

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

## Does Progressive Dispensationalism Teach a Posttribulational Rapture? Part I

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1

### Introduction

In the last few years a movement has developed called Progressive Dispensationalism.<sup>1</sup> This movement has sought to redefine some of the distinctive features of traditional dispensationalism. There are many though, who believe that progressive dispensationalism goes too far in all the changes that are made to traditional dispensationalism. One of these modifications that will be presented in this paper is—PD's theology, leaning toward a posttribulational rapture.

### The Nature of the Church Redefined

Progressive dispensationalists define the Church significantly different than traditional dispensationalist have done. This is done in at least seven ways: 1) The concept of the church is seen as a remnant instead of a body; 2) The “body of Christ” concept is not the defining entity of the church; 3) The baptism of the Holy Spirit is viewed differently and is not the defining work of the church; 4) The view of one people of God instead of two; 5) The mystery nature of the Church is minimized and redefined; 6) The church is the kingdom in this dispensation (Matt. 13); 7) The Church fulfills Israel's New Covenant as well as the Davidic and Abrahamic covenants in an inaugurated way.

#### *The Concept of the Church as a Remnant Instead of a Body*

Progressive dispensationalists believe that, “The Church=Believing Jews and Gentiles (a remnant of Israel and the Gentile Nations)”<sup>2</sup> in this dispensation as opposed to the traditional belief that the Church=believing Jews and Gentiles united together by the baptism of the Holy Spirit in one body as a living organism.

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<sup>1</sup> For a full evaluation of this new movement from an authority on traditional dispensationalism see Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, rev. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), pp. 161–181.

PD Progressive Dispensationalist

<sup>2</sup> Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), p. 51.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Believing that the Church is just a remnant of saved Jews and Gentiles in this dispensation destroys the scriptural distinction between the Church and Israel. This leaves one wondering, what distinguishes them from saved Jews and saved Gentiles in the tribulation period? Traditional dispensationalists have believed that God is dealing uniquely with the Church, which is Jew and Gentile in one body of Christ, in this dispensation from Pentecost to the time of the rapture. After the rapture, God will pick up His program with the nation Israel, in the final seventieth week, in dealing mainly with Jews, in fulfilling Israel's program as listed in Daniel. The Church has no part of that program; however, the progressive view of that remnant does not forgo saved Jews and Gentiles in the tribulation period. Like posttribulationists in the past, (i.e. George Ladd), progressives see saints in the tribulation but do not make a distinction between church saints and tribulation saints. Thus, it is easy to see that this definition of the Church, as just a remnant, would naturally lead to a posttribulational view of the rapture.

## ***The Body of Christ Concept is not the Defining Entity of the Church***

Blaising and Bock state this of their view of the Church. They write:

One of the striking differences between progressive and earlier dispensationalists, is that progressives do not view the church as an anthropological category in the same class as terms like Israel, Gentile Nations, Jews, and Gentile people. The church is neither a separate race of humanity (in contrast to Jews and Gentiles) nor a competing nation (alongside Israel and Gentile nations), nor is it a group of angelic-like humans destined for the heavens in contrast to the rest of redeemed humanity on the earth. The church is precisely redeemed humanity itself (both Jews and Gentiles) as it exists *in this dispensation* prior to the coming of Christ. When Paul speaks of the church as "one new man" in Christ (Eph. 2:15), he means precisely redeemed humanity as opposed to the unsaved.<sup>3</sup>

But is that what Scripture is teaching? On the contrary, it is exactly the body of Christ concept that makes the church unique and distinct from the nation Israel and the Gentiles. In this dispensation, those who place their faith in Jesus Christ have been baptized into the body of Christ. Both Jew and Gentile are now seen as one in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12–13). So God is dealing with the Church and its program as a whole, not just a remnant of individuals that are separate. This would distinguish the Church's program from that of the nation Israel in the future tribulation period when God uses that time to finish Israel's rebellion (Dan. 9:24–27) and to bring about the whole nation of Israel's conversion at the end of the tribulation period. The minimizing of the uniqueness of the

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<sup>3</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism ...*, p. 49.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

baptism of the Holy Spirit blurs the uniqueness of the Church and provides no reason why the church should not be in the tribulation.

