

Scriptures and Doctrine :: New Covenant Theology?

New Covenant Theology?, on: 2016/4/29 10:44

In my forty some odd year walk with Christ I have been exposed to two major theological systems by which scripture is interpreted. Being converted in a Presbyterian background. I was exposed to Covenant Theology which basically comes out of the Reformed tradition. This tradition sees more of a continuation of the Old Testament into the New. The church more or less has replaced Israel. This system basically is used to justify infant baptism as a correlation to circumcision in the Old Testament.

When I went to college I was discipled by campus Crusade for Christ. It was with this ministry I was introduced to premillennial dispensationalism. Much of what has been talked about in the forum here. The southern university where I attended was pretty much influenced by Dallas Theological Seminary. And we were influenced by the writings of Hal Lindsey. The Left Behind series came out of this deal logical system with the teachings of a pre-trib rapture. This system appeared to make Chop Suey of scripture in to different dispensations or economies by which got operated.

But lately I have seen a third theological system that is making inroads among some Baptist. Some of them being of Calvinistic suasion. The system is known as new covenant theology. With Christ in the gospel being the hermeneutic by which scripture is interpreted. From what I have gleaned the scripture is one story about Jesus Christ. He is Central in all of the scriptures both Old and New Testament.

Has anyone heard of new covenant theology. If so what are your thoughts on the interpretation of scripture being through Christ as our grid.

Posted by Blaine Scogin

Re: New Covenant Theology?, on: 2016/4/29 11:22

Hi Blane,

The scriptures are about one story and one overarching Person. Jesus Christ. It is not about men, or specific nations or races or earthly boundaries or physical enemies. Christ can be seen in every book in the Bible and Hebrews is an excellent book for summing things up.

Heb 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken THIS IS THE SUM: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty IN THE HEAVENS;

Heb 8:2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the TRUE TABERNACLE, which the Lord pitched, AND NOT MAN.

Heb 8:4 FOR IF HE WERE ON EARTH he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

Heb 8:5 Who serve unto the example AND SHADOW OF HEAVENLY THINGS, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Heb 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I WILL MAKE A NEW COVENANT with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

Heb 8:9 NOT ACCORDING TO THE COVENANT THAT I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, AND I REGARDED THEM NOT, saith the Lord.

Heb 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, HE HATH MADE THE FIRST OLD. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old IS READY TO VANISH AWAY.

This is New Covenant Theology. I don't know what this "New Covenant Theology" belief system you speak of is all about

, but if you go by it's name, it should mirror the scriptures. If you have a link, I would like to investigate it.

If it doesn't support Jesus Christ being the SUM of ALL THINGS and the Better EVERYTHING of Hebrews, then it's not really New Covenant Theology.

Jesus is "so much better than the angels" Heb 1:4

Jesus is "the better hope" Heb 7:19

Jesus is "our surety of a better testament" Heb 7:22

Jesus is the "mediator of a better covenant"

based on "better promises" Heb 8:6

Jesus is the "better sacrifice" Heb 9:23

A lot of people don't seem to want to talk about heavenly realities, even though the NT scriptures immerse us in scriptures about heavenly realities.

"It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the HEAVENLY THINGS themselves with better sacrifices than these." Heb 9:23

Jesus is our "better and an enduring substance" in heaven. Heb 10:34

"For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that YE HAVE IN HEAVEN a better and enduring substance."

In Jesus, we have a "better country, that is, an heavenly", not earthly. Heb 11:16

Jesus is the "BETTER THING" for us. Heb 11:40

"God having provided some BETTER THING for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Heb 11:40

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh BETTER THINGS than that of Abel." Heb 12:24

Jim Fowler has an interesting take on Dispensational and "Covenant Theology (below).

What does Dispensational Theology believe?

Recognizes the discontinuity of the Mosaic covenant of Law. Also creates discontinuity in the Abrahamic covenant of promise by insisting on yet unfulfilled physical fulfillment, positing interrupted and postponed fulfillment to be realized in future at second coming. Fears that continuity in spiritual fulfillment of Abrahamic promises would impinge on God's faithfulness, thus fixing God in physical preoccupation. This has led to regarding the Church as a parenthetical interim afterthought in God's plan, letting the Gentiles partake of the benefits of Christ until the time that Christ returns to restore physical Israel. Eschatologically expressed in premillennial pessimism."

"What does Covenant Theology believe?

Recognizes the continuity of Abrahamic covenant of promise in spiritual fulfillment of Christ and Christians. Also posits partial continuity of Mosaic covenant of Law, denying ceremonial, civil, and sacrificial laws, but advocating renewed continuation of moral, behavioral obligations of law. Fear that discontinuity of old and new covenants might impinge on God's immutability, thus fixing God in mechanistic proceduralism. This view of continued Law has led to reconstructionist concepts of theonomy, and the quest to restore God's Law as the "law of the land." Covenant theology is usually eschatologically expressed in postmillennial optimism."

The problem with both of these views is they necessarily believe that ALL the promises to Abraham are not fulfilled in Christ when the NT actually teaches that the promises to Abraham are all fulfilled IN CHRIST.

Do you see the problem with any theology that nullifies the belief that ALL the promises to Abraham are now fulfilled in Christ?

Gal 3:26 For YE ARE ALL (Jew and Gentile) the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for YE ARE ALL

L ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.

Gal 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Do we need anything more than Christ who is available NOW to all men?

Re: Julius , on: 2016/4/29 11:41

Brother agree with your post. Indeed Christ should be central in all things. One new covenant ministry I looked up online says that we should be obsessed with Jesus Christ.

Would you agree that Christ should be our obsession? That all of our focus should be on Him? That all of our conversation should be about Him?

