin is taken care of when you are sanctified. Your inbred sin is done away with when you are sanctified.

So that was the Reformed tradition of people like Finney or Gordon. That's one kind of difference of opinion they had. The second difference of opinion they had is when they talked about sanctification, they often talked about it as baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And they talked about it as baptism of the Holy Spirit for empowerment for ministry. The Holy Spirit baptizes the believer and empowers the believer for ministry. Now, it's not as though the Wesleyans didn't talk about that, but for the Wesleyans, the baptism and the work of the Holy Spirit, they didn't talk about it so much as empowerment for ministry as purity of heart.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is purity of heart. It purifies your heart. It helps you to conform to the image of Christ in the life of the believer.

So, it's purity of heart more than empowerment for ministry for the Wesleyan folks. So, they had that kind of Reformed emphasis. People like Finney had that kind of Reformed emphasis, as did A.J. Gordon, Dwight L. Moody, and some others.

A couple of contributions that the Wesleyan tradition has made to American Christianity. Here's a couple. One contribution they made was they made, and I think the dispensational premillennialists kind of did this as well, but the holiness people made, I don't know, it was kind of a call to a radical living out of the discipleship of Jesus, not conforming to the world, but really radically living out the message, the radical message of Jesus, be perfect as God is perfect, love God supremely, love your neighbor supremely.

So, it did kind of provide this radicality in a sense of the message of the gospel. So that's one thing. There's kind of a spiritual vitality here.

A second thing that it did, of course, is that it was a movement that reached out to the poor and made the poor the supreme work of their lives. The ministry to the poor became the supreme work of the lives of many of these Wesleyan groups. And so there was a very strong humanitarian, but humanitarian in the name of Jesus, not just a kind of neutral humanitarian outreach, but a humanitarian outreach in the name of Jesus, love God, love your neighbor.

So that's the second thing it did. And a third thing that this did, which was very interesting and still is true in a sense, this movement, the holiness movement, not only crossed social lines because the poor felt very much attracted to joining these groups as their own churches because they had been ministered to by these groups

but very interesting across gender lines as well. And many, many, many, in many of the Wesleyan denominations, you will find women ministers, women administrators, women preachers, women writers, because they believed, because they understand the ministry of Christ and the work of Christ in the heart of the believer to be for male and female.

And so, you cross this. It's very interesting. Our provost did a faculty forum about two weeks ago, and she's doing a study of women's leadership in institutions.

And I'm not sure if it's just institutions of higher learning, it may be that, but it's also perhaps in ministry. However, what she found as an objective observer doing this work is that the highest percentage of women leaders in higher education is found in Wesleyan schools, which is very interesting. For instance, the president of Asbury College is a woman.

The president of Houghton College is a woman. These are Wesleyan institutions. So, it is very interesting in her study that she finds that the Wesleyan schools, because of their emphasis on women as well as men, have provided some very strong women's leadership.

So, it's an interesting find. I was delighted to be there, and I was delighted to raise my hand and support what she said. So, it was a real joy for me to be able to do that.

So that is the holiness movement. This is kind of a second movement now that is shaping what we are going to call just generally fundamentalism. So, questions about the holiness people.

We've got the dispensational premillennialist people. Now we've got the holiness people. Well, people really did question this business of perfect love, and they got a lot of pushback on that. Not necessarily from Finney or our founder, or Moody, because they believed also in sanctification, but they had questions about some technical matters.

But they had pushback from a lot of Christians who felt that this was going much too far. Perfect love we'll know in heaven, but perfect love for the believer here on earth? You've got to be kidding me. So, sometimes they find the holy people to be too isolationist.

Now, the holy people's response to that was, well, we may be a bit isolationist from the broader mainstream, but we're not isolationist from the poor. We're living with the poor and reaching out to the poor and so forth. So yeah, there was definitely pushback, no doubt.

No doubt about that. Something else about the holiness folks? Do you have any other questions about the dispensational premillennial folks while we have Dr. Hildebrandt with us doing the taping? Any questions about those two? Okay, the third, let me just mention it and then we'll have to let it go and start this again on Monday. Third is Pentecostalism.

So, your third movement is Pentecostalism. Let me just say this. This is a mirror image of the modern world.

So that's all I have time to say here. It's a mirror image. Why is it a mirror image? Because the modern world, especially classical Protestant liberalism, emphasizes experience and experiencing God.

And remember, we talked about Friedrich Schleiermacher and Schleiermacher's great emphasis on religious experience. Pentecostalism is going to be a mirror image to that because Pentecostalism is going to say that kind of experience comes only through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. You can't have that kind of experience just by being a good human being or just by being a good moral person who wants to love God, know God, and so forth.

Pentecostals came along and said that experience is possible, but only through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. So, they are going to really emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit in the person to bring the person to Christ and live out this experience as they should. Okay, we'll pick up on Pentecostalism.

This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 25 on Fundamentalism and the Wesleyan Holiness Tradition.