

The chart below depicts the principal commonalities and differences between the two *main* branches of Dispensationalism Theology: Classic Dispensationalism and Progressive Dispensationalism. Although certainly **not** exhaustive, this chart highlights the principal commonalities and differences between these two *main* branches of Dispensational Theology.

(√) indicates virtual agreement with NCT

(⊖) indicates partial agreement with NCT

(⊗) indicates significant disagreement with NCT

DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY (DT)	NEW COVENANT THEOLOGY (NCT) <small>(as defined by Providence Theological Seminary)</small>
CLASSIC DISPENSATIONALISM	
√ I. Sola Scriptura ("by the Scriptures alone") √ A. The Bible <u>is</u> the Word and words of God. √ B. All Scripture is inspired by God and thus wholly inerrant, infallible, sufficient and authoritative. ⊗ C. Normal / plain (i.e. literal) historical-grammatical interpretation of Scripture (especially OT Scriptures). ⊗ D. New Testament (NT) does not have interpretive priority over the Old Testament (OT). ⊗ E. Rejects 'Now-Not-Yet' understanding of NT Prophecy & redemptive history ⊗ F. Literal understanding of apocalyptic prophecy (i.e. Revelation, etc.). ⊗ G. "Sequential" understanding of Revelation & Olivet Discourse.	√ I. Sola Scriptura ("by the Scriptures alone") √ A. The Bible <u>is</u> the Word and words of God. √ B. All Scripture is inspired by God and thus wholly inerrant, infallible, sufficient and authoritative. √ C. Christocentric Hermeneutic that interprets all Scripture in light of Christ (directly, typologically, or prepares way for Him) √ D. New Testament (NT) has interpretive priority over the Old Testament (OT) due to NT being the final revelation of God. √ E. <i>Now-Not-Yet</i> understanding of NT Prophecy & redemptive history √ F. Non-literal interpretation of apocalyptic prophecy, where <i>clearer</i> passages of Scripture interpret of <i>less clear</i> passages. √ G. <i>Recapitulation</i> necessary to understand NT Prophecy
√ II. Trinitarian Theology	√ II. Trinitarian Theology
⊗ III. Arminian Soteriology (OR varying degrees of Calvinism) ⊗ A. Five Points of Arminianism (although <i>most</i> hold to Perseverance of Saints) ⊗ B. Regeneration follows faith. ⊗ C. God limits His sovereignty to give man free will. √ D. Dual Imputation of Righteousness indispensable to biblical Gospel. √ E. Good works will always result from genuine faith.	√ III. Calvinistic Soteriology √ A. Five Points of Calvinism (i.e. Doctrines of Grace) √ B. Regeneration precedes faith. √ C. God's absolute sovereignty in all things. √ D. Dual Imputation of Righteousness indispensable to biblical Gospel. √ E. Good works will always result from genuine faith.
