

Hyperdispensationalism

7 Wikipedia Articles

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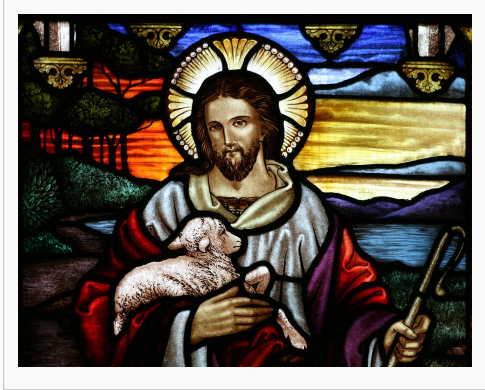
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Hyperdispensationalism

Part of a series on

Christianity



 Christianity portal

Grace Movement Dispensationalism (Hyper-dispensationalism, Mid-Acts Dispensationalism.,^[1] ultra-dispensationalism,^[2] or more rarely "Bullingerism"^[3]) is a Protestant doctrine that views the teachings of the Apostle Paul both as unique from earlier apostles and as foundational for the church, a perspective sometimes characterized by proponents as the "Pauline Distinctive."^[4] E. W. Bullinger (1837–1913), an Anglican clergyman and scholar, is the best known early expositor of Acts 28 hyper-dispensationalism, although the ideas trace back further to John Nelson Darby (1800–1882).

Hyper-dispensationalism is rejected by mainstream dispensationalism, which holds that the Church began at Pentecost^[5] long prior to Paul's conversion to Christianity as described early in the New Testament book entitled "Acts of the Apostles." Popular dispensationalist Harry A. Ironside (1876–1951) declared Bullingerism an "absolutely Satanic perversion of the truth."^[6] Anti-dispensationalists simultaneously admire hyper-dispensationalism as a "consistent Dispensationalism" and condemn it as much like a "cult or sect."^[7] Evangelicals reject adherents as "divisive."^[8]

Except for a few obscure dissertations, there has been no substantial investigation of the hyper-dispensational position and its strengths. Only superficial assertions of the Acts 2 position is posited as an answer yet without any real engagement with the answers given by the more consistent dispensationalists. See the Berean Bible Society's web site where most all of J.C. O'Hair's writings are archived in which he answers his opponents and documents their responses or lack thereof. The clearest scholarly references to hyper-dispensationalism are made by Charles C. Ryrie^[9] and Charles F. Baker.^[10]

Advocates of hyper-dispensationalism use the term grace movement dispensationalism, and reject the prefix "hyper" or "ultra" as pejorative (often considering it derogatory or misinforming). Within the United States, advocates often refer to themselves as members of the "Grace Movement,"^[11] and affiliate with the [Grace Gospel Fellowship], a church association, and its Grace Bible College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, or the more conservative Berean Bible Fellowship.

General views

Hyper-dispensationalism holds that the early Christian Church lost "four basic truths" starting near the end of the Apostle Paul's ministry.^[12] The four truths are (in order of loss):^[13]

- The Distinctive Message and Ministry of the Apostle Paul
- The Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church, the Body of Christ
- The Difference between Israel and the Church, the Body of Christ
- Justification by Faith Alone, in Christ Alone.

The truths, advocates say, were gradually recovered in reverse order starting during the Protestant Reformation;^[14] for example, Martin Luther is credited with recovery of "justification by faith" and John Nelson Darby with "Church Truth."

Hyper-dispensationalists reject water baptism and Holy Communion,^{[15][16][17]} which divides them from mainstream dispensationalists who are often Baptists, like W. A. Criswell,^[18] or in earlier times Presbyterians^{[19][20]} like James H. Brookes. So instead of water baptism, they believe in the baptism by the holy spirit, which occurs when they accept Christ as their Savior.

Hyper-dispensationalists are not monolithic nor homogenous. There are two main positions. Within each camp there exists minor variations. The two main positions are Mid Acts and Acts 28. While the Acts 2 position tries to distance itself from its more consistent dispensational brothers, they are all true dispensationalists. Furthermore, the differences separating the Mid Acts position from the Acts 28 position are just as great as those separating the Acts 2 position from its more consistent dispensational brothers.

Divisions

There are large irreconcilable differences between the Mid-Acts position and the Acts 28 position just as there are between them and the Acts 2 position. They differentiate among themselves by terminology reflecting when the normative portion of Paul's ministry to the church began. The most obvious result of this differentiation is an absence of the practice of water baptism which is considered as a ritual for Israel under the last dispensation and not for the body of Christ in this present dispensation. Less obvious is what part of the New Testament is understood as being directly written to the church. Mid-Acts types take all of Paul's epistles to be directly written to the church (thus accepting the practice of the Lord's Supper as for this dispensation) while the Acts 28 position takes only Paul's prison epistles (those written while in prison) to be directly applicable to the church today (denying the Lord's Supper for today).

Bullinger held that Paul's authoritative teaching began after the conclusion of the book of Acts, a viewpoint now characterized as "Acts 28" dispensationalism (chapter 28 being the concluding chapter of the book), a position he solidified in cooperation with Charles H. Welch.^[21] Other writers holding this position include Sir Robert Anderson, Oscar M. Baker, and Otis Q. Sellers. Acts 28 Dispensationalists distinguish themselves with their belief that today's Church is exclusively revealed in Paul's later writings, in the so-called "Prison Epistles."^[22] Acts 28 Dispensationalists tend to reject all ordinances including the Lord's Supper.^[23]

The so-called "mid-Acts" position was developed independently later by J.C. O'Hair followed later by Cornelius R. Stam and Charles F. Baker, among others, and reflects their position that Paul's normative ministry began in either the ninth (Stam) or thirteenth chapter (O'Hair, Baker). Some very few independent spirits have staked the beginning of the church in a few other chapters but such differences are technical preferences rather than disagreements. The hallmark is that the church is served uniquely with Paul's ministry and upon that there is complete and total agreement. Acts is seen as a transitional period between dispensations and the Mid Acts position does not insert an extra dispensation there contra Ryrie. The mid-Acts position accepts the Lord's Supper but rejects water baptism.^[24] There is only one baptism made without hands where the believer is baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13) which is held in contradistinction to Christ baptizing believing Israel in Acts 2 with the Holy

Spirit. This pouring out baptism of the Holy Spirit is in fulfillment of the Old Testament promise of the new covenant to Israel. Thus it has nothing to do with the newly revealed Mystery to and through the apostle Paul who is not sent out until years later with the new ministry to the Gentiles to establish a new church which is composed of both believing Israelites and believing Gentiles, and not just Israelites (which includes proselytes to Judaism) as in Acts 2. This new church is not obligated to any Jewish rituals (like water baptism) according to the determination of the Jerusalem council recorded in Acts 15.

John Nelson Darby, sometimes called the father of dispensationalism, began the church at Pentecost, but his dispensational scheme is not like Scofield's and later American dispensationalists. Nor is it like that of the hyperdispensationalists. The church does not begin with a new dispensation for Darby. One can study R.A. Huebner, who sees the Church's advent at Acts 2, to get a better understanding of Darby's scheme of dispensations which is altogether a horse of another color. Miles J. Stanford, who drew heavily upon Darby's soteriology of "spiritual growth" and who considered himself a "classic Pauline dispensationalist", more-or-less held to the seven-dispensations (ages) scheme of Scofield/Chafer/etc.

