



New Covenant Theology & Progressive Covenantalism

Covenant Theology Lesson 2

Spectrum of Views on the Covenants



Classic
Dispensationalism


Progressive
Dispensationalism

New Covenant
Theology

Progressive
Covenantalism

Baptist Covenant
Theology
("1689
Federalism")

Paedobaptist
Covenant
Theology



History of New Covenant Theology & Progressive Covenantalism

Calvinistic Baptists (1960s-1970s)

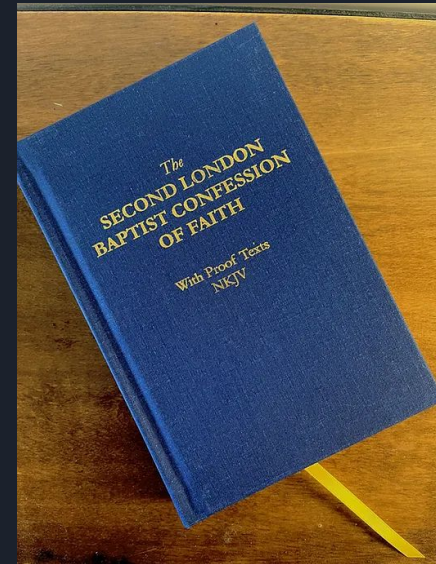
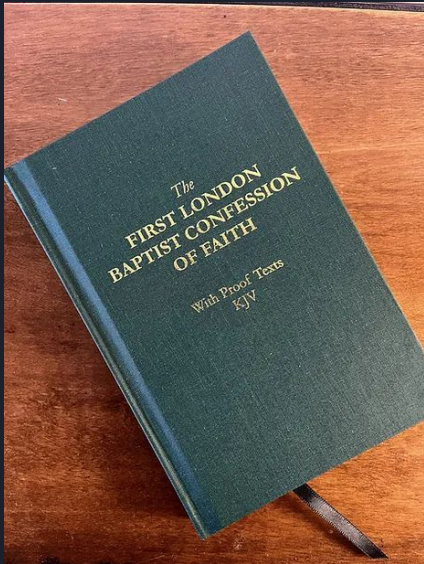
John Reisinger

Ernest Reisinger

New Covenant Theology

(Baptist) Covenant Theology

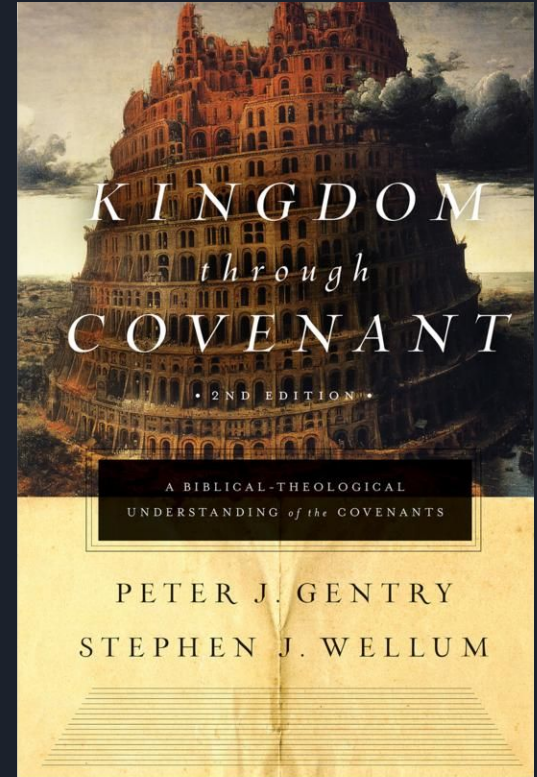
Progressive
Covenantalism



History of Progressive Covenantalism

- 2012
- Southern Seminary (Louisville)
- Bethlehem Seminary (Minneapolis)

- Well-known proponents of NCT/PC
 - D. A. Carson
 - Douglas Moo
 - Thomas Schreiner
 - John Piper





Commonalities of NCT & PC

- All of the Law of Moses is done away with by Christ
- The Christian is no longer under the Mosaic Law, including the 10 Commandments

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Differences Between NCT & PC

New Covenant Theology

- Some question the imputation of Christ's obedience to the believer
- The Law of Moses is not relevant to Christians

Progressive Covenantalism

- Affirm imputation of Christ's obedience
- The Law of Moses is still part of Scripture and therefore can instruct Christians

The Role of the Law in NCT/PC



Why does this matter?

- “Woe to you . . .! For you load people with burdens hard to bear.” (Luke 11:46)
- “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.” (1 John 5:3)

The Role of the Law in NCT/PC

1. There is no “three-fold division” of the Law.

CIVIL



CEREMONIAL



MORAL



- a. The Law is a “whole package.”
- b. “You are not under law but under grace” (Romans 6:14).



The Role of the Law in NCT/PC

2. Christians are under a new law, the “Law of Christ.”

“The law of Christ can be defined as those prescriptive principles drawn from the example and teaching of Jesus and his apostles (the central demand being love), which are meant to be worked out in specific situations by the guiding influence and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.” (A. Blake White)

“I have not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it” (Matthew 5:17).

- Christ’s teaching fulfills and replaces all of the Law of Moses.



The Role of the Law in NCT/PC

2. Christians are under a new law, the “Law of Christ.”

- “Law of Christ” = “Law of Love”
 - Matthew 7:12
 - Matthew 22:36–40
 - John 1:17
 - Romans 10:4
 - Romans 13:8
 - Galatians 5:14
 - Galatians 5:18
 - Galatians 6:2
 - James 2:8
 - James 2:12



A Response from Covenant Theology

1. The three-fold division of the Law *is biblical*.

- Jesus did not come to abolish the Law (Matt 5:17), yet Jesus “declared all foods clean” (Mark 7:9; see Acts 10).
- Ceremonial laws are clearly abolished
 - Hebrews 7:12, 18
 - Hebrews 8:5
 - Hebrews 9:10, “They deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed *until the time of reformation*.”
 - Stephen is accused of teaching that Jesus would “change the customs that Moses delivered to us” (Acts 6:13–14).



A Response from Covenant Theology

1. The three-fold division of the Law *is biblical*.
 - There is a clear distinction in Exodus between the Book of the Covenant (Moses' civil and ceremonial laws) and the 10 Commandments.
 - Exodus 24:7-8; Hebrews 9:18-19
 - Book of the Covenant: Exodus 20:22-23:19
 - 10 Commandments: Exodus 20:1-17
 - Written by the finger of God (Exod 31:18)
 - Placed in the Ark of the Covenant (25:16)



A Response from Covenant Theology

1. The three-fold division of the Law *is biblical*.
 - If civil and ceremonial laws are abolished, what is the Law that Jesus *did not abolish*?
 - What is the law that Paul says is “good if one uses it lawfully” (1 Tim 1:8)?
 - The moral law
 - Romans 2:15
 - 1 Corinthians 7:19



A Response from Covenant Theology

2. Jesus fulfills (all of) the law, not abolishing it (the moral law).

- What does it mean that “love fulfills the law”?
- What about the NT passages that speak of the law as bad?
- 1 Corinthians 9:12
“To those outside the law I became as one outside the law, (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.”



A Response from Covenant Theology

3. The moral law is summarized in the 10 Commandments, including the Sabbath command.

- Jeremiah 31:33, “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.”
- What law?