

# What is Replacement Theology?



I'm very excited to find this talk on YouTube! It confirms what I have believed from years ago, namely that the accusation of believing in "replacement theology" is meant to be derogatory and an insult by Dispensationalists. This article will give you the conviction and courage to refute being called a "replacement theologian."

I never heard the speaker, Hank Hanegraaff, till now. He is the president of Christian Research Institute.

## Transcription

Welcome to another edition of the Hank Unplugged podcast, a special teaching edition for today, which is going to focus on a question, that question being, what is Replacement Theology?

As prologue to this question, or the answer to this question, I want to mention again our Christian Research Journal, we did a special edition, it's titled A Biblical Response to Christian Zionism, deals with a host of questions that go to the heart of Christian Zionism. And at **the very heart of Christian Zionism is this notion that God has two distinct people**, one of which must be raptured before God can consummate his plan with the other.

And this is what I write in a section of the journal, which is kind of a good prologue to answering this question. I write, Dispensational eschatology today is the norm, not the abnormality. And those who dare question the notion of a pre-tribulational rapture that is followed by a Holy Land Holocaust in which the vast majority of Jews perish are *so often shouted down as peddlers of godless heresy*.

Now that's a very *strong* accusation! And now, well now the **ultimate pejorative phrase** has been coined. Coined for those who dare to deny the heart of dispensational eschatology. They're called "replacement theologians." And that's not all. John Hagee, for one, very popular dispensationalist Christian Zionist, says that replacement theologians are *guilty of spreading the message of anti-Semitism*.

Today, if you're called an anti-Semite, *that* is a very serious charge! And that's the charge he makes. And so do many other popular dispensationalists

today.

So one can only pray for the courage to stand in face of vilification, because this is what it is, it's *vilification*. And to do all that is permissible to see that this pseudo-eschatology, this dispensational eschatology, fades into the shadowy recesses of history.

So again the question, what is Replacement Theology? So the first and very obvious point is that the very phrase Replacement Theology or replacement theologian is designed to be the **ultimate insult**. **It's the ultimate pejorative** and it's *leveled at those who deny the heart of dispensationalism*.

Again, the heart of dispensationalism is that God has two distinct peoples, one of whom must be raptured, in other words the Church, before God can continue His plan with the other, Israel. And if a Christian dares question the notion of a pre-tribulational rapture that is followed by a Holy Land holocaust in which the vast majority of Jews perish, they're immediately shouted down as *peddlers of godless heresy*.

In fact, popular dispensationalists today are blunt. They're blunt in their denunciations. They say such things as replacement theologians are now carrying Adolf Hitler's anointing in his message. I mean, I don't know how you get any more of a disparagement than that.

A second point. So the first is it's meant to be an insult. The second is that this moniker, this moniker Replacement Theology is *inaccurate*. People who are labeled replacement theologians neither believe that the Church has replaced Israel nor the other way around. Instead they hold that all people clothed in Christ constitute one congruent chosen covenant community that is beautifully connected by the Cross.

In the words of St. Paul, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ. All one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ Jesus' people, *then* you are Abraham's seed. If you belong to Christ, you're the seed of Abraham, and you are an heir according to the promise. Salvation is not a matter of race, it is a matter of *relationship*.

A third and final point. The use of the term "replacement" is highly ironic. Why? Well because the very people who wield the term as an insult believe a mistaken notion. The mistaken notion that Israel will replace a soon to be raptured Church during seven horrific years of tribulation. And ironically those who suffer the rebuke are repulsed by that very rhetoric of replacement. And also I should add, ironic in the fact that those who are now claiming that replacement theologians are guilty of spreading the message of anti-Semitism *are themselves in the process of herding Jews into the Holy Land and doing that believing that these Jews will soon be slaughtered in a bloodbath that exceeds even Hitler's Holocaust!*

So what is a replacement theologian? It is the ultimate pejorative that is leveled at anyone who dares to whisper, "I don't believe that we're going to be raptured out of this world."

In fact, I believe something very different. I believe in what St. John says in Revelation chapter 21. The direction is *not escape*. The direction ultimately is God Himself will be with us. That's what St. John says. He sees a new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven prepared as a bride, beautifully adorned for her husband.

And he hears a loud voice from the throne saying, now the dwelling of God is with men and he will live with them. God himself will be with us. He will wipe every tear from our eyes. There'll be no more death, or mourning, or crying, or pain. For the old order of things will have passed away. Behold, all things will be made new.

The truth is this, God doesn't scrap things. He redeems them. The universe, as Paul talks about in Romans chapter 8, is groaning in travail. It's awaiting its liberation from bondage to decay. And we also ourselves. So God isn't going to destroy our bodies. He's going to resurrect our bodies. That doesn't mean that there's such a thing as every atom being resuscitated, but there is continuity between the body that is and the body that will be. We'll be resurrected immortal, imperishable, incorruptible.

And this universe too will be redeemed. That's the ultimate solution given to us in Holy Scripture. It is that when Jesus comes a second time, the problem of sin and Satan will forever be dispensed with. And we will be resurrected, immortal, imperishable, incorruptible. We'll be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

And so that is what we await, not a rapture out of this world, but the transformation of this world.

For those who believe in Jesus Christ, the resurrection is the great hope, the thing we look forward to. Not a rapture theory invented in the 19th century by a disillusioned priest and expanded on in the present with great bravado, with great popularity. Millions upon millions of people believe it, but the fact that it's popular doesn't mean that it's true. It most certainly is not biblical.

And I can say this as someone who has spent a lot of time in the book of Revelation. I love that book. It's a fantastic book because it is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw. That is the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

And then it says, blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.