

p. 47      Covenant theologians speak of a covenant of grace that runs through all Bible history since the fall. Dispensationalists object to the idea of one covenant for all the history of redemption, but would readily agree that there is but one fundamental plan of salvation for all ages. Both sides would agree that this common salvation was not fully revealed until after the death and resurrection of Christ (2 Tim.1:9-10).

p.48      The new birth. Perhaps both sides of the dispensational debate could also agree that the new birth is characteristic of every period since the fall, even though this doctrine is not as clearly revealed in the Old Testament as in the New. It was before the inauguration of the church age that the Lord said to Nicodemus; "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"(John 3:5). Old Testament saints are clearly declared to be in the kingdom of God(Luke 13:28-29) and therefore they must have experienced the new birth. The Scriptural truth of man's sinful nature would make the new birth a necessity before there could be entrance into the kingdom of God.

Moral law applies in every dispensation. Both the friends and oppoenets of dispensationalism could agree that the eternal moral law of God applies to every dispensation. By "the eternal moral law of God" we do not mean the Mosaic law or the Ten Commandments, but the eternal principles of righteousness which are a reflection of the character of God. God's standard of holiness has always been nothing less than His own character or glory(Rom.3:23). Moses did not originate this moral law and it did not cease at the end of the age of Mosaic law.

When dispensationalists say that the Ten Commandments are done away, they mean that believers are not under the Mosaic setting of the eternal moral law. They recognize that all the moral principles of the Mosaic age reappear for the church in a setting of grace. It is no more antinomian to say that the Mosaic law does not apply to this age than it is for a citizen of Michigan to say that he is not under the laws of Illinois. Much of the argument over law and grace is caused by a failure in definition of terms. If the eternal moral law of God is distinguished from the Mosaic laws, much of the confusion disappears. All agree that we are still under the "righteousness of the law," i.e., the moral principles contained in the law of Moses, and all but extreme legalists ~~are~~ also agree that we are not under "the ministraton of death written and engraven in stones"(2 Cor. 3:7), i.e., under the Mosaic economy of the moral law with its death penalties.

p.49      Finally it should be agreed that the dispensational discussion should be conducted on the New Testament ethical platform. Both sides should take another look to see whether they are shooting at a real opponent or at a straw man of their own imagination. Further discussion should not only clarify differences, but emphasize more the great ~~agrea~~ areas of agreement.