## *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit not Viewed as the Defining Work of Church*

As we have already pointed out, in this dispensation those who place their faith in Jesus Christ have been baptized into the body of Christ, both Jew and Gentile, and are now seen as one in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12–13). But, the way the progressives define the baptism of the Holy Spirit minimizes this body concept. In progressive dispensationalism the baptism of the Holy Spirit is no longer defined as the Spirit's activity which joins a believer to the body of Christ at the time of salvation, nor is the baptism of the Holy Spirit unique to the church. Blaising and Bock write:

It is said that the baptism of the Spirit is what makes the church different from Israel. However, the baptism of the Spirit is itself defined as that relationship with Christ which makes the church the church. Consequently, we are left with a nominal distinction only, but one which was vigorously defended, at least by some. Some revised dispensationalists, however, began to question the meaningfulness of this distinction in eternity [see Robert W. Cook, *The Theology of John* (Chicago: Moody, 1979), 226–27, n. 27.] ... <sup>4</sup>

In a recent paper by Blaising, entitled “The Baptism with the Holy Spirit in the History of Redemption,” he writes:

There is no thought that this baptism with the Spirit marks a separate company of the redeemed from eschatologically redeemed Israel (as envisioned in Old Testament prophecy). Rather, the entire discussion leads the reader to believe that this baptism with the Spirit is precisely what the Old Testament was predicting and that the Gospel is promising the fulfillment of that very blessing.<sup>5</sup>

According to 1 Corinthians 12:13, it is the Spirit who baptizes Jew and Gentile into one body. In progressive dispensationalism though, the baptism of the Spirit is not that activity which unites Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ, but rather the fullness of the Spirit promised by the New Covenant. It is significant to point out here that Gundry uses the New Covenant blessings at Pentecost, tied in with the baptism of the Spirit, to argue against the uniqueness of the Church and to argue for the presence of the Church on earth during the tribulation.

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<sup>4</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* ..., p. 305.

<sup>5</sup> Craig A. Blaising, “The Baptism with the Holy Spirit in the History of Redemption,” (Dallas Theological Seminary), p. 16.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Unlike traditional dispensationalists, the progressive dispensationalists also argue that the baptism of the Holy Spirit will be in operation during the millennium since it is a New Covenant blessing. This view of the baptism of the Spirit waters down the uniqueness of the Church. If the Church is only redeemed Jews and Gentiles in this dispensation and not Jews and Gentiles in one body as a separate entity, then when we see Jews and Gentiles in the tribulation before the millennium, why wouldn't they be part of the Church according to progressive dispensationalism? This is exactly what they believe.

4

## *The View of One People of God Instead of Two*

Progressive dispensationalists no longer view two distinct peoples of God—Israel and the Church. The progressive view is that there has only been one people of God all through history.

The church is not another “people-group” in that picture. Those Jews and Gentiles who compose the church prior to Christ's coming join the redeemed Jews and Gentiles of earlier dispensations to share equally in resurrection glory. Those who during their dispensation had certain blessings only in promise or in an inaugurated form will all be brought to the same level of complete fulfillment *when they are raised together from the dead.*” (emphasis mine)<sup>6</sup>

This quote shows that the Church's program of resurrection is not distinct from the Jews' resurrection program. They state that both Jew and Gentile will share equally in resurrection glory and be raised *together* from the dead with Jews and Gentiles from earlier dispensations.

