

Is it really possible for someone studying the Bible to come up with the dispensationalism system on their own? Is it not something superimposed on scripture? Charles Spurgeon refers to it as a "system totally wrapped up in itself".

We are encouraged in scripture to find good bible teachers in the body of Christ (Mt 28:19, 20, Ro 11:14, Eph 4:11). Unless one knows the entire plot of the Bible, he might not understand dispensationalism without additional help from pastor/teachers. There are certain mysteries revealed in the New Testament which had not been revealed in the Old Testament.¹ A pastor/teacher can help elucidate these dispensations. Biblical Christianity has no secrets (Ps 119:30). God has revealed his heart to mankind in his word (Ro 10:21). His truth is for *all* to understand (Jn 3:16, 2 Pe 3:9). Bible students are encouraged to question teachers (Ac 17:11, Pr 21:17) and after time they can trust them (1 Ti 2:2) but ultimately the responsibility is given to every believer to know the truth first hand (2 Ti 2:15, 1 Jn 4:1, Jn 8:32).²

God gives gifts to all believers. The apostle Paul wrote:

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. 1 Co 12:4–7.

At conversion (Heb. 6:4) the believer is given spiritual illumination from the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:13–16). which leads him into all truth (Eph. 1:18). Spiritual gifts--specialties so to speak--are assigned sovereignty (1 Cor. 12:11, 28) though each believer is given a portion of all gifts in a some measure. The apostle Peter said: His divine power has *given us everything* required for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness (2 Pe 1:3, HCSB, emphasis mine).

¹ The List of Truths which were mysteries in Old Testament times but were revealed in the New Testament:

1. The Fullness of the times of the Gentiles. Rom. 8:10
2. The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 2:6-16
3. The coming Rapture of the church. 1 Cor. 15:51
4. Of God's Will Eph. 1:9
5. The dispensation of Grace. Eph. 3:3
6. The fellowship of believers. Eph. 3:9
7. The church as the Bride of Christ. Eph. 5:32
8. Of the Gospel. Eph. 6:19
9. Of Christ. Col. 4:3
10. Of Iniquity II Thess. 2:7
11. Of Faith I Tim. 3:16
12. Of Godliness I Tim. 3:16
13. Of Seven Churches of Asia Rev. 1:20
14. Of Babylon Rev. 17:5,7 Abrams, Cooper P. III: Introduction: Mysteries of the Bible. 1996: <http://bible-truth.org/myst-intro.htm>.

² *ibid* Abrams, Cooper P. III pg 1.

The apostle James encouraged disciples to pray for understanding: If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him (Jas 1:4–5).

Peter wrote: No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation (2 Pe 1:20). God's prophetic word is trustworthy. Regarding this verse J. Vernon McGee wrote:

...What Peter is saying here is that no portion of the Scripture is to be interpreted apart from other references to the same subject. That is the reason I put up such an objection to this idea of pulling out one little verse of Scripture and building a doctrine on that one verse. If you cannot get the whole body of Scripture to confirm your doctrine, then you had better get a new doctrine, my friend. I think a good illustration is the difference between riding in a good, solid, four-wheeled wagon and on a unicycle. If you have ever seen a person ride on that one wheel of a unicycle, you have noted that he does a lot of twisting and turning and maneuvering around to stay balanced on that one wheel. In the circus I once saw a man riding way up high on a unicycle, and all of a sudden it went out from under him, and he fell backwards. Believe me, he had a bad fall. And I thought, Oh, how many Christians are like that today. They base what they believe on a single verse. While it is wonderful to have one marvelous verse of Scripture, if it tells a great truth, there will be at least two or three verses and usually a whole chapter on it somewhere in the Bible. Simon Peter is telling us that no passage of Scripture should be interpreted by itself. We need to confirm it with other Scriptures.³

One portion of scripture is to be compared with another (1 Co 2:13). We see further by standing on the shoulders of giants⁴. Disciples must root out false teaching where it is found and return to sound biblical doctrines.

³ McGee, J. V. (1991). *Thru the Bible commentary: The Epistles (2 Peter)* (electronic ed., Vol. 55, pp. 38–39). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ Isaac Newton quote: "Bernard of Chartres used to say that we [the Moderns] are like dwarves perched on the shoulders of giants [the Ancients]".