

## FOREWORD

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The system of Bible interpretation known as dispensationalism has in recent years been subjected to much opposition. A growing literature of books and articles has vigorously attacked it. Some have called dispensationalism a heresy and have classed it among the cults. Others have even identified it with modernism. Not all, but much, of the criticism of dispensationalism has come from evangelical writers.

Thus far dispensationalists have done little to answer this criticism. Though they have been writing extensively, their work has not been apologetic but rather expository, particularly of the prophetic portions of Scripture. Moreover, dispensationalism has at times been the victim of its adherents who have pressed unwisely certain of its features.

Dr. Ryrie's book is the first book-length contemporary apologetic for dispensationalism to be written by a recognized scholar. As such it commands attention. The author, a graduate of Haverford College, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Edinburgh University, is well known for his expository and doctrinal writing. His broad experience includes service as dean of men at a Christian liberal arts college, the presidency of a leading college of Bible, and his work as dean of the graduate school of Dallas Theological Seminary. Among his distinctions is honorary membership in Phi Beta Kappa, conferred on him by Haverford College.

Dr. Ryrie deals fairly and courteously with the critics of dispensationalism. He faces honestly objections that have been raised against this system of interpretation. He displays mastery of the literature and writes from a perspective of history as well as contemporary theology.

Many who have based their condemnation of dispensationalism upon hearsay will be enlightened by Dr. Ryrie's lucid presentation of its nature and his thoughtful rebuttal of its critics. This book is an admirable contribution to better understanding among Christians who disagree about dispensationalism. Although Dr. Ryrie has deep convictions about dispensationalism and the opposition to it, he has kept his temper and presented his case candidly and

graciously. The last chapter is an eloquent and reasonable plea for tolerance.

As one for whom dispensationalism is not theology but rather a method of interpretation helpful in grasping the progress of revelation in the Bible, I do not find myself in agreement with every aspect of Dr. Ryrie's presentation. Yet I believe that this book is mandatory reading for those who have attacked dispensationalism and for all who would understand what it really is. As a reasonable and scholarly apologetic for dispensationalism, it cannot be ignored.

—FRANK E. GAEBELEIN 1965