If Darby appears to be followed more closely by hyperdispensationalism, it is because Darby's dispensationalism and hyperdispensationalism is more consistent than American Acts 2 dispensationalism in marking Scripture's distinction between national Israel and the church which is Christ's body.

"if Christianity were the new covenant, which it is not, the Holy Ghost is the seal of faith now as circumcision was then. Matthew 28 was never carried out. The mission to the Gentiles was given up to Paul explicitly (Gal. 2) who was not sent to baptize..."^[25]

"the outward symbol and instrument of unity is the partaking of the Lord's supper - for we being many are one 'bread, one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.' And what does Paul declare to be the true intent and testimony of that rite? That whensoever 'ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.' Here then are found the character and life of the church"^[26]

Mainstream dispensationalists are referred to as the "Acts 2" position in the spectrum, because that chapter describes the events at Pentecost with which they begin the church.

Notes

[1] "Dispensational Theology" by Charles F. Baker, page 16, Grace Publications, 1971]

[2] Eleventh Avenue Church (<http://www.eleventhavenuechurch.com/ultra.html>)

[9] "Dispensationalism Today by Charles C. Ryrie, pages 194-195, Chicago, Moody Press, 1965

[10] "Dispensational Theology" by Charles F. Baker, page 16, Grace Publications, 1971]

[11] <http://www.biblicaladvancedbasics.com/pdf/Grace.pdf>

[25] J. N. Darby, "The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby, Ecclesiastical Writings » The Collected Writings Of J. N. Darby, Ecclesiastical No. 4, Volume 20: A Reply To Defence Of The Doctrine Of Baptismal Regeneration" (<http://www.plymouthbrethren.org/article/10884>)

[26] J. N. Darby, Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ (<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/ECCLESIA/01002E.html>)

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- Stam, Cornelius R., *Things That Differ*, 1951, Berean Bible Society, Germantown, WI
- Bullinger, E.W., *The Foundations of Dispensational Truth*, Reprinted 1972, Samuel Bagster & Sons LTD 72 Marylebone Lane, London. W.I.
- Baker, Charles F., *A Dispensational Theology*, 1971, Grace Bible College Publications, Grand Rapids, MI

External links

- Writings and recordings of Acts 28 dispensationalist Charles H. Welch (<http://www.charleswelch.net/>)
 - Acts 28 dispensationalist Oscar M. Baker's writings (<http://www.tftmin.org/>)
 - GraceImpact.org (<http://www.graceimpact.org/>) by Richard Jordan
 - 85 Pages in the Bible (<http://www.85pagesinthebible.com/>) Comprehensive survey of the divisions of Scripture from the Post-Acts dispensational perspective
 - Berean Bible Society (<http://www.bereanbiblesociety.org/history.html>) History of the Grace Movement
 - God's Invitation to the World (<http://www.godinvitesyou.com>) A clear presentation of the Dispensational Approach to Scripture.
 - Grace Gospel Fellowship (<http://www.ggfusa.org/>)
 - Magnified Word (<http://www.magnifiedword.com/index2.htm>) site maintained by a former "mid-Acts" hyperdispensationalist adherent
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E. W. Bullinger

Ethelbert William Bullinger



E. W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

Born	15 December 1837 Canterbury, Kent, England
Died	6 June 1913 (aged 75) London
Education	King's College London
Occupation	clergyman, Biblical scholar, and theologian
Known for	The Companion Bible

Ethelbert William Bullinger AKC (December 15, 1837 – June 6, 1913) was an Anglican clergyman, Biblical scholar, and ultradispensationalist theologian.

Life and work

He was born in Canterbury, Kent, England, the youngest of five children of William and Mary (Bent) Bullinger.^[1] His family traced their ancestry back to Heinrich Bullinger, the Swiss Reformer.^[2]

His formal theological training was at King's College London from 1860–1861, earning an Associate's degree.^[3] After graduation, on October 15, 1861, he married Emma Dobson, thirteen years his senior.^[4] He later received a Doctor of Divinity degree in 1881 from Archibald Campbell Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury who cited Bullinger's "eminent service in the Church in the department of Biblical criticism."^[5]

Bullinger's career in the Church of England spanned 1861 until 1888. He began as associate curate in the parish of St. Mary Magdalene, Bermondsey in 1861,^[4] and was ordained as a priest in the Church of England in 1862.^[6] He served as parish curate in Tittleshall from 1863–1866; Notting Hill from 1866–1869; Leytonstone, 1869–1870; then Walthamstow until he became vicar of the newly established parish of St. Stephen's in 1874. He resigned his vicarage in 1888.^[7]

In the spring of 1867, Bullinger became clerical secretary of the Trinitarian Bible Society, a position he would hold till his death in 1913.^[8] Bullinger was editor of a monthly journal *Things to Come* subtitled *A Journal of Biblical Literature, with Special Reference to Prophetic Truth. The Official Organ of Prophetic Conferences* for over 20

years (1894–1915) and contributed many articles.

In the great Anglican debate of the Victorian era, he was a Low Churchman rather than High Church sacerdotalist.

His three major works were

- *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament* (1877) ISBN 0-8254-2096-2;
- *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (1898) ISBN 0-8010-0559-0
- Primary editor of *The Companion Bible* (published in 6 parts, 1909–1922) ISBN 0-8254-2177-2. It was completed after his death by his associates.

These works and many others remain in print (2007).

Bullinger's friends included well-known Zionist Dr. Theodor Herzl. This was a personal friendship, but accorded with Bullinger's belief in a Biblical distinction between the Church and the Jewish People.

Trinitarian Bible Society

In 1867, at age 29, Bullinger accepted the office of clerical secretary of the Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS), an office which he exercised, with rare lapses due to illness in his later years, until his death. Accomplishments of TBS during his secretariat include:

- Completion and publication of a Hebrew version of the New Testament under a TBS contract with Christian David Ginsburg after the demise of Isaac Salkinson.
- Publication of Ginsburg's first edition of the Tanakh (*Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*).
- Formation of the Brittany Evangelical Mission Society under Pasteur LeCoat and translation of the Bible into the Breton language.^[9]
- First-ever Protestant Portuguese Reference Bible.
- Distribution of Spanish-language Bibles in Spain after the Spanish Revolution of 1868.

Bullinger was also a practiced musician. As part of his support for the Breton Mission, he collected and harmonized several previously untranscribed Breton hymns on his visits to Trémel, Brittany.

Bullinger's TBS workload in his later years was reduced by the assistance of Henry Charles Bowker and Charles Welch. Their assistance enabled him to focus on *The Companion Bible* in his final years. Bullinger and Ginsburg parted ways, and another edition of Tanakh was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Theology

Bullinger's views were often unique, and sometimes controversial. He is so closely tied to what is now called "hyperdispensationalism" that it is sometimes referred to as Bullingerism.^[10] Noted dispensationalist Harry A. Ironside (1876–1951) declared Bullingerism an "absolutely Satanic perversion of the truth"^[11] Bullingerism differs from mainstream dispensationalism with regard to the beginning of the church. Mainstream dispensationalism holds that the Church began at Pentecost as described early in the New Testament book entitled "Acts of the Apostles". In stark contrast, Bullinger held that *the Church*, which the Apostle Paul revealed as the *Body of Christ*, began after the close of Acts,^[12] only revealed in the Prison Epistles of the Apostle Paul.^[13] Other dispensationalists (often described as "mid-Acts" dispensationalists, i.e., Acts 9 or 13) hold that the Church, the Body of Christ, began at or shortly after Saul's conversion.

