the drama of scripture
understanding a biblical worldview
Covenant Theology
What is a biblical worldview?

A biblical worldview is a conceptual framework through which we interpret the large and small stories of scripture, define terms, and determine the Bible’s application to our lives.
The Bible is composed of 6 main parts:

Creation:            Genesis 1-2
Curse:               Genesis 3
Covenant:            The Old Testament–Genesis to Malachi
Community:           The New Testament Letters–Acts to Jude
Conquest:            Revelation
Dispensational Theology

Dispensationalism is a theological system that teaches biblical history is best understood in light of a number of successive administrations of God's dealings with mankind, which it calls "dispensations."

It maintains fundamental distinctions between God's plans for national Israel and for the New Testament Church, and emphasizes prophecy of the end-times and a pre-tribulation rapture of the church prior to Christ's Second Coming.
Summary of Study:

1. What is Covenant Theology?
2. How did Covenant Theology begin?
3. What some of Covenant Theology’s main ideas?
4. How does Covenant Theology Affect Our Understanding of the Bible?
Covenant Theology is a system or biblical worldview that organizes the history of the world in terms of three large covenants. These covenants are called the “covenant of redemption” between the person of the Godhead; the “covenant of works” made with Adam before the Fall on behalf of the entire human race; and the “covenant of grace” made through Christ with all who are to believe, namely, the elect. (Kingdom Through Covenant by Peter Gentry & Stephen Wellum).
How did it begin?

Covenant theology is a biblical theological system, it has its roots in the Reformation.

It was held by men like Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) and John Calvin (1509-1564).

It was also represented in the Westminster Confession of Faith (1643-1649) and in many other Reformed confessions of faith.
Major Differences?

Dispensationalism
Israel & Church are distinct peoples of God

Covenant Theology
Israel & Church are one people of God

Dispensationalism
Old Covenant (mix of believers and unbelievers)
New Covenant (only believers)

Covenant Theology
Old Covenant (Mix of believers and unbelievers)
New Covenant (Mix of believers and unbelievers)
What is a covenant?

“An unchangeable, divinely imposed legal agreement between God and man that stipulates the conditions of their relationship” (Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem).
Covenant of Redemption

“The agreement between the members of the Trinity in which each agreed to fulfill his respective role to accomplish the salvation of human beings” (Systematic Theology, 1239.)
A plan was conceived before the foundation of the world, made known on the stage of human history, and which involves the work of all three persons of the Godhead.

The Father gave a people to the Son.
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.
In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.
In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:3-14, ESV)
For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. (John 6:38-39, ESV)
Covenant of Redemption

The Father gave a people to the Son.

The Son saves his people by his life and death.
All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:37-40, ESV)
I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.” (John 10:14-18, ESV)
[You know] that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (1 Peter 1:18-21, ESV)
Covenant of Redemption

The Father gave a people to the Son.

The Son saves his people by his life and death.

The Spirit works to bring those same people to faith in union with Christ.
We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:28-30, ESV)
“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” (John 3:3-8, ESV)
“The legal agreement between God and Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden whereby participation in the blessing of the covenant depended on the obedience, or “works,” of Adam and Eve” (Systematic Theology, 1239).
Covenant of Grace

“The legal agreement between God and man, established by God after the fall of Adam, whereby man could be saved. Although the specific provisions of this covenant varied at different times during redemptive history, the essential condition of requiring faith in Christ the Redeemer remain the same” (Systematic Theology, 1239).
The covenant of Grace was immediately begun after the fall with the promise given in Genesis 3:15. This promise was then progressively revealed and fulfilled in history through variously administered covenants with Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David. Ultimately, it was brought to fulfillment in the new covenant inaugurated by Jesus Christ in his victorious cross work on our behalf.
Covenant of Grace

There is believed to be one overarching covenant of grace. All other covenants find their place in this covenant and all covenants progressively reveal God’s plan until the culminating sub-covenant in God’s greater covenantal plan--the New Covenant of Christ.
Implications of Covenant Theology

Israel = The New Testament Church

Infant Baptism

Unregenerate Covenant Members
Distinctions Between
Dispensationalism & Covenant Theology

Dispensationalism
Promotes hard discontinuity - fracturing of the people of God

Covenant Theology
Promotes hard continuity - flatting distinctions of God’s peoples
the drama of scripture
understanding a biblical worldview

Covenant
Theology