⊗ IV. "Classic" Dispensational Theology ⊗ A. Redemptive history divided into 7 distinct <i>dispensations</i> : Innocence, Conscience, Civil Government, Promise, Law, Grace (i.e. Church Age), Kingdom (i.e. Millennium) ⊗ B. Two New Covenant (NC) <i>dispensations</i> : Grace & Millennium ⊗ C. Two redemptive plans: Israel & the Church (each with a <i>distinctly different</i> purpose & destiny) √ D. OT & NT saints all saved by grace through faith in Christ. ⊗ E. Israel = Israel (always) ⊗ F. Israel ≠ type of Church; Church ≠ eschatological Israel ⊗ G. Church has not replaced, fulfilled, or superseded Israel. ⊗ H. Church Age = parenthesis in redemptive history, as the OT promises (Abrahamic, Davidic) are neither inaugurated nor fulfilled. Fulfillment reserved for future, literal millennium. ⊗ I. Christ's <i>current</i> heavenly reign at the Father's Right Hand is not in fulfillment of Davidic Covenant. (Only Millennium). √ J. Body of Christ = the Church ⊗ K. Church not revealed in the Old Testament. ⊗ L. New Covenant made with Israel, but inaugurated for Church. √ M. Only select OT saints had Spirit prior to Pentecost. ⊖ N. Church = the Body of Christ first constituted at Pentecost via Spirit Baptism. Spirit Baptism ends at Rapture of the Church. Consists of believing Jews & Gentiles during the Church Age. ⊖ O. Specific commandments from the Ten Commandments only apply to NC believer if repeated in the New Testament. √ P. OT Scriptures are <i>profitable & authoritative</i> for NC believer as they reveal Christ but are no longer covenantally binding since Old Covenant has been fulfilled by Christ & thereby abrogated. ⊖ Q. Some may hold to pre-fall "Edenic" / post-fall "Adamic" Covenants	√ IV. New Covenant Theology (Theology of the New Covenant (NC)) √ A. Redemptive history divided into 3 <i>ages</i> : <i>world that was</i> (pre-Flood; 2 Pet. 3:6), <i>world that now is</i> (2 Pet. 3:7), <i>world to come</i> (2 Pet. 3:13); also 2 primary <i>covenant eras</i> : Old & New. √ B. New Covenant Age = interadvent period √ C. One redemptive plan to secure salvation of the elect, i.e., <i>the one people of God</i> . √ D. OT & NT saints all saved by grace through faith in Christ. √ E. Israel ≠ Israel (always); interpretation depends on context. √ F. Israel = type of Church; Church = eschatological Israel √ G. Church has typologically fulfilled Israel (as the eschatological Israel) √ H. Church Age is not a parenthesis. NC Age inaugurated at Christ's First Coming & consummated at His Second Coming. Likewise, Fulfillment of OT promises inaugurated at Christ's First Coming, awaiting total fulfillment at His Second Coming. √ I. Christ's <i>current</i> heavenly reign at the Father's Right Hand is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant which stands totally fulfilled at Christ's Second Coming (not after). √ J. Church = the Body of Christ √ K. Church typified in OT as the eschatological Israel. √ L. New Covenant made with the Church via the Resurrected Christ. √ M. Only select OT saints had Spirit prior to Pentecost. √ N. Church = the Body of Christ first constituted at Pentecost via Spirit Baptism. Spirit baptism was accomplished at Pentecost with its Apostolic extensions (Acts 8, 11, & 19; its application continues. Consists of elect of all time. √ O. The Ten Commandments apply to the NC believer who is under the Law of Christ, not under the Law of Moses. √ P. OT Scriptures are <i>profitable & authoritative</i> for NC believer as they reveal Christ but are no longer covenantally binding since Old Covenant has been fulfilled by Christ & thereby abrogated. √ Q. Hold to pre-fall / post-fall covenants given to Adam (but not like CT)