Bullinger described dispensations as divine "administrations" or "arrangements" wherein God deals at distinct time periods and with distinct groups of people "on distinct principles, and the doctrine relating to each must be kept distinct". He emphasizes that "Nothing but confusion can arise from reading into one dispensation that which relates to another."^[14] and lists seven dispensations:

Dispensational Scheme of Bullinger						
Edenic state of Innocence	Period "without law"	Period under the Law	Period of Grace	Epoch of Judgment	Millennial Age	The Eternal State of Glory
Genesis 1-3 ended with the expulsion from Eden	Genesis 4 to Exodus 19 ended with the flood and judgment on Babel	Exodus 20 to Acts 28 ended at the rejection by Israel of the grace of God at the end of Acts	Church History will end at the Day of the Lord	Tribulation will end at the destruction of the Antichrist	Rev 20:4-6 will end with the destruction of Satan	Rev 20-22 will not end

Outside of ultradispensationalism, many other examples of Bullinger's unique views can be found. For example, Bullinger argues that Jesus was crucified with four, not just two, criminals.^[15] Bullinger argued for mortality of the soul, the cessation of the soul between death and resurrection.^[16] While Bullinger did not express any views concerning the final state of the lost, many of his followers did hold to annihilationism. Purportedly, Bullinger was also a member of the Universal Zetetic Society.^[1]

Footnotes

- [1] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, p.27
- [2] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, p. 28-29
- [3] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, p. 35
- [4] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, p. 39
- [5] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, pp.62
- [6] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, p.40, states July 6, 1862.
- [7] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, pp.42-47, 55, 65
- [8] *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*, Carey, Juanita, 2000, pp. 71-73
- [10] p. 1120

References

- Carey, Juanita S. (1988). *E. W. Bullinger: A Biography*. Kregel Publications. ISBN 0-8254-2372-4.

External links

- E.W. Bullinger Books Website (<http://www.ewbullingerbooks.com/>)
- E.W. Bullinger Books online (http://levendwater.org/frameset.htm?books4.htm&books4_inhoudsopgave.htm) (html & pdf)
- The Companion Bible In PDF Format... Free Downloads (<http://www.companion-bible.com/>)
- Appendixes to The Companion Bible (http://levendwater.org/companion/frameset.htm?index_companion.html&inhoudsopgave_companion.htm) (All 198 appendices to the Bible)
- Google has a limited preview of The Companion Bible (<http://books.google.com/books?vid=ISBN0825422035>)
- The Companion Bible (Condensed) on line (<http://www.companionbiblecondensed.com/>)
- The Companion Bible Notes/Appendices in software module format (<http://www.bibleanalyzer.com/companion.html>) (not PDF images. Fully searchable)
- E.W. Bullinger: Did Jephthah really sacrifice his daughter? (<http://www.jba.gr/Articles/jbadec06b.htm>)
- Number in Scripture (http://philologos.org/__eb-nis/)
- E.W. Bullinger: The Christian's Greatest Need (<http://www.bibleunderstanding.com/greatestneed.htm>)
- E.W. Bullinger: Number in Scripture Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance (http://philologos.org/__eb-nis/) (4th Edition, Revised)

- E.W. Bullinger: The Rich Man and Lazarus - the Intermediate State (http://www.bibleunderstanding.com/richmanandlazarus_contents.htm)
- E.W. Bullinger: Great Cloud of Witnesses (<http://www.peterwade.com/articles/bullinger/cloud00.shtml>)
- E.W. Bullinger: The Two Natures in the Child of God (<http://www.bibleunderstanding.com/twonatures.htm>)
- E.W. Bullinger: The Witness of the Stars (http://www.heavendwellers.com/hd_witness_of_the_stars.htm)
- E.W. Bullinger, Critical Lexicon Concordance EngGreek (<http://www.archive.org/details/Criticallexiconconcordanceengreeknt.5thed1908>) NT. 5thed, (1908).

For more information on Bullinger's dispensationalism go here : E.W. Bullinger's "How to Enjoy the Bible - Rightly Dividing the Word as to its Times and Dispensations" (http://philologos.org/_eb-htetb/133.htm#2d) and here : E.W. Bullinger's "How to Enjoy the Bible" (http://philologos.org/_eb-htetb/).

John Darby (evangelist)

John Nelson Darby (18 November 1800 – 29 April 1882) was an Anglo-Irish evangelist, and an influential figure among the original Plymouth Brethren. He is considered to be the father of modern Dispensationalism and Futurism in the English vernacular. He produced a translation of the Bible based on the Hebrew and Greek texts called *The Holy Scriptures: A New Translation from the Original Languages* by J. N. Darby.

Biography

Early years

John Nelson Darby was born in Westminster, London, and christened at St. Margaret's on 3 March 1801. He came from an Anglo-Irish landowning family seated at Leap Castle, King's County, Ireland. He was the nephew of Admiral Henry D'Esterre Darby and his middle name was given in recognition of his godfather and family friend, Lord Nelson.



John Nelson Darby.

Darby was educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Dublin where he graduated Classical Gold Medallist in 1819. Darby embraced Christianity during his studies, although there is no evidence that he formally studied theology. He joined an inn of court, but felt that being a lawyer was inconsistent with his religious belief. He therefore chose ordination as an Anglican clergyman in Ireland, "lest he should sell his talents to defeat justice." In 1825, Darby was ordained deacon of the established Church of Ireland and the following year as priest.

Middle years

Darby became a curate in the Church of Ireland parish of Delgany, County Wicklow, and distinguished himself by convincing Roman Catholic peasants in the Calary area to abandon the Catholic Church. The well-known gospel tract "How the Lost Sheep was Saved" ^[1] gives his personal account of a visit he paid to a dying shepherd boy in this area, painting a vivid picture of what his work among the poor people involved. He later claimed to have won hundreds of converts to the Church of Ireland. However, the conversions ended when William Magee, the Archbishop of Dublin, ruled that converts were obliged to swear allegiance to George IV as rightful king of Ireland.

Darby resigned his curacy in protest. Soon after, in October 1827, he fell from a horse and was seriously injured. He later stated that it was during this time that he began to believe that the "kingdom" described in the Book of Isaiah and elsewhere in the Old Testament was entirely different from the Christian church.

Over the next five years, he developed the principles of his mature theology—most notably his conviction that the very notion of a clergyman was a sin against the Holy Spirit, because it limited the recognition that the Holy Spirit could speak through any member of the Church. During this time he joined an interdenominational meeting of believers (including Anthony Norris Groves, Edward Cronin, J. G. Bellett, and Francis Hutchinson) who met to "break bread" together in Dublin as a symbol of their unity in Christ. By 1832, this group had grown and began to identify themselves as a distinct Christian assembly. As they traveled and began new assemblies in Ireland and England, they formed the movement now known as the Plymouth Brethren.

It is believed that John Nelson Darby left the Church of Ireland around 1831.^[2] He participated in the 1831–33 Powerscourt Conference, an annual meeting of Bible students organized by his friend,^[3] the wealthy widow Lady Powerscourt (Theodosia Wingfield Powerscourt). At the conference Darby publicly described his ecclesiological and eschatological views, including the pretribulation rapture.^[4] For about 40 years William Kelly (1821–1906) was his chief interpreter and continued to be a staunch supporter until his own death. Kelly in his work "John Nelson Darby as I knew him" stated that "a saint more true to Christ's name and word I never knew or heard of".