Traditional dispensationalists have placed the resurrection of Old Testament saints after the tribulation period as a distinct and separate resurrection from the Church's resurrection that will occur before the tribulation period. The Progressives place both resurrections at the same time because they view the Church not as a separate people group but as one people of God with the saints of the Old Testament. A further definition by the Progressives is given by Decker. He writes:

Since the church also participates in the new covenant, [see NEW COVENANT, THEOLOGY OF], it is on that basis that the church becomes a part of the PG [people of God]. The church does not replace Israel as God's people. Rather, the category, PG [people of God], is a larger term that encompasses OT Israel, the NT church, and others in the future. Some also argue for a dichotomous definition of PG: in the OT, Israel was elected as PG in a revelatory sense; in the NT, election as

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<sup>6</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism ...*, p. 50.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

PG is defined in soteric terms and is open to both Jews and Gentiles. PG can also be defined as a unitary, umbrella category that encompasses distinguishable subgroups. Others argue for two separate PG: Israel and the church. Although not exclusively a dispensational view, the two people-of-God position is perhaps best known from classic dispensationalism's contention of an earthly and a heavenly people with differing purposes and destinies. Church believers are described as and included in the PG on the basis of the new covenant. This is not presented as a dual category (Israel and the church), nor is the church described as the new people of God that replaces the old people.<sup>7</sup>

5

Since there is only one people of God, the question needs to be asked: "Why won't there be just one eschatological program for that one people?" This would seem to break down the distinction of Israel's eschatological program with the Church's which would lead to the idea that the Church would be in the tribulation period and share in Daniel's seventieth week with the nation Israel.

The earliest community of believers were all Jews. They viewed themselves as the remnant of faith who would inherit the kingdom when Jesus descended from heaven as the apocalyptic Son of Man.

At His coming, the gift of righteousness which is manifest in a remnant now will be revealed in a nation that will emerge from the Day of the Lord, redeemed and purified to inherit the "irrevocable" blessings of covenant promise.<sup>8</sup>

Are Bock and Blaising saying that the remnant of Israel, in the Church now, will be in the tribulation period and will receive the full blessing of the New Covenant as they emerge from the Day of the Lord? Based on the other evidence we have seen, this is highly probable.

## *The Mystery Nature of the Church is Minimized and Redefined*

Traditional dispensationalists in the past have viewed the Church as a mystery, a totally new unique entity in the working of God's purpose. A mystery that has been hidden in the past, but is now revealed. Progressive dispensationalists no longer see the Church as such. Saucy states:

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<sup>7</sup> Rodney Decker, "The People of God" in *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, gen. ed. Mal Couch (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1996), pp. 297–298, 300. [This view is also held in the article *The New Covenant and the People(s) of God*, in *Dispensationalism, Israel, and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), pp. 68–97.]

<sup>8</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism ...*, pp. 256, 270.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Our study of the Pauline mysteries related to the church leads to a mediating conclusion between traditional dispensationalism and non-dispensationalism. Contrary to the former, the contents of both mysteries—i.e., the equal participation of Jew and Gentile in the body of Christ (Eph. 3) and his indwelling in his people (Col. 1)—are best understood as fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies. Although a greater understanding of these mysteries is revealed in the New Testament, their basic substance was already contained in the Old Testament promises.<sup>9</sup>

Again, it is noteworthy to mention that Gundry also altered the traditional dispensational understanding of the mystery nature of the Church to support his posttribulationism.<sup>10</sup> Progressives view the mystery as not warranted biblically. The Old Testament never did predict, even in the New Covenant, that Jews and Gentiles would be united together on an equal basis into one body through the Holy Spirit. Speaking of the mystery, the Bible states:

*Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel (Eph. 3:5–6 NKJV).*

The idea that the Jews and Gentiles are united in one body is a concept unique to the Church. In the millennium the New Covenant speaks of Gentiles partaking of spiritual blessings but not being united together on an equal basis with Jewish believers in one body in Christ. The progressives denial of this mystery nature leads them farther down the road to a posttribulation rapture position.

