

separate ways of salvation. During each of them man is reconciled to God in only one way, i.e. by God's grace through the work of Christ that was accomplished on the cross and vindicated in His resurrection. Before the cross man was saved in prospect of Christ's atoning sacrifice, through believing the revelation thus far given him. Since the cross man has been saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ in whom revelation and redemption are consummated.

On man's part the continuing requirement is obedience to the revelation of God. This obedience is a stewardship of faith. Although the divine revelation unfolds progressively, the deposit of truth in the earlier time-periods is not discarded; rather it is cumulative. Thus conscience (moral responsibility) is an abiding truth in human life (Rom. 2:15; 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:2), although it does not continue as a dispensation. Similarly, the saved of this present dispensation are 'not under law' as a specific test of obedience to divine revelation (Gal. 5:18; cp. Gal. 2:16; 3:11), yet the law remains an integral part of the Holy Scriptures which, to the redeemed, are profitable for 'instruction in righteousness' (2 Ti. 3:16-17; cp. Rom. 15:4).

The purpose of each dispensation, then, is to place man under a specific rule of conduct, but such stewardship is not a condition of salvation. In every past dispensation unregenerate man has failed, and he has failed in this present dispensation and will in the future. But salvation has been and will continue to be available to him by God's grace through faith.

Seven dispensations. . . are distinguished in this edition of the Bible: Innocence (Gen. 1:28); Conscience or Moral Responsibility (Gen. 3:7); Human Government, (Gen. 8:15); Promise (Gen. 12:1); Law (Ex. 19:1); Church (Acts 2:1); Kingdom (Rev. 20:4), . . .

-- *The New Scofield Reference Bible*, ed. C. I. Scofield, E. Schuyler English, Chairman, Editorial Committee of the New Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 3.

b. Covenant Theology on the Dispensations of Scripture

(1) John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II 11: 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13:

"What then? You will ask: will no difference remain between the Old and New testaments? What is to become of the many passages of Scripture wherein they are contrasted as utterly different?

I freely admit the differences in Scripture, to which attention is called, but in such a way as not to detract from its established unity. . . . Those chief differences, as far as I can note or remember, are four in number. If anyone wants to add a fifth difference, I shall not object at all. I say that all these pertain to the manner of dispensation rather than to the substance, and I undertake to show this. In this way there will be nothing to hinder the promises of the Old and New Testaments from remaining the same, nor from having the same foundation of these very promises, Christ!

Now this is the first difference: the Lord of old willed that his people direct and elevate their minds to the heavenly heritage; yet, to