Darby saw the invention of the telegraph as a sign that the end of the world was approaching; he called the telegraph an invention of Cain and a harbinger of Armageddon.^[1]

Darby defended Calvinist ^[5] doctrines when they came under attack from within the Church in which he once served. His biographer Goddard ^[6] states, "Darby indicates his approval of the doctrine of the Anglican Church as expressed in Article XVII of the Thirty-Nine Articles" on the subject of election and predestination. Darby said:

"For my own part, I soberly think Article XVII to be as wise, perhaps I might say the wisest and best condensed human statement of the view it contains that I am acquainted with. I am fully content to take it in its literal and grammatical sense. I believe that predestination to life is the eternal purpose of God, by which, before the foundations of the world were laid, He firmly decreed, by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and destruction those whom He had chosen in Christ out of the human race, and to bring them, through Christ, as vessels made to honour, to eternal salvation." ^[7]



Gravestone of John Nelson Darby

Later years

Darby traveled widely in Europe and Britain in the 1830s and 1840s, and established many Brethren assemblies. He gave 11 significant lectures in Geneva in 1840 on the hope of the church (*L'attente actuelle de l'église*). These established his reputation as a leading interpreter of biblical prophecy. The beliefs he disseminated then are still being propagated (in various forms) at such places as Dallas Theological Seminary and by authors and preachers such as Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye.

In 1848, Darby became involved in a complex dispute over the proper method for maintaining shared standards of discipline in different assemblies that resulted in a split between Open Brethren, which maintained a congregational form of government and Exclusive Brethren. After that time, he was recognized as the dominant figure among the Exclusives, who also came to be known as "Darbyite" Brethren. He made at least 5 missionary journeys to North America between 1862 and 1877. He worked mostly in New England, Ontario, and the Great Lakes region, but took one extended journey from Toronto to Sydney by way of San Francisco, Hawaii, and New Zealand. A Geographical Index of his letters is currently available and lists where he traveled.^[8] He used his classical skills to translate the Bible from Hebrew and Greek texts into several languages. In English he wrote a Synopsis of the Bible and many other scholarly religious articles. He wrote hymns and poems, the most famous being, "Man of Sorrows".^[9] He was also a Bible Commentator. He declined however to contribute to the compilation of the Revised Version of the King James Bible.^[10]

He died 1882 in Sundridge House, Bournemouth and is buried in Bournemouth, Dorset, England.^[11]

Later influence

If one accepted Darby's view of the secret rapture... Benjamin Wills Newton pointed out, then many Gospel passages must be "renounced as not properly ours."...this is precisely what Darby was prepared to do.

Too traditional to admit that biblical authors might have contradicted each other, and too rationalist to admit that the prophetic maze defied penetration, Darby attempted a resolution of his exegetical dilemma by distinguishing between Scripture intended for the Church and Scripture intended for Israel...

The task of the expositor of the Bible was, in a phrase that became the hallmark of dispensationalism, "rightly dividing the word of truth".

From "The Roots of Fundamentalism:
British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930" (1970)
by Ernest R. Sandeen, University of Chicago Press
ISBN 0-22-73467-6, p. 65-67

Darby is noted in the theological world as the father of "dispensationalism", later made popular in the United States by Cyrus Scofield's Scofield Reference Bible.

Charles Henry Mackintosh, 1820–1896, with his popular style spread Darby's teachings to humbler elements in society and may be regarded as the journalist of the Brethren Movement. Mackintosh popularised Darby, although not his hyperdispensational approach,^[12] more than any other Brethren author. In the early twentieth century, the Brethren's teachings, through Margaret E. Barber, influenced the Little Flock of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee^[13]

Darby is sometimes credited with originating the "secret rapture" theory wherein Christ will suddenly remove His bride, the Church, from this world before the judgments of the tribulation. Some claim that this book was the origin of the idea of the "rapture." Dispensationalist beliefs about the fate of the Jews and the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Israel put dispensationalists at the forefront of Christian Zionism, because "God is able to graft them in again," and they believe that in His grace he will do so according to their understanding of Old Testament prophecy. They believe that, while the ways of God may change, His purposes to bless Israel will never be forgotten, just as He has shown unmerited favour to the Church, He will do so to a remnant of Israel to fulfill all the promises made to the genetic seed of Abraham.

Criticism

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle and contemporary of Darby published criticism of Darby and Brethrenism.^[14] His main criticism was that Darby and the Plymouth Brethren rejected the vicarious purpose of Christ's obedience as well as imputed righteousness. He viewed these of such importance and so central to the gospel that it led him to this statement about the rest of their belief.

James Grant wrote: "With the deadly heresies entertained and taught by the Plymouth Brethren, in relation to some of the most momentous of all the doctrines of the gospel, and to which I have adverted at some length, I feel assured that my readers will not be surprised at any other views, however unscriptural and pernicious they may be, which the Darbyites have embraced and zealously seek to propagate"^[15]

Works

- *The Holy Bible a new translation by J.N. Darby, a parallel edition*, Bible Truth Publishers: Addison, Illinois.
- The Writings of J. N. Darby ^[16] courtesy of Stem Publishing ^[17]
- The Holy Scriptures (A New Translation from the Original Languages by J. N. Darby) ^[18] courtesy of Stem Publishing ^[17]
- A Letter on Free Will by J.N. Darby, Elberfeld, 23 October 1861 ^[19]
- The Collected Writings Of J. N. Darby, Ecclesiastical No. 1, Volume 1: The Character Of Office In The Present Dispensation ^[20]

References

- [2] The year in which Darby left the Church of Ireland, a branch of the Anglican Church, is not certain but a consensus of opinion is that it was possibly around 1831. Searches for formal documentation of his resignation have been made in the Church of Ireland archives, but nothing has been found.
- [3] It is widely believed that Darby and Lady Powerscourt were romantically attached but friends persuaded him that any marriage may prove a distraction.
- [4] page 82
- [5] page 46
- [6] Goddard, "The Contribution of Darby," p. 86
- [7] J. N. Darby, "The Doctrine of the Church of England at the Time of the Reformation," (<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/DOCTRINE/03001E.html>)
- [9] The Man of Sorrows (<http://www.plymouthbrethren.com/jndms.htm>)
- [10] John Nelson Darby Biography (http://www.museumstuff.com/learn/topics/John_Nelson_Darby::sub::Biography)
- [16] <http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/>
- [17] <http://www.stempublishing.com/>
- [18] <http://www.stempublishing.com/bible-darby/>
- [19] <http://www.inthebeloved.org/letterfreewill.htm>
- [20] <http://www.plymouthbrethren.org/article/10884>
- *The Watching Servant*, Words of Truth: Belfast, Northern Ireland
- *John Nelson Darby – as I knew him*, William Kelly, Words of Truth: Belfast, Northern Ireland

External links

- My Brethren (<http://www.mybrethren.org/bios/framjnd.htm>), a biography of J. N. Darby
- The writings of John Nelson Darby (<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/>) courtesy of Stem Publishing (<http://www.stempublishing.com/>)
- The Exclusive Brethren (<http://www.theexclusivebrethren.com/>), the only site endorsed by Taylor 'Exclusive Brethren'
- Darby & Other Resources (http://www.plymouthbrethren.org/byauthor/5/john_nelson_darby)
- J.N. Darby's Early Years (<http://www.pre-trib.org/article-view.php?id=104>)

