



Let's Read *The Institutes* of the Christian Religion, Class 6

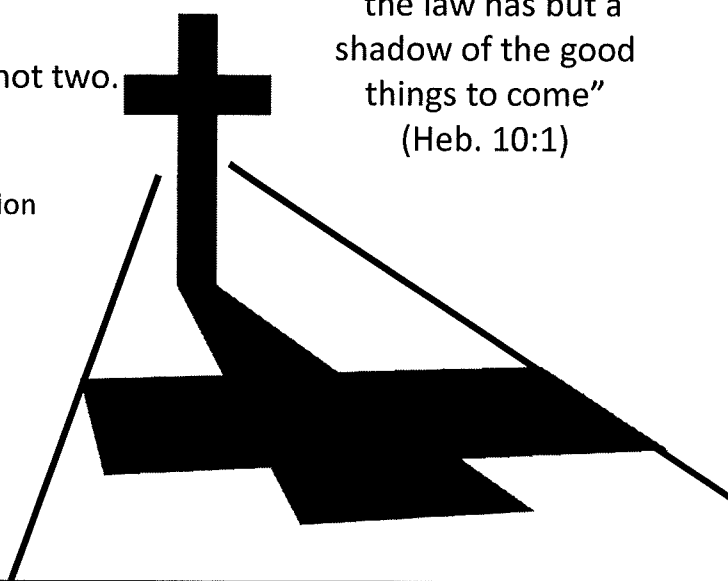
Book 2: Of the Knowledge of God the Redeemer
Chapters 6-11



Unity of the Scripture Message

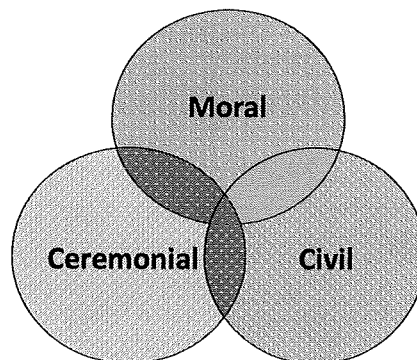
- There is one Word of God, not two.
 - One law/gospel.
 - One Old/New Testament.
 - Accommodation in progression from beginning to end of revelation/anticipation.

“the law has but a shadow of the good things to come”
(Heb. 10:1)



Unity of the Scripture Message

- The Law of God – one rule with three aspects:
 - Ceremonial (Levitical)
 - Most clearly points to Christ – absolutely worthless/empty without it.
 - Fulfilled (as to use) but not abrogated (as to meaning) in the death of Christ.
 - Judicial (Civil)
 - Laws for the regulation of social life in Israel.
 - Unfulfilled (as to use) in the condemnation of the nation of Israel.
 - Not abrogated as toward the general equity/love/justice of man.
 - The Church replaced the nation of Israel.
 - Modern governments draw on them as socially and universally valid.
 - Moral – true/eternal rule of righteousness for all people at all times
 - Analogous to the idea of Natural Law
 - Written/summarized in the 10 Commandments & in the Sermon on the Mount.



Moral Law – how to live

Gen. 1:1

Rev. 20:15

Ceremonial Law – how to worship

Gen. 3:15

Jn. 19:30

Civil Law – how God's government works

Ex. 19:12

2 Chron. 36:21



Unity of the Scripture Message

- The Law of God – one rule with three aspects
- The Law of God – one rule with three uses:
 - Condemnation – it points out sin & leaves us with no excuse.
 - Restraint – social/political fear of punishment restrains sin
 - so human life is possible in community on this earth,
 - protecting the elect until the time of their redemption.
 - Principle – guidance for believers as to God’s will.
 - Luther: law and gospel clas
 - Calvin: law and gospel = same thing

“Lutherans were afraid Calvinists would become legalists
And Calvinists were afraid Lutherans would become antinomian.”

Unity of the Scripture Message

- The Law of God – one rule with three aspects
- The Law of God – one rule with three uses:
 - Principle – guidance for believers as to God’s will.
 - Two tables/two themes – love for God, love for people
 - The purpose determines the meaning – specific as well as broad application
 - The opposite is included – command/prohibition
 - It speaks to the heart – vs. mere outward compliance
 - It is sufficient – no other laws need apply

Unity of the Scripture Message

- The Gospel – Christ is known throughout the Bible

By the Gospel, I understand the clear manifestation of the mystery of Christ.