## ***The Church is the Kingdom in this Dispensation (Matthew 13)***

Progressive dispensationalists view Matthew 13 in a different way than older dispensationalists. Although there are some differences in how past dispensationalists have viewed Matthew 13, all would agree that Matthew 13 teaches that the Church does not equal the kingdom. However, progressives equate the Church with the kingdom in this dispensation; although, they would allow for a future millennial kingdom.

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<sup>9</sup> Robert L. Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism*, p. 173.

<sup>10</sup> See Robert H. Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973), pp. 12–14.

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# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Being a dispensation of the kingdom, the church corresponds to that mystery form of the kingdom which Jesus revealed in the parables of Matthew 13. It is a community of citizens of the kingdom prior to the coming of the Son of Man.<sup>11</sup>

If the Church is equated with the mystery form of the kingdom, then the Church would be in the kingdom prior to the second coming of the Son of Man (Matt. 13:41, 25:31; Dan. 7:13, 14). Past dispensationalists have viewed Matthew 13 as occurring in the interadvent age between the first and second comings of Christ, and continuing past the Church age after the rapture. However, progressives view the existence of the Church in the tribulation by equating the Matthew 13 form of the kingdom, with the Church prior to the coming of the Son of Man.

To summarize, in these parables, Jesus appears to be predicting a form of the kingdom which will precede its expected apocalyptic arrival. This is a different form of the kingdom from His own presence in the world (which He had identified as a presence of the kingdom). Rather, it consists of the presence of “sons of the kingdom” (that is, people who truly belong to the eschatological kingdom) in the world prior to the coming of the Son of Man. The Son of Man Himself will put them into the world in an initial “sowing” which appears small. But it’s reality is that of the eschatological kingdom, and it will grow and develop in the world even in the presence of evil until the time of the coming of the Son of Man.<sup>12</sup>

Those individuals listed who are “sons of the kingdom” are later stated by Saucy as being the Church. He writes:

In His parables, He explained that He would receive the kingdom at that time, that He would baptize His disciples by the Holy Spirit (the inauguration of new covenant blessing), that He would put “sons” or citizens of the kingdom (constituted as such by the Spirit) into the world where through proclamation of the Gospel they would grow in number, and that He would return with judgment upon evil and usher the heirs into the everlasting kingdom of God.

That phase of the eschatological kingdom of which Jesus spoke parabolically is revealed in Acts and other New Testament epistles as a new dispensation, established through inaugurated blessings of the new covenant based upon the sacrificial death of Jesus.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism ...*, p. 262.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 254.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 280.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Not only do progressives equate the Church with the sons of the kingdom, but they are basically equating the mystery form of the kingdom, in Matthew 13, with the dispensation of the Church.

... so the present form of the kingdom appears when the Spirit of God indwells Jews and Gentiles, citizens of the kingdom. They form a new society in which the peace and righteousness of the kingdom is to be manifested.

All who come to faith in Jesus are likewise blessed by the gift of the Spirit and join this kingdom community, which has come to be known as the Church.<sup>14</sup>

**To summarize**, progressive dispensationalists see the Church as the mystery form of the kingdom that will be in existence until the coming of the Son of Man. This view coincides with the idea that the Church will be in that future time of tribulation called Daniel's seventieth week.

Progressives also misunderstand Walvoord's view of Matthew 13 and his view of the kingdom.

Walvoord argues (from the same passage) that it has nothing to do with the Davidic kingdom, but is precisely *the church*.<sup>15</sup>

This is not true. Walvoord does not equate Matthew 13 with the Church but sees Matthew 13 as occurring in the interadvent period. This form of the kingdom even continuing after the rapture of the Church is clearly seen in his book *Major Bible Prophecies*.