- Correspondence between Darby and Rev. James Kelly of the Church of England – 5 megabytes (<http://ia311507.us.archive.org/3/items/theclaimsofthech00kelluoft/theclaimsofthech00kelluoft.pdf>)
- Darbyism Its Rise, Progress & Development (<http://www.bruederbewegung.de/pdf/grovesdarbyism.pdf>)
- Papers of John Nelson Darby (<http://archives.li.man.ac.uk/ead/search/?operation=summary&rsid=203286&firstrec=1&numreq=20&highlight=1&hitposition=0>) – Archive of Darby's personal papers at the John Rylands University Library, Manchester, England
- Continuing church truth taught by J. N. Darby and his contemporaries (<http://www.biblecounsel.homestead.com/>)
- Roy A. Huebner: Detailed historian regarding J. N. Darby, early Brethren, their theology, and dispensational truth (<http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com/>)
- Synopsis of the Books of the Bible by John Nelson Darby (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/cmt/darby/index.htm>)

Charles Caldwell Ryrie

Charles Caldwell Ryrie (born March 2 1925) is a Christian writer and theologian who served as professor of systematic theology and dean of doctoral studies at Dallas Theological Seminary and as president and professor at what is now Cairn University. He is the editor of *The Ryrie Study Bible* by Moody Publishers, containing more than 10,000 of Dr. Ryrie's explanatory notes. First published in 1978, it has sold more than 2 million copies.^[1] He is a notable advocate of premillennial dispensationalism.

Early life and family

Ryrie was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and grew up in Alton, Illinois. After graduating from high school in 1942, he attended Stony Brook School on Long Island for one semester, where he became acquainted with headmaster Frank E. Gaebelein. Ryrie attended Haverford College, intending to enter a banking career, but soon thereafter dedicated his life to Christian ministry, and left for Dallas Theological Seminary. Haverford conferred his B.A. (1946) on the basis of his studies at Dallas. A year later, he earned his Th.M. (1947), and two years following that his Th.D. (1949). He went on to complete his Doctor of Philosophy (1953) at the University of Edinburgh.

Academic career

Ryrie joined the faculty of Westmont College in 1948 and eventually became dean of men and chairman of the Department of Biblical Studies and Philosophy. He returned to Dallas Theological Seminary in 1953 to teach systematic theology, but left for several years to serve as president of Philadelphia College of the Bible, from 1958 to 1962. Upon returning to Dallas once again, he became dean of doctoral studies until his retirement in 1983.

Publications

Two of his books (*The Miracles of Our Lord* and *So Great Salvation*) garnered the Gold Medallion Book Award. Other publications include:

- "Dispensationalism Today," 1965; The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. NOTE: This is an older version of the below book reference which may have been revised.
 - "A Survey of Bible Doctrine" Moody Publishers, 1972 (First Edition), 1989 (11th Edition) ISBN 0-8024-8438-7 NOTE: This title is also available in electronic version for use with, and sold by: Logos Bible Software.
 - "Ryrie's Concise Guide To The Bible", Here's Life Publishers, 1983 ISBN 0-685-09716-1 [Paperback] NOTE: This title is also available in electronic version for use with, and sold by: Logos Bible Software.
 - *Basic Theology*, Moody Publishers, 1986, ISBN 0-89693-814-X
-

- *Balancing the Christian Life*, Moody Publishers, 1994 ISBN 0-8024-0887-7
- *Dispensationalism*, Moody Publishers, 1995 ISBN 0-8024-2187-3
- *So Great Salvation: What It Means to Believe in Jesus Christ*, Moody Publishers, 1997 ISBN 0-8024-7818-2
- *Ryrie's Practical Guide to Communicating Bible Doctrine*, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005 ISBN 0-8054-4063-1

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[1] http://www.moodypublishers.com/pub_authorDetail.aspx?id=41798&aid=511 Charles C Ryrie

Charles Henry Welch

Charles Henry Welch (called *C. H. Welch*) (1880-1967) was a Christian dispensational theologian, writer and speaker.

During his lifetime he produced over 60 books, booklets and pamphlets, and more than 500 audio recordings. His most significant works are 56 bound volumes of the Berean Expositor,^[1] a Bible study magazine edited by Mr. Welch from 1906 until his death in 1967, and 10 volumes of The Alphabetical Analysis.^[2] He also taught his dispensational approach of the Bible with lectures throughout Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Canada and the United States.

Welch promoted the Acts 28^[3] position which he believed "is indeed of the utmost dispensational importance to the believer today. It marks a frontier."^[3] He believed the dispensational truths of the Acts period (29 - 62 AD) differed greatly from those written after the Acts period, (see Meeting with Dr. Bullinger below).

Early life

C. H. Welch was born in London, England on April 25, 1880.^[4] When he left school at 14 Welch entered the leatherwork trade, his father's occupation, and remained in the industry until 1904, age 24.

In addition, his early years were influenced by the study of art at the Bermondsey Settlement.

From November 1900, he became a Christian after hearing an address by Dr. L. W. Munhall, (M.A.) titled "Sceptics and the Bible". He was amazed as he "listened to a man who was most evidently sane and scholarly, actually maintaining that the Scriptures were true!"^[5]

Bible Training College

After his conversion to Christianity, young Welch actively attended Church and various Christian meetings and lectures. During one of the classes he received a prize for writing "The Figurative Language of Scripture". Afterwards Welch was offered a position at the Bible Training College of London as part-time General Secretary. While attending the college he studied advanced Greek and Hebrew, while teaching an elementary Greek class. It was during this time that Welch began to develop his dispensational approach to the Bible.

As his knowledge of the Scriptures grew, Welch disagreed with the direction of the Bible Training College which was forming a primitive church based upon the Sermon on the Mount and Acts chapters 1 and 2. As a result of this conflict, Welch resigned in 1907 and began meeting with a small Bible study group. It was during this time that he created The Berean Expositor.

Meeting with Dr. E.W. Bullinger

After his resignation from the Bible Training College in 1908, Welch read an article in Dr. Bullinger's "Things To Come" which he believed contained an anomaly; namely, if Israel had been set aside in God's plans at Acts 28:24-28 (approximately 62 AD), then the epistles of the New Testament written before and after this event should reflect such a change.

Welch wrote to Bullinger and soon met with him to discuss the relation of Paul's 14 epistles to the boundary line of Acts 28. Although Bullinger had written many times previously concerning Israel's setting aside in God's dealings at Acts 28, he had continued to write about the New Testament epistles without reconciling the fact that some were written before, and some after Acts chapter 28.

At this meeting, Welch put forth the idea to the man for whom he had so much respect. Mr. Welch records that after pondering his proposal, Dr. Bullinger declared, "That scraps half the books I've written. But we want the Truth, and the Truth is in what you have said."^[6] Dr. Bullinger agreed, the place of Acts 28 indeed had an important bearing on interpreting the New Testament. Then they both "discussed implications that arise from observing the relation of Paul's epistles to that boundary line" as follows: ^[6]

Epistles Written Before Acts 28	Epistles Written After Acts 28
Galatians	Ephesians
1 Thessalonians	Philippians
2 Thessalonians	Colossians
Hebrews	Philemon
1 Corinthians	1 Timothy
2 Corinthians	Titus
Romans	2 Timothy

Although Dr. Bullinger died four and half years after the meeting, his last book titled: "Foundations of Dispensational Truth" ^[7] reflected his understanding and acceptance of the division of the Pauline epistles written before and after the Acts 28 dividing line.