- “Gospel” is the promise made to the patriarchs and in the law.
- “Gospel” is the fulfillment of that promise in Christ.
- “Covenant” explains the similarities & differences between the testaments
 - *“It is altogether one and the same: still the administration differs.”*
 - “Covenant” – a descriptive term that comes into dialogue with Zwingli and Bullinger
 - Becomes prominent in disputes with Anabaptists over the topic of infant baptism
 - “Covenant” is not an over-arching theme but Calvin deals with it regularly
 - Three Latin words for “covenant” appears 273 times in the Institutes;
 - Calvin teaches it in his sermons on Deuteronomy)
 - Going forward, “Covenant Theology” becomes an over-arching theme embraced by Reformers and becomes prominent in the WCF

Unity of the Scripture Message

- The unity of the Bible is illustrated by

- The similarities of the two testaments – examples of his several proofs:

- Same goal – to point people toward heaven/immortality/Christ

Earthly promises are, indeed, there but the goal was not carnal happiness but the hope of immortality

This directly opposed Servetus and the Anabaptists who saw no good in the OT

- Same Mediator – ill.: Mt. 27:51-54 – general resurrection anticipated for the OT saints in the death of Christ.
- Same means – OT believers were saved by grace. Laws/commands not an end to themselves.

Unity of the Scripture Message

- The unity of the Bible is illustrated by
 - The similarities of the two testaments – examples of his several proofs (cont.):
 - Same signs/symbols

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. (1 Cor. 10:1-4, ESV)

- The sacraments of the OT were of real efficacy (not mere figures but reality).
 - “ ... the Apostle makes the Israelites our equals, not only in the grace of the covenant, but also in the signification of the Sacraments.”
 - In way and form, they both point to Christ.
 - They are more rich and abundant for us but only by matter of degree.

Unity of the Scripture Message

- The unity of the Bible is illustrated by
 - The differences of the two testaments –
 - the progress of revelation: in unity (Reformed) vs. in disunity (Anabaptist)
 - Illustrations:
 - Beginning a journey at sunrise and arriving at sunset
 - A farmer planting and then harvesting
 - A parent raising a child from infant to youngster to adult

Unity of the Scripture Message

- The unity of the Bible is illustrated by
 - The differences of the two testaments –
 - the progress of revelation: in unity (Reformed) vs. in disunity (Anabaptist)
 - Temporal blessings conferred upon the Israelites as a “lower mode of training”
 - There were carnal, earthly elements but it was still a spiritual covenant (toward a heavenly blessing).
 - It is the Lord, not the land, that is the real inheritance.
 - For [Abraham] was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. (Heb. 11:10, ESV)*
 - Images/ceremonies – these are nonessential properties of the covt. due to Israel’s childhood, and are meant to forecast the better hope of the gospel in the NT
 - Literal vs. Spiritual language –

From these words, the Apostle took occasion to institute a comparison between the Law and the Gospel, calling the one a **doctrine of the letter**, the other a **doctrine of the spirit**; describing the one as formed on **tables of stone**, the other on **tables of the heart**; the one the **preaching of death**, the other **of life**; the one **of condemnation**, the other **of justification**; the one **made void**, the **other permanent** (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; 2 Cor. 3:5-6).

Unity of the Scripture Message

- The unity of the Bible is illustrated by
 - The differences of the two testaments –
 - the progress of revelation: in unity (Reformed) vs. in disunity (Anabaptist)
 - Bondage vs. freedom –
 - OT saints (being “divinely regenerated”) were subject to laws/practices/shadows in anticipation – the gospel was, indeed, present, but much, much more to the future.
 - NT saints (being also “divinely regenerated”) are freed in the present from much anticipation by the coming of Christ and yet, still anticipate the consummation of all things.
 - Ethnicity vs. “every nation/tribe/tongue”
- Our regard now for the Old Testament
 - Not merely as an obsolete history/revelation or in a mere auxiliary fashion
 - To give us a more full appreciation/scope of the purpose of Christ