The age in mind here, as in the previous parables, is the whole inter-advent period from the time of Christ on earth to the time of his second coming. The parables do not take into consideration the special character of the church age from Pentecost to the Rapture. The climax, accordingly, is different from that at the Rapture. At the rapture of the church, believers will be caught out of the world and taken to heaven, but all others will be left on the earth. At the Second Coming, however, there will be a worldwide judgment, and those who are saved will be separated from those who are not saved, whether Jews or Gentiles, as the millennial kingdom does not allow unsaved adults to enter the kingdom. This is brought out later in Matthew 25:31–46 as well as in Ezekiel 20:33–38.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism*, pp. 281, 254.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> John F. Walvoord, *Major Bible Prophecies* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), pp. 216–217.



# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

No dispensationalist in the past has equated the Church with the kingdom; but progressives are doing this very thing through their view of Matthew 13.

## *The Church Fulfills Israel's New Covenant as well as the Davidic and Abrahmic Covenants in an Inaugurated way*

Progressives believe that the Church is now fulfilling Israel's New Covenant in an inaugurated way. They do not believe that the political aspects will be fulfilled in the future but that the Church is fulfilling, at least in an inaugurated way, Israel's New Covenant in the spiritual blessings of that covenant.

In the history of dispensationalism there have been three views of the relationship the Church has to the New Covenant. First, classical dispensationalism, represented by Lewis Sperry Chafer, believed in the two covenant view; God has a New Covenant with Israel and a New Covenant with the Church.

Second, represented by John Master and Darby, the Church has no part in the new covenant.

Because of Israel's unbelief, the covenant is not now in effect with that nation. Instead, the church participates in the new covenant ("he brought us into it"), not as a legal party to the covenant, but as recipients of the blessings of the covenant.<sup>17</sup>

Third, the Church shares in the spiritual blessing part of the covenant but is not fulfilling it, represented by Homer Kent and Bruce Comtents.<sup>18</sup> They still believe that the New Covenant will be fulfilled with Israel eschatologically; however, the Church now participates in some of the spiritual benefits of the New Covenant.

The new view of the progressive dispensationalists is that the Church has a preliminary part, or that the Church is in an inaugurated way fulfilling the New Covenant. One of the spiritual benefits of the New Covenant, that the progressives believe will be fulfilled with the Church, is the spiritual blessing of resurrection. This New covenant blessing of Israel will be fulfilled with Israel and the Church at the second coming, according to progressive dispensationalists. This aspect of the New Covenant would definitely teach a posttribulational coming for the Church. This is exactly what Bock and Blaising teach. They comment:

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<sup>17</sup> Decker, "Dispensational views of the New Covenant," ..., p. 281.

<sup>18</sup> Homer Kent's 1985 article in *The Grace Theological Journal* and Bruce Content's dissertation at Grace seminary in 1986.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

The new covenant promises envisioned both spiritual renewal and bodily resurrection. In Pauline theology, the enlivening is first spiritual (that is, spiritual renewal of the heart) and then physical, at the coming of Christ (Rom. 8:10–11).<sup>19</sup>

As we will see in the final section of this paper, they see the final coming of Christ in Romans 8:10–11 as occurring right at the end of the tribulation period, before the millennium.

Not all that was predicted about renewal by the Holy Spirit (including resurrection from the dead) has yet occurred. The new covenant has been inaugurated, but complete fulfillment awaits the return of Christ. Finally, the new covenant offers the ultimate blessing, promising resurrection from the dead (Ezek. 37:1–23). Paul continues to speak of the internal renewal under the new covenant ministry (2 Cor. 4:16) which will lead to the resurrection of the dead (5:1–5). Again the theme is consistent with Ezekiel 36–37 where we have renewal of the heart and resurrection from the dead, both accomplished by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

This ministry of the Holy Spirit will eventually lead to the resurrection of their bodies, a blessing that is also part of the new covenant promise (recall again Ezek. 36–37).