After the meeting

When Dr. Bullinger was writing The Companion Bible there was little time to continue his *Things to Come* journal. As a result, he asked Welch to take over as editor. His first article was titled, "The Unity of the Spirit (Eph 4:3): What is it?" ^[8] He continued to write dispensational expositions in the journal until it ceased publication in 1915.

Although incomplete at his death, Dr. Bullinger's Companion Bible ^[9] was fully published in 1922. Within The Companion Bible's appendixes is written an exposition by C.H. Welch titled, *The Eight Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven in Matt. 13, Appendix 145*. Although Welch wrote 24 more articles for the Appendixes related to the Acts 28 position, this was the only article published. Perplexed, Welch wrote to the committee in charge of completing The Companion Bible for an explanation. Their response was: "We do not know what Dr. Bullinger would have written, we can only go back and adopt what he has already written, although his last book, The Foundations of Dispensational Truth proves that he fully accepted Acts 28 as the dispensational boundary and the segregation of The Prison Epistles."^[10]

In 1943, Welch adopted the Wilson St. Chapel in London as his church building, which he renamed The Chapel of the Opened Book. To preserve Welch's works and research, The Berean Publishing Trust and The Berean Forward Movement were established.

Works

- *Apostle of the Reconciliation* (1923) ASIN B000GEE83U ^[11]
- *Testimony of the Lord's Prisoner* (1931) ISBN 0-85156-053-9
- *Just and the Justifier* (1948) ASIN B0007B24DS ^[12]
- *Life Through His Name* (1953) ASIN B000OHFMDO ^[13]
- 'Dispensational Truth: Or, The Place of Israel and the Church in the Purpose of the Ages' (1959) ISBN 978-0-85156-082-3
- Published posthumously, after Welch's death on November 11, 1967
 - *In Heavenly Places: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians* (1968) ASIN B0006BY6MQ ^[14]
 - *United Yet Divided* (1976) ISBN 978-0-85156-057-1
 - *The Berean Expositor*, volumes 1-56 ASIN B000GJGAH2 ^[15]
 - *From Pentecost to Prison, or The Acts of the Apostles*, (1996) ASIN B000JY0S5O ^[16]
 - *Perfection or Perdition: An Exposition of the Book of Hebrews* (1970) ASIN B000PDI220 ^[17]
 - *Form of Sound Words*, (1997) ISBN 978-0-85156-174-5
 - Welch's magazine continues to publish his works ^[18]


References



- [1] <http://www.charleswelch.net/be.htm>
- [2] <http://www.charleswelch.net/aa.htm>
- [3] *An Alphabetical Analysis Volume 1* p.20 <http://www.charleswelch.net/aa.htm>
- [4] *Charles H. Welch: An Autobiography* p. 27
- [5] *Charles H. Welch: An Autobiography* p. 61
- [6] *Charles H. Welch: An Autobiography* p. 81
- [7] *"Foundations of Dispensational Truth* ISBN 978-1-60206-045-6
- [8] *Things To Come*: Journal, pgs. 27-29, No.177, Vol 15 No.3, March 1909
- [9] <http://companion-bible.com>
- [10] *Charles H. Welch: An Autobiography* p. 93
- [11] <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000GEE83U>
- [12] <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0007B24DS>
- [13] <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000OHFMDO>
- [14] <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0006BY6MQ>
- [15] <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000GJGAH2>
- [16] <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000JY0S5O>
- [17] <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000PDI220>
- [18] <http://www.bereanonline.org/>

External links

- Charles Henry Welch website (<http://www.charleswelch.net>)
- Writings (<http://www.charleswelch.net/writings.htm>)
- Audio recordings (<http://www.charleswelch.net/audios.htm>)

Pauline Christianity

Part of a series on
The Bible

Biblical canons and books
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Perspectives
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  Bible book •  Bible portal

Pauline Christianity is a term used to refer to the Christianity associated with the beliefs and doctrines espoused by Paul the Apostle through his writings. Orthodox Christianity relies heavily on these teachings and considers them to be amplifications and explanations of the teachings of Jesus. Others, as detailed below, perceive in Paul's writings, teachings that are different from the original teachings of Jesus documented in the canonical gospels, early Acts and the rest of the New Testament, such as the Epistle of James. Proponents of the perceived, distinctive Pauline form of Christianity, include Marcion of Sinope, the 2nd century theologian and excommunicated heresiarch, who asserted that Paul was the *only* apostle who had rightly understood the new message of salvation as delivered by Jesus Christ.



Artist depiction of *Saint Paul Writing His Epistles*, 16th century (Blaffer Foundation Collection, Houston, Texas). Most scholars think Paul actually dictated his letters to a secretary.^[1]

Opponents of the same era include the Ebionites and Nazarenes, Jewish Christians who rejected Paul for straying from Second Temple Judaism. *Pauline Christianity*, as an expression, first came into use in the 20th century among scholars who proposed different strands of thought within Early Christianity, wherein Paul was a powerful influence.^[2] It has come into widespread use among non-Christian scholars, and depends on the claim that the form of the faith found in the writings of Paul is different from that found elsewhere in the New Testament, but also that his influence came to predominate.

Reference is made to the large number of non-canonical texts,^[3] some of which have been discovered during the last 100 years, which show the many movements and strands of thought emanating from Jesus' life and teaching or which may be contemporary with them, some of which can be contrasted with Paul's thought. Of the more significant are Ebionism and Gnosticism. However, there is no universal agreement as to Gnosticism's relationship to Christianity or to the writings of Paul. The expression is used by modern Christian scholars, such as Ziesler^[4] and Mount, whose interest is in the recovery of Christian origins and the contribution made by Paul to Christian doctrine, Christian Reconstructionism and Restorationism.

Characteristics of 'Pauline Christianity'

The characteristics of the critical use of the term take a number of forms. They are partly political and partly theological.

Political

From a political perspective, Robert Eisenman sees Pauline Christianity as a method of taming a dangerous sect among radical Jews and making it palatable to Roman authorities.^[5] Pauline Christianity was essentially based on Rome and made use of the administrative skills which Rome had honed. Its system of organization with a single bishop for each town was, in Bart Ehrman's view, the means by which it obtained its hegemony.^[6]

Theological

The theological aspect is the claim that Paul transmuted Jesus the Jewish messiah into the universal (in a wider meaning "catholic") Savior. Pauline theology is also a term referring to the teaching and doctrines especially espoused by the apostle Paul through his writings. Mainstream Christianity relies on Paul's writings as integral to the biblical theology of the New Testament and regards them as amplifications and explanations consistent with the teachings of Jesus and other New Testament writings. Christian scholars generally use the term expressing interest in the recovery of Christian origins and the contribution made by Paul to Christian doctrine. Others, especially non-Christian scholars, claim to see a Pauline distinction different from that found elsewhere in the New Testament,

a distinction that unduly influenced later Christianity.