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DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY (DT)

CLASSIC DISPENSATIONALISM

V. Church Issues

- √ A. Two Ordinances: Baptism & Lord's Supper
- ⊗ B. Sign of New Covenant: Baptism
- √ C. Baptism for Believers *Only* (*credobaptism*)
- √ D. Baptism by Immersion
- √ E. Baptism = Symbol of salvation; important as act of obedience
- ⊗ F. Lord's Supper = Mere Remembrance
- G. Mixture of cessation / non-cessation of *miraculous* spiritual gifts

VI. Church Government

- A. (Typically) Plurality of Elders *or* Single Elder / Rule by Deacons
- √ B. Local Autonomy of Congregations

VII. Christian Liberty & Total Liberty of Conscience

VIII. Government Relations

- √ A. Separation of Church and State
- √ B. Voluntarily involvement of Church members in political activities

IX. Eschatology

- ⊗ A. Visible, Bodily, *Two*-Stage Return of Christ: **(1)** Rapture of Church; **(2)** Second Coming (i.e. glorious appearing); timing of Rapture varies: *pre-tribulation*, *mid-tribulation*, *pre-wrath*, *or post-tribulation*, etc.
- ⊗ B. Daniel's 70th Week = *literal*, 7-year period between Rapture & Second Coming; also, referred to as Tribulation Period
- C. Antichrist = future *individual* who is Christ's chief human enemy
- ⊗ D. Rebuilt Jewish Temple (as the Temple of God) in the Tribulation Period and the Millennium with reconstituted sacrificial system (for some, memorial sacrifices; for others, semi-*efficacious* ones)
- ⊗ E. Future salvation of "all Israel" & total reconstitution/restoration of Israel *as a national entity* at/just before Christ's Return.
- ⊗ F. Bodily Resurrection of Just & Unjust for Day of Judgment after 1,000 year period.
- ⊗ G. Millennium = future, *literal*, thousand-year reign of Christ from Jerusalem on David's Throne in fulfillment of OT promises of the Abrahamic & Davidic covenants
- √ H. *Eternal* New Heavens & Earth for Elect; *eternal* Hell for Non-Elect.

NEW COVENANT THEOLOGY (NCT)

(as defined by Providence Theological Seminary)

V. Church Issues

- √ A. Two Ordinances: Baptism & Lord's Supper
- √ B. Sign of New Covenant: Cup of Lord's Supper (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25)
- √ C. Baptism for Believers *Only*
- √ D. Baptism by Immersion
- √ E. Baptism = Symbol of salvation; important as act of obedience
- √ F. Lord's Supper = Remembrance + Spiritual Communion with God
- √ G. Cessation of *miraculous* spiritual gifts

VI. Church Government

- √ A. Plurality of Elders
- √ B. Local Autonomy of Congregations

VII. Christian Liberty & Total Liberty of Conscience

VIII. Government Relations

- √ A. Separation of Church and State
- √ B. Voluntarily involvement of Church members in political activities

IX. Eschatology

- √ A. Visible, Bodily, *One-Stage* Return of Christ at End of NC Age.
- √ B. Daniel's 70th Week = *either* **(1)** *already* fulfilled in 1st century at Christ's First Coming (& after), *or* **(2)** *symbolic* of entire NC age between Christ's First & Second Comings (i.e., *Ultimate Jubilee*).
- √ C. Varying positions on identity of the Antichrist - *all* which identify the Antichrist with an end-time apostate one-world government.
- √ D. Temple = type of Christ (i.e., the Ultimate Temple of God), the Church, and the individual NC believer. Even if Jewish Temple is rebuilt before End of Age, *not a temple of God*.
- √ E. Massive, future end-time ingathering of *elect*, ethnic Israel into the Church. Israel has *no* future *apart* from the Church.
- √ F. Bodily Resurrection of Just & Unjust for the Day of Judgment at End of NC Age.
- √ G. No Future Millennium; Millennium = Inter-Advent period (specifically between the Christ's Ascension & Second Coming) during which Christ is reigning in heaven with His saints.
- √ H. *Eternal* New Heavens & Earth for Elect; *eternal* Hell for Non-Elect.

WHAT IS THE SINE QUA NON OF NEW COVENANT THEOLOGY?