Blaine

Re: , on: 2016/4/29 12:12

Yes, we should be "ADHD" about Jesus Christ. :-)

That is why I keep resisting anything that draws people away from Him which is always a sure "red flag" in our Christian walk.

Re: New Covenant Theology? - posted by savannah, on: 2016/4/29 14:21

Here are two messages on SI from a man who holds to NCT;

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/viewcat.php?cid=593>

Re: , on: 2016/4/29 15:44

Thank you brother. I will listen to them.

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/4/29 18:02

Seems to me like both "systems" are doing a whole lot of dissection where the Scripture itself doesn't.

Is Jesus central? Of course! Don't need any system. The Law and the Prophets were until John and since then the Kingdom of God is preached. John preached Jesus. The Law and Prophets preached Him. The apostles did. By Him all things consist.

What this New Covenant theology deal sounds like to me is one more effort to stir up debate about the OT law, the nature of it, and the nature of Israel now. I don't see where it helps anything except for some self congratulatory degraded men to attach themselves to a so called movement while it trickles from academy to journal to pulpit to pew.

It is like being in on the ground floor of a network marketing scheme. Lots of talk about the benefits of being in the network, but nobody really makes any use of what is being sold.

I am sorry if cynicism drips but this kind of stuff is just harmful.

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2016/4/29 23:55

quote: "Christ should be the center of all things"

What really is the practical meaning of this or how it is properly manifested in the lives, beliefs, and affection of true Christians.

Re: , on: 2016/4/30 0:24

Let's start with a simple example. How important is your head in relation to your toe, arm, finger, leg? Which ones can you do without?

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2016/4/30 2:12

Can you elaborate how this analogy explains the concept of 'new covenant theology'.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/4/30 6:37

Quote:

-----Can you elaborate how this analogy explains the concept of 'new covenant theology'.

Saints,

Just so we are clear it is not "new covenant theology" but is called "covenant theology." And also it was formed during the reformation times and not before.

Brother Zac Poonen has been using the phrase "new covenant" from the scriptures in his messages so I do not want saints to confuse the two:

New Covenant Principles by Zac Poonen
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cX7jM52CStk>

The blessings of the new covenant by Zac Poonen
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCS7n7p3u6l>

Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology are sort of polar opposites, of course there is truth in both systems of thought but overall they are reactions and SermonIndex does not hold to either view. There might be a few messages on SermonIndex touches on these theology's but overall we do not believe Scripture should be interpreted strictly by either mindset.

It is of value to watch these Zac Poonen messages and ask myself am I living in a New Covenant reality in my practical walk with the Lord? It does not matter if I am figuring out mysteries of the Scripture but am I obeying Scripture?

Re: , on: 2016/4/30 10:12

Thanks for the clarification, Greg.

That makes a lot of sense as I have been looking for this new belief system called, "New covenant theology", and could not find it.

Re: , on: 2016/4/30 10:51

Actually there is a New Covenant Theology:

<http://www.biblicalstudies.com/bstudy/hermenutics/nct.htm>

<http://www.trinitybaptistreformed.org/files/Download/Covenant%20Theology%20Versus%20New%20Covenant%20Theology.pdf>

Quote:

-----New Covenant Theology

Intro:

1.

Some see New Covenant Theology as a middle ground between Dispensational Theology and Covenant Theology.

2.

Giving a precise outline of New Covenant Theology is difficult because there are differences among those who hold to this system.

â€œIt is somewhat difficult to critique New Covenant Theology for at least three reasons.

First, New Covenant Theology is not a monolithic movement. New Covenant theologians differ on some of the nuances involved with defining New Covenant Theology. Second, New Covenant Theology is a relatively new school of thought. Though there is much in print on New Covenant Theology, there is no definitive work as yet. Third, one major adherent of New Covenant Theology has recently acknowledged that he will have to modify his understanding of the New Covenant Theology and revise some of his published worksâ€ (Barcellos, In Defense of the Decalogue, page 8)

I.

New Covenant Theology sees a discontinuity between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

A.

The New Covenant has a distinctively new character to it

1.

The New Covenant law of Christ stands in sharp contrast to the Old Covenant law of Moses.

2.

New Covenant Theology teaches that the New Covenant has replaced the Old Covenant.

â€œThe primary premise of NCT is that the New Covenant as mediated by Christ is a brand NEW covenant, which totally replaces the Old Covenant:â€

(From a paper,

In Defense of the New Covenantâ€

by Michael W. Adams)

B.

Where Covenant Theology recognizes the eternal, unchanging nature of God's moral law New Covenant Theology denies this

1.

God did not reveal His moral law to Adam, Noah, or even Moses

2.

The Ten Commandments were temporary

3.

Whatever is repeated from the Old Testament in the New Testament is binding but if it is not repeated it is not binding â€ again marking a discontinuity between the OT and the NT.

(In response to this position Richard Barcellos writes, â€œIt is simply not true that only those things from the Old Testament repeated in the New are still binding. Where is the exegetical basis for such a claim? There is none. Where does the New Testament tell us that the absence of the Old Testament commands is the death knell of such commands?â€ (Barcellos, In Defense of the Decalogueâ€ Page 86).

4.

New Covenant proponents believe that God waited until the coming of Christ to reveal His perfect law.

a.

Christ has actually changed Godâ€™s laws

b.

The Law of Christ is actually different than the law of Moses â€ this is distinctively seen with the 4

th

Commandment

Re: , on: 2016/4/30 10:56

Thank you, Brenda!

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/4/30 13:36

That info from Brenda and other like it is why I posted as I did.

Let me say this. If you agree with this system, I love you in Jesus and hope you love me the same. I'm not digging under rocks to find areas of disagreement.