Other views

The use of the term by Christian scholars, such as John Ziesler,^[7] is altogether different. Pauline Christianity is the development of thinking about Jesus in a gentile missionary context; Christopher Rowlands concludes that Paul did not materially alter the teachings of Jesus. Much of this view turns on the significance of the Council of Jerusalem. According to this view, James decreed that Christianity was for the Gentiles and not just for the Jews, and quoted the prophet Amos in support of this position (the *Apostolic Decree* is found in Acts 15:19-21^[8]). He entrusted Paul among others with bringing their decision to Antioch (15:22-31^[9]).

Christians themselves disagree as to how far there was tension between Paul and the Jerusalem Church. (See Paul of Tarsus). One difficulty is the tension between Acts and Paul's letters; another is the disparity between his views in different letters. Galatians is reserved about the teaching of the Jerusalem church and is hostile toward Jews who would impose Jewish distinctives, codified in the Mosaic Law, on Gentile converts; in Romans Paul is deeply concerned about the spiritual condition and ultimate destiny of the Jewish people.

Paul's view of the subject

That people saw different disciples of Christ as representing different teachings was addressed by Paul himself, in the 1st letter to the Corinthians: (1 Cor 1:10–18)

“I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas(Peter)"; still another, "I follow Christ."

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, so no one can say that you were baptized into my name. (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel — not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power”

As a pejorative term

All that is good about Christianity stems from Jesus, and all that is bad about it stems from Paul.

Tom O'Golo, *Christ? No! Jesus? Yes!*, p.199

The pejorative use of the expression "Pauline Christianity" relies in part upon a thesis that Paul's supporters, as a distinct group, had an undue influence on the formation of the canon of scripture, and also that certain bishops, especially the Bishop of Rome, influenced the debates by which the dogmatic formulations known as the Creeds came to be produced, thus ensuring a Pauline interpretation of the gospel. The thesis is founded on differences between the views of Paul and the apostles in Jerusalem, and also between the picture of Paul in the Acts of the Apostles and his own writings, such that it is claimed that the essential Jewish or Old Testament character of the faith was lost (see Jewish Christian).

Christian anarchists, such as Leo Tolstoy and Ammon Hennacy, believe Paul distorted Jesus' teachings. Tolstoy claims Paul was instrumental in the church's "deviation" from Jesus' teaching and practices, whilst Hennacy believed "Paul spoiled the message of Christ."^{[10][11]} According to Tom O'Golo, the Ebionites believed Paul was a false prophet whose task was not to convert Romans to Christians but Christians to Romans.^[1] Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, wrote in the latter half of the 2nd century that the Ebionites rejected Paul as an apostate from the law, using only a version of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, known as the Gospel of the Ebionites.

Tom O'Golo postulates several key elements were added by Paul to Christian theology that weren't evident in Jesusism. These included:

1. Original sin
2. Making Jews the villains
3. Making Jesus divine
4. Transubstantiation of bread and wine into actual flesh and blood
5. Jesus' death being seen as atonement for human sin
6. Making Jesus the Messiah
7. Shifting the emphasis from an earthly to a heavenly kingdom
8. Enlarging the chosen people to include anyone who accepted Jesus as Saviour
9. Making salvation a matter of belief in Jesus almost regardless of the demands of the Torah
10. Establishing a hierarchy (literally a holy order) to create and control a Church and more importantly to create and control the beliefs of its membership.^[1]

The argument made that Christian doctrine (that is, the teachings of Jesus) was subsequently distorted by Paul and the Church of Rome depends on a view as to how the canon of Scripture came to be compiled, about which little is known (for details, see Biblical canon). The earliest references to Paul's writing are fragmentary: Clement of Rome, writing about AD 95, quotes from Romans; Ignatius of Antioch (d. AD 115) quotes from 1 Corinthians, Romans, and from 1 Timothy and Titus as if authoritative, not merely as the opinion of one writer.

As to his influence, there are considerable differences of scholarly opinion concerning how far Paul did in fact influence Christian doctrine. Among the most radical is G.A. Wells, a professor of German rather than of theology or history, whose view is that Jesus was a mythical figure and that Christianity was in good part invented by Paul. More widely influential is the view of the 19th-century German theologian F.C. Baur,^[12] founder of the Tübingen school, that Paul was utterly opposed to the disciples, based upon his view that Acts was late and unreliable and who contended that Catholic Christianity was a synthesis of the views of Paul and the Judaizing church in Jerusalem. Since Harnack, the Tübingen position has been generally abandoned,^[13] though the view that Paul took over the faith and transformed the Jewish teacher to the Son of God is still widely canvassed.^[14] It depends on a comparison between the books of the New Testament which cannot be made here, but see Paul of Tarsus, and the claims of Ultradispensationalists such as E. W. Bullinger who view the distinction abhorred by the Ebionites as positive and essential doctrine.^[15]

On the other side, the idea that Paul invented Christianity is disputed by numerous Christian writers.^{[16][17][18][19][20]} Christopher Rowlands contends that, "the extent of his influence on Christian thought has been overestimated".^[21] Thus, though thirteen letters under his name appear in the New Testament, the great controversies of the 3rd and 4th centuries were about the Person of Christ and the nature of God - the so-called Christological and Trinitarian debates - in which St. Paul does not greatly feature; likewise, the Nicene Creed contains no doctrine of atonement. Moreover, while the influence of the Church of Rome was very important in the credal debates, Greek theologians such as Athanasius, the Cappadocian Fathers, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa were formidable figures. The resolution of these controversies at the Council of Chalcedon was not dictated by the Bishop of Rome or Latin Christendom, but was made more difficult by the necessary task of translating technical terms between the two languages of Greek and Latin, and not by arguments over Pauline theology.

As for the New Testament itself, there are evident tensions between the Judaizing party and Paul's views, which are made plain by a comparison between Acts and Paul's letters. How far Paul is to be taken as anti-Jewish (pro-Hellenization or Romanization) is a matter of disagreement, but there has been widespread acknowledgement of the view of W. D. Davies that the essential Jewishness of Paul's Christian perspective has been underplayed.^[22] In Davies' view, Paul replaced the Torah, the Jewish Law or Mosaic Law, with Christ.^[23] In any case, "the problems with which he wrestles in his letters were probably typical of many which were facing the Christian sect during this period".^[24]

Further, by contrast one of the common features of Protestant churches, certainly in English-speaking countries and those influenced by the reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, is their use of formulations other than the ancient

Creeds, such as the Westminster Confession of Faith, in which Pauline formulations play a much greater part. Ideas such as justification by faith, which, though not absent from Catholic formulations, play a much more central role in Protestant thinking, where they are considered fundamental Christian truths and essential for defining the Gospel.^[25]

As to the conclusion that Paul distorted rather than developed the faith, this depends upon a judgment as to wherein lies the right path. Henry Chadwick, former Oxford don, commented about a later controversy: "It was not that the heretics departed from the road; it was that they took a path along which the road was not subsequently built." Roman Catholics, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, conservative Protestants, and most Messianic Jews contend that Paul's writings were a legitimate interpretation of the Gospel. Those who disagree with them either argue that Paul distorted the original and true faith or claim that Christianity is, largely, his invention. The former include such secular commentators^[26] as the philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche and Bertrand Russell, whose criticisms are based upon their moral objections to Paul's thought; others thinkers, such as Slavoj Žižek and Alain Badiou, also agree with this interpretation, but hold much more positive opinions about Paul's theological influence.

