

law of God for us, and the Holy spirit fulfills the law of God in us, as Paul tells us in Roams 8:3-4:

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

4. With regard to Dispensationalism's emphasis on the contrast between the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and His work in this dispensation, it should be noted that much development has occurred during the past twenty-five years to bring Dispensational Theology and Covenant Theology closer in this area of truth. Notable in this connection has been a renewed stress in Dispensational circles on the reality of regeneration during the Old Testament period. In Aldrich's article, "A New Look at Dispensationalism", he says:

"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."

ibid., pp. 47-48.

However, a further sticking-point has been the Holy Spirit's ministry of indwelling in the Old Testament period, especially as related to Dispensationalism's view of the rapture. For if indwelling is denied to members of Israel and confined to members of the Church, then when the Church is raptured and God turns once more in grace to Israel, the indwelling ministry must cease. This appears to many Dispensationalists to be a strong argument in favor of a pre-tribulation rapture. Any suggestion of indwelling in the Old Testament (or during the Tribulation) appears to weaken or threaten the clean, clear-cut contrast between Israel and the Church, and thus the necessity of a rapture prior to the Tribulation.

Part of the problem appears to lie in the spatial conception of indwelling prevalent among many Christians. Redefinition is clearly needed! But there is another erroneous conception among many believers: that of an absolute contrast between the Old Testament as dealing exclusively or primarily with the outward, external, physical, carnal aspect of life, and the New Testament as dealing exclusively or primarily with the inward, internal, spiritual, godly aspect of life. This contrast should be seen as a relative, not an absolute one!

5. With regard to Dispensationalism's emphasis on its consistently literal interpretation of Old Testament predictive prophecy versus the alleged inconsistently literal interpretation of non-dispensational premillennialism or the figurative-spiritualization interpretation of amillennialism, it should