

Dispensational v. Covenant Theology

Baptism, Israel, and the Church

Part 2

Under Covenant Theology, the Church is Israel

- This view is known as “Replacement Theology,” or “Supersessionism,” or “Fulfillment Theology”
- The basic position is that the Church has succeeded Israel as the people of God
- The rejection of Christ by the Jews occasioned this

In his *Systematic Theology*, Berkhof says of the Church

- In the Patriarchal Period the families of believers constituted the religious congregations; the Church was best represented in the pious households, where the father served as priests. There was no regular cultus (system of worship), though Genesis 4.26 seems to imply a public calling upon the name of the Lord.

- In the Mosaic Period. After the exodus the people of Israel were not only organized into a nation, but were also constituted the Church of God...The Church did not yet obtain an independent organization, but had its institutional existence in the national life of Israel. The particular form which it assumed was that of a Church-State. We cannot say that the two coalesced together

- In the New Testament. The New Testament Church is essentially one with the Church of the old dispensation. As far as their essential nature is concerned , they both consist of true believers, and of true believers only.
- Is that true? Were ONLY true believers part of the nation of Israel?
- Romans 9.1-8
- Berkhof continues, “The representation given in the preceding proceeds on the assumption that the Church existed in the old dispensation as well as the new...”

It is in this unity that CT defends
infant baptism

How is this unity explained Biblically?

What follows is the explanation of A.A. Hodge in his *Outlines of Theology*, 1878, pages 616-621.

Hodge was a professor of systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary

- The Church, under both dispensations, has the same nature and design. The OT Church, embraced in the Abrahamic Covenant, rested on the Gospel offer of salvation by faith.
- Galatians 3.8
- Hebrews 11.1

- They bear precisely the same name.
 - Psalm 22.12; Hebrews 2.12
- There is no evidence whatever furnished by the apostolic records that the ancient Church was abolished and a new and different one organized in its place...Their disciples were always *added* to the “Church” or “congregation” previously existing.

- There is abundant positive evidence that the ancient Church, resting upon its original charter, was not abolished by the new dispensation
 - Isaiah 49.13-23
 - This includes a commitment to children.
Isaiah 59.20-21
 - Romans 11.18-26, God will graft the Jews back again into their own stock, and not into another.
 - Ephesians 2.11-22 Gentiles are made fellow-citizens...in the old house hold of the faith