

Negatively

The distinction does not lie in the concept that New Testament believers are savingly united to Christ and the benefits of His redemption, whereas Old Testament believers were not.

The distinction does not lie in the concept that New Testament believers are saved by divine grace through faith on the basis of Christ's atonement, whereas Old Testament believers were saved by divine indebtedness on the basis of fulfillment of the Law.

The distinction does not lie in the concept that New Testament believers are foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified, whereas Old Testament believers were not.

The distinction does not lie in the concept that New Testament believers are born of God, members of God's family, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, whereas Old Testament believers were not.

The distinction does not lie in the concept that the New Testament body is made up only of true believers, whereas the Old Testament body was made up of a mixture of unbelievers and believers. The New Testament body in its external expression is made up of professing believers (those merely professing) and those who are true believers, just as the Old Testament body in its external expression was made up of professing believers and those who were true believers.

The distinction does not lie in the concept that the New Testament body in its external expression has officers and ministers, and carries out the functions of the preaching of the Word, the administration of ordinances, and the exercise of responsible discipline, whereas the Old Testament body in its external expression did not.

Then where do the distinctions between the Old Testament body and the New Testament body lie? in what do these distinctions consist?

Positively

First of all, from Adam until Moses, the people of God appear to have been externally expressed in family congregations (e.g., Noah, Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, the Children of Israel in Egypt). From Moses until Christ, the people of God were externally expressed in a twofold manner: first, as a religious community of professing believers in Jehovah, whose worship was governed by His laws and administered by His appointed religious officials; and second, as a political state rule by Jehovah, governed by His laws, and administered by His appointed civic officials. From Moses until the Exile, all religious exercises (in the narrow sense) took place either at the Tabernacle or Temple, or in the home (although it is highly probably that local gatherings of believers met regularly under the leadership of the Levites for the purpose of hearing and understanding the Word, prayer, and singing of psalms). During the time of the Exile in Babylon, when the temple lay in ruins, these gatherings (called synagogues) were the centers of expression of religious exercises in the narrow sense; and appear to have developed into organized form, with officers and structured worship formats that were highly visible by the time of Christ.

Under the New Testament the people of God are externally expressed as a religious community, but not as a political entity (either a state, or a state