“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you” (Rom. 8:11, cf. 18–25).<sup>20</sup>

The progressives tie the resurrection promise to the nation Israel with the Church’s future resurrection, even quoting the same verses. This would demonstrate that the Church’s resurrection would not be separate from the nation Israel’s resurrection but will all occur as the fulfillment of the New Covenant promise. Therefore, the Church will not have a separate resurrection apart from Old Testament saints, or the nation Israel’s, at the end of the tribulation period. Both Israel and the Church will fulfill New Covenant promises together in resurrection life at the end of the tribulation period.

Bock and Blaising write the following:

The kingdom is said to be in heaven because the Messiah is presently in heaven, and the souls of all the dead who will inherit the kingdom are with Him awaiting their resurrection (cf. Rev. 6:10–11). The church which is “in Christ” thus has a heavenly identity in this dispensation. But, as we have seen, Christ will return to

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<sup>19</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism ...*, p. 317.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 206, 153, 204, 205.

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

earth. "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). This "revelation" will be the completion of our salvation (1 Peter 1:7–9, 13), our resurrection from the dead (1 Peter 1:3), which leads in turn to our inheritance in that future form of the eschatological kingdom (1 Cor. 15:50–57). Corresponding to our resurrection from the dead will be the renewal of the earth, the locus of the future kingdom.

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:18–23).<sup>21</sup>

There are several revealing things about this last quote. They state that the souls of all the dead who will inherit the kingdom are awaiting their resurrection and then they quote Revelation. 6:10–11. Revelation 6:10–11 is dealing with tribulation martyrs who are awaiting their resurrection bodies, not Church saints. Revelation 6:10–11 reads as follows:

*And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed (Rev. 6:10–11 NKJV).*

Applying Colossians 3:4 as Christ's return to the earth, they state that at this time our salvation will be completed, we will receive our resurrection from the dead and will enter into the millennial kingdom. They view the Church's resurrection as occurring at the same time as the renewal of the creation in the millennium. This quote is clearly a posttribulational one. Another clear posttribulational statement is:

That future will arrive when Jesus returns to earth. Paul says in Colossians 3:4, "When Christ ... is revealed [from heaven], then you also will be revealed with Him in glory." In "the day of Christ," that is, when He returns, we will be perfected

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<sup>21</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism ...*, pp. 265, 266.  
NKJV New King James Version

# Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

(Phil. 1:6), made blameless (1 Cor. 1:8; Jude 24), purified completely just as He is Himself (1 John 3:2–3), raised and transformed bodily in glorious immortality just as He is Himself (Phil. 3:20–21).

The fact that the fullness of New Covenant blessing awaits the return of Christ is not surprising since the prophecies of the New Covenant envisioned Messiah reigning upon the earth over a transformed people. Included in that vision was the political restoration of Israel in peace with all other nations. Accordingly, Paul the apostle of the New Covenant who envisions the fullness of New Covenant blessing at the return of Messiah to earth, foresees the national salvation of Israel fulfilled at that time as well. Paul writes:

“Just as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’ ... From the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom. 11:26–29).<sup>22</sup>

This statement sees the fullness of the New Covenant blessing with the Church, which is the resurrection of the body, as occurring with Christ’s second coming to the earth and also, this resurrection occurs at the same time as the nation Israel’s salvation which is a New Covenant blessing as well.

## Conclusion

We can see that the progressives’ view of the Church definitely teaches a posttribulational view point; the concept of the Church as a remnant instead of a body; the body of Christ concept not the defining entity of the Church; the baptism of the Holy Spirit viewed differently and not the defining work of the Church; the view of one people of God instead of two; the mystery nature of the Church minimized and redefined; the Church is the kingdom in this dispensation; and the Church fulfilling Israel’s New Covenant as well as the Davidic and Abrahamic covenants in an inaugurated way, leading toward a posttribulational return of Christ for the Church and a posttribulational rapture and resurrection for the Church.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism ...*, pp. 209, 210.

<sup>23</sup> Brumett, J. (1998). “Does Progressive Dispensationalism Teach a Posttribulational Rapture?—Part I.” *Conservative Theological Journal Volume 2*, 2(5), 190–203.