Notes

- [1] Harris, Stephen L., *Understanding the Bible*. Palo Alto: Mayfield. 1985. p. 316-320. Harris cites , , , . Joseph Barber Lightfoot in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* writes: "At this point [] the apostle takes the pen from his amanuensis, and the concluding paragraph is written with his own hand. From the time when letters began to be forged in his name (;) it seems to have been his practice to close with a few words in his own handwriting, as a precaution against such forgeries... In the present case he writes a whole paragraph, summing up the main lessons of the epistle in terse, eager, disjointed sentences. He writes it, too, in large, bold characters (Gr. *pelikois grammasin*), that his handwriting may reflect the energy and determination of his soul."
- [2] Lietzmann, Hans *History of the Early Church* Vol 1 p.206
- [3] M.R. James *The Apocryphal New Testament* (1924) *See also the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi documents*
- [4] Ziesler John, *Pauline Christianity* (OUP 2001) Ziesler comments "Pauline Christianity is the earliest for which we have direct documentary evidence..."
- [6] Ehrmann, Bart: *Lost Christianities* (OUP) p 175
- [7] Ziesler, John *Pauline Christianity*
- [8] <http://bibref.hebtools.com/?book=%20Acts&verse=15:19-21&src=!>
- [9] <http://bibref.hebtools.com/?book=%20Acts&verse=15:22-31&src=!>
- [12] *Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi* (Eng trans.1873-5)
- [13] The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church ed. F.L. Cross
- [14] cf James Tabor *The Jesus Dynasty* (Simon & Schuster 2006): Tabor contends that Paul led the church in its decisive break with the Ebionites, whose teaching contained the authentic teachings of Jesus.
- [15] The Pauline Epistles. - Appendix to the Companion Bible (<http://levendwater.org/companion/append192.html>)
- [16] David Wenham, "Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?"
- [17] L. Michael White, "From Jesus to Christianity"
- [18] F. F. Bruce, "Paul & Jesus"
- [19] Did Paul Invent Christianity? (http://www.godandscience.org/apologetics/paul_invented_christianity.html)
- [20] Machen, J. Gresham. "The Origin of Paul's Religion"
- [21] Rowlands Christopher, *Christian Origins* (SPCK 1985) p. 194
- [22] See also New Perspective on Paul and Ed. Sanders *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*
- [23] see also Supersessionism
- [24] [Rowlands, Christopher, *ibid.* p.196
- [25] but see also Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification
- [26] Articles - People who have understood Paul is Anti-Christ - Oneness - True Faith (http://www.wizanda.com/modules/article/view_article.php/article=52)

Further reading

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Ultradispensationalism

Ultradispensationalism is a minority Christian doctrine regarding the relationship between God, the Christian church and human beings. As the name implies, it is an extreme form of dispensationalism.

The clearest scholarly references to **Ultradispensationalism** (sometimes known as "Extreme Ultradispensationalism" or "Bullingerism") are made by Charles C. Ryrie ^[1] and Charles F. Baker.^[2] Ultradispensationalism is a niche doctrine of Christian belief that believes that the Christian Church began with Paul's statement made to the Jewish leaders at Rome near the end of the Book of Acts with Acts 28:28 stating: "Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" being the foundational Scripture of belief of the doctrine of Ultradispensationalism.^[3]

Ultradispensationalists distinguish themselves with their belief that today's Church is exclusively revealed in Paul's later writings, in the so-called Prison Epistles. The Prison Epistles contain Paul's presentation of "the *mystery* ... Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets" (Eph. 3:3-6). This mystery is identified as the Church, a mystery then unrevealed when he wrote his Acts-period epistles.

By contrast, Acts and Paul's early epistles are deemed to cover the Jewish Church that concluded Israel's prophesied history (Bullinger, 1972, p. 195). One rationale for this view is that Paul's epistles written during the period of Acts only proclaim those things which the prophets and Moses said would come, as Paul himself stated in Acts 26:22. The Acts-period epistles are 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. Some add Hebrews to this list, believing it to also be written by Paul.

Within the United States, advocates often refer to themselves as members of the "Grace Movement,"^[4] and affiliate with the Grace Gospel Fellowship, a church association, and its Grace Bible College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, or the more conservative Berean Bible Fellowship.

Most notable proponents

The most notable proponent of Ultradispensationalism doctrine was E. W. Bullinger (1837–1913). Other writers holding this position include Charles H. Welch, Oscar M. Baker, and Otis Q. Sellers.

Early Ultradispensationalism

Early Ultradispensationalism, such as that promoted by Sir Robert Anderson and E.W. Bullinger in his early years, emphasized a dispensational boundary line at Acts 28:28, but did not apply this boundary line to the Epistles of Paul, viewing them as a whole whether or not they were written before or after Acts 28:28. When the young Charles Welch pointed out the inherent contradiction in this to E.W. Bullinger, Bullinger changed his views, and incorporated the dividing line into his teachings on the Epistles of Paul that were written from that point forward and which became universally known as Ultradispensationalism. Since the majority of his work was written before this point, however, many of his writings view Paul's Epistles as an unbroken whole. Later adherents of Ultradispensationalism writers, such as Stuart Allen, Oscar Baker, and Otis Sellers, all followed the example of Charles Welch and E.W. Bullinger's later work in applying the division to Paul's books as well as the book of Acts in the true spirit of Ultradispensationalism.

Post Acts Dispensationalism

There is also a division of Ultradispensationalism called "Post-Acts Dispensationalism", whereby the adherents do not believe that the church began after the Book of Acts chapter 9 nor do they identify the body of Christ as *the mystery* of Ephesians 3 and Colossians 1. This central belief disqualifies them from the doctrine of Hyperdispensationalism which is almost universally recognised as a post-Acts chapter 9 to Acts chapter 15 system of theology.

Post-Acts Dispensationalism holds that only the *mystery* of Ephesians and Colossians is the grace dispensation, which effectively dispensed with "*the law of commandments...the ordinances that were against us*"(Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14), in order to bring those saved into the body during Paul's Later Acts ministry, with those like the Ephesians and Colossians, into one fellowship, "*the one new man...the fellowship of the mystery.*"(Eph.2:16;3:9) In this new unified body, all the practices ordained for the Acts church, which was decidedly Jewish/Covenantal, were abolished with the "revelation of the mystery" (Romans 16:25) of Ephesians and Colossians.^[5] It is this central belief of a subtle form of Acts 28 doctrine that qualifies Post Acts Dispensationalism as a doctrine to be added into the category of Ultradispensationalism.

Ultradispensationalism and personal living

Ultradispensationalism tends to emphasize personal Bible study, a one-on-one relationship with God, and living a Godly life over religious activities.

Water Baptism regarded as Ordinance

As such, most of the adherents to Ultradispensationalism reject all sacraments, including baptism with water.^[6]

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- [2] "Dispensational Theology" by Charles F. Baker, page 16, Grace Publications, 1971]
- [3] <http://www.gotquestions.org/ultra-dispensationalism.html> "What is ultra-dispensationalism?"
- [4] <http://www.biblicaladvancedbasics.com/pdf/Grace.pdf>
- [5] 85 Pages in the Bible - About this book (<http://www.85pagesinthebible.com>)
- [6] "Dispensationalism by Charles C. Ryrie, page 199, Chicago, Moody Press, 1995]

External links

- Writings and recordings of Acts 28 dispensationalist Charles H. Welch (<http://www.charleswelch.net>)
- Ultra-dispensationalism from Elwell Evangelical Dictionary (<http://mb-soft.com/believe/text/ultradis.htm>)

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