The *consistent Christocentric* interpretation of the OT in light of the NT (Luke 24:27, 44; Rom. 10:4; 2 Cor. 1:20) which results in the following theological distinctives: **(1) the plan of God** : one plan of redemption, centered in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:10; 2 Cor. 1:20; Col. 1:18), implemented according to the God's eternal purpose (Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9), and securing the salvation of God's elect (Rom. 8:28-32); **(2) the biblical covenants** : the covenants of Scripture progressively unfold God's kingdom purpose (Matt. 6:10) in history, culminating in the New Covenant; **(3) the Old Covenant** : the *conditional* (Exod. 19:5-6) treaty which God established with the ethnic descendants of Jacob at Mount Sinai – a covenant which formed *the nation* of Israel as a geopolitical entity, the sign of which was the Sabbath (Exod. 31:15-17), which was *temporary* in terms of its purpose and duration (Heb. 8:7-13), and which was superseded by the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-33); **(4) the New Covenant** : the promised everlasting covenant (Heb. 13:20) established by Christ Jesus (Luke 22:20; Dan. 9:26-27) that fulfills all preceding *biblical covenants* – a covenant in which all believers have full forgiveness of sins (Jer. 31:34), are *permanently* indwelt by the Spirit (Ezek. 36:25-27; Eph. 1:13-14), and are empowered by the Spirit to please God (Jer. 31:31-33; Phil. 2:12-13); **(5) the people of God** : all God's elect, comprised of believing Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:15), first formed as the body of Christ, which is the Church, at Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-41), not before (John 7:39; 17:21; Col. 1:26-27; Heb. 11:39-40), as one corporate spiritual body in New Covenant union with Christ (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:19-21; Col. 1:18, 24); **(6) the nation of Israel** : the ethnic descendants of Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15) formed into a geopolitical entity at Sinai via the Old Covenant (Exod. 19:5-6), comprised of *both* believers and unbelievers (1 Cor. 10:1-5; Heb. 3:16-4:2), typological of Christ (Hos. 11:1; Matt. 2:15) and His Church (Exod. 19:5-6; 1 Pet. 2:9), the believing remnant (Rom. 9:27; 11:5) of which was transformed into the Church at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-10,41), and which awaits consummation at a future *spiritual* restoration (Amos 9:8) in the form of a massive, end-time ingathering of *elect* Jews into the Church at Christ's Parousia (Rom. 11:12, 15, 25-27); **(7) the law of God** : the two greatest commandments – love of God and neighbor (Matt. 22:36-40) – constitute God's *absolute* or *innate* law, which is righteous, unchanging, and instinctively known by man (Rom. 2:14-15) created in God's image (Gen. 1:27), and of which each *system* of *covenantal law* is a temporary, historical outworking (Heb. 7:12) in accordance with God's eternal purpose (Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9); **(8) the Law of Moses** : the *covenantal* outworking of God's absolute law under the Old Covenant – the exhaustive, *indivisible* (Jas. 2:10; Gal. 5:3) legal code, summed up in the Ten Commandments (Exod. 34:28), covenantally binding upon *the nation of Israel* (Exod. 19:5-6; 24:3), temporary in its duration (Heb. 7:11-12; Col. 2:14), and fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:4; Matt. 5:17-18; Col. 2:16-17); **(9) the Law of Christ** : the *covenantal* outworking of God's *absolute law* under the New Covenant – the gracious law of the New Covenant (Rom. 6:14), which is covenantally binding upon the *Church* (1 Cor. 9:20-21) and consists of the *law of love* (Matt. 5:44; Gal. 6:2; Jas. 2:8; Rom. 13:8-10), *the example of the Lord Jesus Christ* (John 13:34; Phil. 2:4-12), *Christ's commands and teaching* (Matt. 28:20; 2 Pet. 3:2), *the commands and teachings of the New Testament* (2 Pet. 3:2; Eph. 2:20; Jude 1:17; 1 John 5:3), and *all Scripture interpreted in light of Jesus Christ* (Matt. 5:17-18; Luke 24:27,44; 2 Tim. 3:16-17); **(10) the Kingdom of God** : the everlasting reign of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven with His saints (Heb. 1:1-4; Rev. 20:4; Eph. 2:6), which was inaugurated at His ascension (Dan. 7:13-14) in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Acts 2:25-36) and will be consummated at His Second Coming when He subdues all His enemies (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

*Providence Theological Seminary used the "Theological Positions" (<http://www.dsfs.org/positions.pdf>) document of Dayspring Fellowship in Austin, TX as the foundational base (i.e., format, some wording, certain areas) for this chart.