

Unity and Diversity

Giving due weight to both unity and diversity



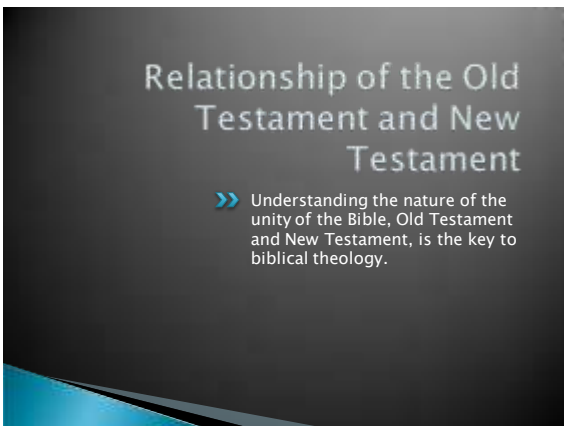
Look ahead

- ▶ The relationship of the Old Testament and New Testament
- ▶ Unity and diversity in the history of interpretation
- ▶ Unity and diversity in recent biblical theology
- ▶ Thematic polarities between the Testaments
- ▶ The typology debate
- ▶ Jesus and reality
- ▶ The dimensions of reality in biblical revelation



Relationship of the Old Testament and New Testament

» Understanding the nature of the unity of the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, is the key to biblical theology.



Some attempts to demonstrate unity

- › Von Rad - typology
- › Vriezen - OT = Christian Scripture
- › Eichrodt - OT completed in Jesus Christ
- › Knight - interpret the OT in the light of the entire Christian message



Modernism and postmodernism undermines unity

- › General resistance to finding unity in “center” or otherwise.
- › Resistance to Christological and NT-based approach to the whole—including the OT
- › Denial of transcendence, and thus of transcendent unity
- › Post-modern denial of any meta-narrative that would form a comprehensive story.



Unity and diversity in the history of interpretation

- ›› Unity and diversity is a deep philosophical and theological issue.

The *one* and the *many*

- ▶ A philosophical question: *either-or* or *both-and*
- ▶ A Trinitarian question
- ▶ A question for doctrine of Scripture
 - Alexandrians (allegorizers)
 - One message hidden under "Judaic overlay"
 - Allegorizing uncovers that one message
 - Marcion (Gnostic)
 - Two incompatible messages
 - Reject the OT in favor of the NT

Gains of the Reformation

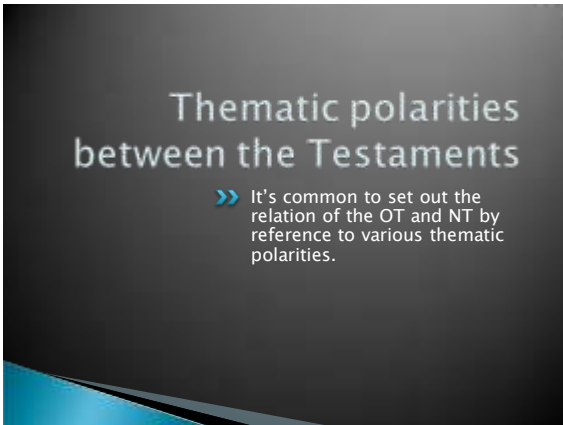
- ▶ Recovery of more Christological definition of the relation between the OT and NT
- ▶ Chalcedonian Trinitarian formula applied to Scripture
- ▶ Calvin, *Institutes*, bk. 2: "The knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ, first disclosed to the Fathers under the Law, and then to us in the Gospel."

Unity and diversity in recent biblical theology

- ▶▶ How can we balance unity with diversity without one erasing the other?

Recent biblical theology

- ▶ The superiority of the OT – A. A. van Ruler
 - OT not merely the antecedent to the NT, but a message with its own integrity, esp. about the kingdom of God
 - The OT is the canon, and the NT is the explanatory gloss.
- ▶ The superiority of the NT
 - Marcion – rejecting the OT
 - Nazi church – rejecting the “Jewish” OT
 - Over-extension of the Lutheran law-gospel dichotomy
 - Bultmann – Old Testament has only negative value, a “miscarriage” of God’s gracious intent for his people.
- ▶ The equality of the NT – Vischer, *Witness of the Old Testament to Christ*
 - The OT tells us *what* the Christ is.
 - The NT tells us *who* he is.
 - Unity demonstrated through typology.



Thematic polarities
between the Testaments

» It's common to set out the relation of the OT and NT by reference to various thematic polarities.

Thematic polarities

- ▶ Salvation history and eschatological consummation
 - J. C. K. von Hofmann – initial proponent of “salvation history”
 - Cullmann – History focuses on Jesus Christ
 - OT lays out salvation history
 - NT announces the eschatological consummation
 - Already/not-yet
- ▶ Type and antitype
 - Von Hofmann – appealed to this in his study of hermeneutics
 - God’s acts and message in the OT was...
 - Preparatory
 - Anticipatory – defining the way God acts



Polarities (cont.)

- ▶ Promise and fulfillment – Walter Kaiser
 - OT is promise
 - NT is fulfillment
- ▶ *Sensus literalis* and *sensus plenior* – Raymond Brown
 - Can look much like typology, although I'll carefully distinguish it.
 - NT gives us the *sensus plenior* of the OT message, which had formerly only been understood in the *sensus literalis*

Polarities (cont.)

- ▶ Old covenant and new covenant
 - Finding unity in the theme "covenant" – Eichrodt, Kline
 - Development of a unified covenantal set of hopes
- ▶ Law and Gospel
 - Petrine vs. Pauline Christianity – Baur
 - Dispensationalism
- ▶ Israel and the church
 - Church ≠ Israel – Dispensationalism
 - Church = Israel
 - By "replacement," either temporary or permanent
 - By engrafting to the one root

The typology debate: the basis and nature of typology

- » We won't say much about this here, because the course has separate and substantial section on typological method.

Jesus and reality

- » The biblical story embraces *all* of reality, namely God and the realm of creation.

Jesus himself embraces all reality

- ▶ Is both God and creaturely man: fully God and fully human.
 - He's last Adam (Gen 3:17-19; Rom 8:18-23)
 - His redemptive work effects all of the fallen creation.
- ▶ He's the one in whom the whole creation coheres (Col 1:15-20).
- ▶ His final rule will entail rule in the new heavens and new earth (Rev 21-22).

Dimensions of reality in the biblical revelation

- » Biblical revelation embraces all reality (God and the realm of creation), and Jesus embraces all reality; therefore, "there is not a text that is not ultimately about Jesus."

Biblical revelation and reality

- ▶ There is not text that is not ultimately about Jesus Christ.
- ▶ The canonical dynamic pointing forward to Jesus Christ does not rely merely on a few predictive prophecies, but upon the macrostructures of biblical revelation.
- ▶ See Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutic*, 253-56.

