

Semper Reformanda: Part 5
New Covenant Theology and the Law of God

The Law of God in the Evangelical Theology

- Covenant Theology – The moral law is that perfect rule of righteousness that was first written on Adam's heart, then delivered by God on Mount Sinai in the ten commandments, written in two tables – the first four commandments containing our duty towards God and the remaining six our duty to man. WCF, 19:1-2. "The divine law is ordinarily divided, or considered as consisting of three parts; the moral, the ceremonial, and the judicial" Z. Ursinus, Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism, p. 490.
- Dispensational Theology – The Mosaic Law was a unified code given to Israel to promote theocratic statehood. The Mosaic Law has been terminated and replaced by the Law of Christ. C. Ryrie, Basic Theology, p. 305.
- New Covenant Theology – The law of God is the character of God Himself reflected innately in man as the image of God binding all men in every age to the duty of loving God and loving one's fellow man. The law of God is structured by Biblical covenants for specific application in the outworking of redemptive history. The law of God written innately on the human heart never changes, but the law of God structured by the covenants changes as redemption progresses.

The Continuity of the Law of God

- God's law written on the heart at creation – Rom. 1:18-21; 2:14-15; 3:9; 5:13
- Why the Law of Moses? (1) teach sin – Rom. 3:20; 5:20; 7:7; (2) segregate Jew from Gentile – Gal. 3:19; Eph. 2:11-16; (3) lead to Christ – Gal. 3:23-26.
- Much of the Mosaic law passes into the New Covenant – 1Jn. 3:4; Eph. 6:1; 1 Tim. 5:17-19; Rom. 3:31
- Love of God and man is the summation of the law – Mt. 22:35-40; Rom. 13:8-10

The Discontinuity of the Law of God

- The Old Covenant has been fulfilled and replaced by the New Covenant – Heb. 8:8-13; 10:9; Mt 5:17-20
- The Decalogue has been removed – 2 Cor. 3:7,11,13 (Ex. 34:27-28); Rom. 7:6
- The change in priesthood (Levitical to Melchizedek) changes the law – Heb. 7:11-12
- Christ is the end or fulfillment of the Mosaic law – Rom. 10:4; (Rom. 3:12; Mt. 11:13); 1 Cor. 9:20-21

Theological Conclusions

1. The threefold division of the Law – moral, civil, and ceremonial – is a helpful theological category, but it is not based on exegesis (Jas. 2:10).
2. The innate law of God in man is not identical to the Decalogue (e.g. the Sabbath – Ex. 19:8; 31:16-17; Neh. 9:14; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 4:1, 9-10).
3. Christians are free from the law, but they are not lawless, they relate to God's law in and through Christ (1 Cor. 9:20-21).